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## Challenges facing the next first minister

If Rhodri Morgan will be remembered as the man who embedded the National Assembly in the minds, if not altogether the hearts of the people of Wales, then the legacy of his successor as First Minister will be defined by how he or she deals with three looming challenges. The first is spending cuts. Second is the intractable problem of Welsh economic performance. Third is negotiating the referendum that will be the next step in the unfinished business of creating a proper Parliament for Wales.

We analyse prospects for the Welsh budget on pages 30-31. The outlook for the next three years presents a sharp contrast to the relative largesse of the first decade of devolution. The Welsh Government's budget will fall from £15.38 billion to £14.18 billion in real terms, after taking account of inflation, a cumulative reduction of around 9 per cent. What this will mean for individual departments can be gleaned from the 2010-11 draft budget which we also publish in summary. In terms of the big spending departments this shows Environment and Housing, the Economy and Education taking the biggest hits, with cuts of 10.2 per cent, 4.6 per cent and 3.4 per cent respectively next year. Meanwhile Social Justice and Local Government have a 2.25 per cent rise and Health and Social Services 0.2 per cent.

The Health and Social Services budget is by some measure the largest and has consistently risen over the past decade at rates well above inflation. In the same period education spending has consistently fallen in relative terms. The time has come to alter this balance. It is a tough call, but it is time for rigorous controls of health spending to allow education to catch up. In any event much of spending in the acute hospital sector is merely dealing with the consequences of unhealthy lifestyles resulting from obesity, smoking, lack of exercise and much more, as we report on pages 62-65. Spending on education is the best option for dealing with these underlying causes of Wales's poor health.

At the same time the next First Minister should champion the case for replacing the Barnett Formula that calculates changes in the Welsh block grant, with one based on need rather than population. Three authoritative reports have made this case in recent months – from the House of Lords Select Committee, the Calman Commission in Scotland and our own Holtham Commission. Estimates vary but unless a change to a needs-based formula for calculating our block grant takes place, Wales is set to lose out by at least £300m in the coming year and more thereafter.

The Welsh Government's levers on the economy are restricted. In the current recession it has shown some fleetness of foot in developing the £48m ProAct scheme in which companies on short time working can receive up to £4,000 per employee to keep them in employment. Elsewhere, however, the Government has tended to be more aspirational rather than effective in developing the 'knowledge economy' in key sectors such as the bio-sciences, renewable energy and the creative industries. Much of this points to a need for more spending in higher education, yet this has been falling in relative terms in recent years. Again there tough decisions are needed to recalibrate the economic and education budgets.

Finally, there is the constitution. The next First Minister should make the case for more powers for the National Assembly in terms of the arguments listed above. We need more effective governing institutions to give us the tools for improving our education and economy, and tackling our unacceptably high levels of morbidity. We need a Parliament for Wales, endorsed by a referendum, to give us the clout to make the case for a fairer share of resources from London.

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- **Branding Wales: How Does Wales Add Value?**  
Swansea Branch Conference

19 November 2009

6.00pm-8.00pm Haldane Building, Swansea University

**Keynote speakers:** Neil Burchell, Rachel's Organics; James Horsham, Brand/68; Dan Langford, Acorn; Adrian Palmer, Professor of Marketing, Swansea University.

- **A Green Pathway Out of the Recession for Wales**  
Day Conference - 1 December 2009

Glamorgan Building, Cardiff University

**Keynote speakers:** Ieuan Wyn Jones AM, Deputy First Minister; Peter Davies, SDC Commissioner; Chris Jofeh, Ove Arup; Michelle Thomas, Eversheds; Tim Williams, Welsh Automotive Forum.

- **Life Under the Tories**  
Day Conference - 4 December 2009

Glamorgan Building, Cardiff University

**Keynote speakers:** Nick Bourne AM, Leader Welsh Conservatives; Cheryl Gillan MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Wales; Sir Emyr Jones-Parry, Chair, All-Wales Convention; Professor Robert Hazell, Director, Constitution Unit, University College, London; Professor Richard Wyn Jones, Director Wales Governance Centre, Cardiff University; Professor James Mitchell, Department of Politics, University of Edinburgh.

- **Learning Pathways for Wales**  
Day Conference - 9 February 2010

WJEC Building, Llandaf, Cardiff

**Keynote speakers:** Sir Adrian Webb, Chair of the 'Webb' 14-19 Review and former Vice Chancellor, University of Glamorgan; Gareth Pierce, Chief Executive, WJEC; Professor David Egan, Director Centre of Applied Education Research, UWIC; Stevie Upton, IWA Research Officer.

## Just published

- **Living With Our Landscape**  
Report of a two-year IWA study on the future of our protected landscapes in association with the Countryside Council for Wales.  
**£9.99**
- **Critical Mass: The Impact and Future of Female Representation in the National Assembly for Wales**  
By John Osmond.  
**£7.50**

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# Nationhood and common humanity

Barry Morgan explains why Christian values have propelled him to the forefront of Welsh politics

**There is a commonly held view that religion and those who represent it, Archbishops and the like, ought to restrict their public pronouncements and concerns to spiritual matters.**

They assume there are two aspects to life, the spiritual and the temporal. The former has to do with God, faith, prayer and the interior life, whilst the latter is concerned with the material sphere of work, politics and the whole business of living in the world. Put more crudely, this view contends that politics and religion do not mix. Religion should be restricted to home and church and excluded from the public square, for religion is what individuals do with their leisure time. It is a marginal and private pursuit for those who like that kind of thing.

However, for Christians and indeed for people of other faiths, this dualistic view of the universe is incompatible with believing in a God who is responsible for bringing the world into being. Since Christians believe that all things have their origin in Him as Creator, nothing can be separate from Him and all things have to relate back to Him since. Since He brought it into existence in love He has a concern for every aspect of the world.

Christians also believe that human beings are made in God's image and are His sons and daughters. Consequently, every aspect of our lives matters to Him because we bear the very stamp of His nature. To take a contrary view is like telling a human parent that he or she should restrict their concern to one or

two aspects of their child's life, rather than that life as a whole.

And if one studies the Scriptures only cursorily, one soon discovers that God does not restrict His concern to religious matters, for this very reason. Through his prophets, the God of the Old Testament castigates the people of Israel for thinking that all He requires is right worship – what the prophets called sacrificial burnt offerings - whilst ignoring the needs of the poor, widows, orphans and strangers in their midst. In fact, the prophets proclaim that what God requires is not sacrifice but mercy, and that He hates religious feasts that are divorced from just living.

The New Testament goes a step further. Its central tenet is that in Jesus Christ, God became man (incarnate) because in the words of one theologian, "matter matters to God". God is so concerned about the world – the world of flesh and blood - that He becomes part of it to show His solidarity with it. That's what the incarnation means. So Jesus begins His public ministry at Nazareth with these words, "God has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Luke 4.18).

Jesus, who reveals to us as much of God as it is possible to be revealed in a human being, spent most of His ministry preaching to the poor and marginalised rather than remaining inside the synagogue and temple. He reached out to all those people whom His society

found unacceptable or untouchable, whether for religious, moral or political reasons, whether they were Gentiles or tax collectors. In the end He died condemned by both religious and secular authorities because He was regarded as a threat to them.

And that's why Christians believe they have a concern for every aspect of life, be it to do with health, education, war, housing, asylum seekers or governance, indeed any aspect that is crucial to a person's or a community's wellbeing. Unless the Gospel, and the very word means 'good news', has relevance to every aspect of life, then it has no relevance to any aspect of it. There is no doubt that our country's beliefs in freedom and equality and the desire to remove poverty, injustice, oppression and slavery are based on Judeo Christian values.

Jesus' mission was to bring God's Kingdom and its values to transform the world, not to save souls from the world. Hence the Lord's Prayer declares, "thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven". So there is every reason for every Christian to get involved in the life and death issues of our time. Of course, that does not mean Christians do not differ from one another or that any Christian viewpoint is infallible. All I am arguing is that because of their theological and philosophical view of the world, Christians have every right to be involved in the issues of our time. They are concerned, as God is, for the good of society as a whole, not just for their own partisan interests.





Barry Morgan in June on the steps of the Senedd launches Cymru Yfory's petition calling for primary law making powers for the National Assembly. So far it has attracted 3,000 signatories, potential activists in the forthcoming referendum.

Which brings me to my involvement in politics with a small p. In the end politics is about how we organise ourselves in society. So, for example, if people are excluded because of their colour of skin or their gender then the Gospel is of relevance. And it is equally of relevance how we organise ourselves as a nation.

In March 2004 an independent commission was set up by the First Minister under the chairmanship of Lord Ivor Richard to review the scope of the powers of the Welsh Assembly as to whether they were adequate to meet the needs of modern Wales. The Members of the commission included politicians from every party, academics and others who knew a great deal about Wales and every aspect of its life. They were unanimous in three broad conclusions:

1. Wales should have a legislative assembly separate from the executive.
2. For the Assembly to exercise its power and ensure proper scrutiny there needed to be an increase in Assembly Members from 60 to 80.
3. There should be a single transferable voting system and that all this should

come into existence by 2011.

This remains the clearest and most coherent vision of the future we have, and the one that offers the greatest clarity about how Wales should be governed.

It is important that people remember that a Commission with no axe to grind had concluded that a National Assembly in Wales, with primary law making powers, would make for more transparency in government. It would allow for a more integrated policy making process and enable the needs of the people of Wales to be met in a better way than they were met then and indeed now. This document about the governance of Wales is unique in the history of Wales.

Cymru Yfory - Tomorrow's Wales was set up as a positive response to the recommendations of the Richard Commission Report with the aim of encouraging and supporting wider discussion in Welsh society.

That is why when I was approached by several politicians from different parties and by others in Welsh civil society, I agreed to chair it, having consulted my brother bishops and other

religious leaders in Wales. As well as wanting the devolution process moved on, Cymru Yfory's purpose is to inform Welsh civil society about the significance of enhanced devolution. To this end, we have organised conferences, published a lay person's guide to the National Assembly's power and procedures and submitted recommendations to the Convention under the chairmanship of Sir Emyr Jones Parry.

Cymru Yfory bases its recommendations for a satisfactory constitutional settlement for Wales on a number of inter-linked fundamental principles. These are compatible with the principles of good governance identified by the European Commission in its 2001 White Paper on Good Governance. They are that our governance arrangements should be:

- Stable
- Effective and efficient
- Comprehensible and transparent
- Encourage maximum participation
- Respect the autonomy of the National Assembly

We believe that the case for moving ahead to greater legislative powers under Part 4 of the 2006 Wales Act is overwhelming. It is clear to us that the current devolution model, based as it is on the piecemeal devolution of legislative powers through LCOs and Acts of Parliament, does not live up to the standards of good governance.

The process of conferring powers through LCOs and Acts of Parliaments is inherently unstable. Change in the powers of the Assembly and the role of the Assembly in the broader governance of Wales is built into the system. Part 3 of the 2006 Act was designed to be a transitional mechanism. As such it is unwieldy, and only works after a fashion. It cannot be sustained as the long-term basis for devolution for Wales, as it is so inherently flawed and is extremely time consuming.

It also makes routine policy issues constitutional ones, blurring the line between the fundamental issues and more day-to-day ones. Moving to Part 4 would create the basis for a stable settlement that could prove durable.

In themselves the present arrangements lack effectiveness, efficiency, and so undermine the effectiveness and efficiency of the National Assembly. The legislative process becomes lengthy and convoluted, and is worsened by the confusion of responsibility between UK and devolved institutions for a wide range of policy matters.

The system provides poor comprehensibility and transparency. It is hard to understand which level of government is responsible for what, or why. This is worsened by the piecemeal way in which functions are devolved to the National Assembly and Welsh Government. The line between executive and legislative devolution is similarly unclear, and difficult to understand.

Moreover, it is hard for those outside government to understand why things work in the way they do, or whom they should lobby to change things or whom they should hold accountable for the way

policies presently work.

As a result of the above failings, the present arrangements are likely to deter people from becoming involved in matters of public concern. Whether citizens are being asked to take an active part in lobbying, or more passively as voters and users of public services, the present constitutional structure discourages rather than encourages public participation.

Cymru Yfory believes that Implementing Part 4 of 2006 Act would bring about a vast improvement on the current arrangements under Part 3. By conferring a clear and broad range of legislative powers on the National Assembly, implementing Part 4 would provide a settlement that had a meaningful prospect of being stable and clear. In our view it would also significantly improve the stability, efficiency and effectiveness, comprehensibility and transparency of devolution in Wales as well as encouraging wider public participation in the Assembly's activities. The autonomy of the National Assembly would also be respected under the new provisions. It is for these reasons that we support moving as soon as practicable to a referendum on implementing Part 4 of the 2006 Government of Wales Act.

Even then Wales would not have parity with Scotland. This is not just a matter of how many policy areas are devolved but how powers are defined. The 1998 Scotland Act uses the 'reserved powers' model, whereby the Scottish Parliament is given legislative and executive competence in all areas except those specifically reserved to Westminster. On the other hand the 2006 Act gives the National Assembly competence only in those areas listed as having been devolved. Nor does Part 4 address the number of Assembly Members and the need for proper scrutiny of legislation.

There are those who think that all of this is rampant nationalism. To my mind, it is possible to be proud to be

Welsh or whatever one's nationality happens to be, and yet to realise that we belong to one common humanity. The two things are not incompatible. It is possible to be both fervent in one's own identity and nationality and yet also to be internationalists. The thing we need to do is to preserve our identity as a nation and move towards greater self government without allowing all of that to become exclusive and destructive. None of this is incompatible with thinking that Wales needs a further measure of self government.

For me, it is possible to be saved from narrowness and exclusivity by the realisation that the whole human race is created in God's image. He cares for all people regardless of their creed, religion or colour. I want to argue that Wales's sense of national identity, nationhood and heritage are gifts from God in which we should rejoice and which for Wales would be enhanced with further self determination. At the same time these gifts that we have been given, the distinctiveness with which we have been marked, are not for ourselves alone but for the enrichment of humanity. As Waldo Williams put it in his poem *Brawdoliaeth* (Brotherhood):

Mae rhwydwaith dirgel Duw  
Yn cydio pob dyn byw;  
Cymod a chyflawn we  
Myfi, Tydi, Efe.  
Myfi, Tydi, ynghyd  
Er holl raniadau'r byd  
Efe'n cyfannu'i fyd.

God's mysterious net  
Binds every living person;  
Reconciliation and the whole web  
Of me, you, Him.  
Me, you together  
Despite the world's divisions  
He makes whole his world

**Barry Morgan is Archbishop of Wales and chair of Cymru Yfory.**

## Critical mass

A new IWA report warns that gender parity in the National Assembly is destined to fall dramatically following the 2011 election. The result will be to threaten the feminisation of the Assembly's style, tone and working patterns.

The report, *Critical Mass: The Impact and Future of Female Representation in the National Assembly for Wales*, says the presence of large numbers of women has meant that it "has avoided any charge of being 'institutionally' male dominated in ways that can be levelled, for example, against the House of Commons which has traditionally been a masculine place, with procedures that militate against female participation".

The report was published at the launch of the new IWA Women group in the Senedd in November when a cross-party panel of AMs comprising Kirsty Williams, leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, Carwyn Jones for Labour, Nick Bourne, Leader of the Welsh Conservatives,

and Jocelyn Davies for Plaid Cymru debated the report.

Hitherto, the Assembly has had close to 50 per cent of female AMs. However, the report predicts that this will drop to near 30 per cent following the 2011 election, for the following reasons:



1. Two female Labour AMs – for Cardiff South and Penarth and Pontypridd – have stated they will not be contesting the

election and have already been replaced by male candidates. Another three have announced that they will not be contesting their seats and selection contests to replace them are pending.

2. The Labour Party has ceased requiring all-women short-lists to choose new Assembly candidates since there are currently more Labour female than male AMs and its objective is to attain a 'gender balance' within the Labour Group rather than within the Assembly as a whole.

3. Plaid Cymru has changed its selection method for choosing List candidates which has the effect of giving men a greater opportunity for taking the lead List slots. This is likely to have the effect of replacing at least one female member with a male, in the North Wales List Region.

4. A number of key marginal constituency seats are all currently held by Labour female AMs. These are the Vale of Glamorgan (majority

83); Vale of Clwyd (majority 92); Delyn (majority 510), Clwyd South (majority 1,119), Gower (majority 1,192), and Wrexham (majority 1,250). The challenging party in all these constituencies is the Welsh Conservatives and they are likely to adopt male candidates in at least half of the six seats.

5. Dependence on positive action to select female candidates in only two of the four parties, with a partial retreat from positive action in both of them.

For these reasons the number of women in the National Assembly will fall by around eight following the 2011 election, from 28 (or 47 per cent) to 20, and possibly by an even greater number depending to a great extent on the electoral fortunes of the Labour Party.

'Critical Mass' is available from the IWA at £7.50

## IWA appoints new research officer

The IWA has appointed a Cardiff University academic, Stevie Upton, as its Research Officer. She replaces Nick Morris who has left us after two years to work as a researcher with the Conservative Group in the National Assembly.

Stevie, who was brought up in Yorkshire, joins the IWA after six years at Cardiff University. She holds an MSc in Regeneration Studies and a PhD from the University's

School of City and Regional Planning, and also worked as a Research Associate in the School. Prior to this she received her Bachelor's Degree in Geography from the University of Cambridge.

A childhood spent holidaying in Pontypool piqued Stevie's interest in the regeneration of the south Wales valleys, and she has subsequently been involved in a number of research projects on the topic. She

also has a deep-seated interest in the value of higher education and the role of universities in society.

Her first major project with the IWA is examining the educational performance of Welsh school children aged 11 to 16, compared with the relatively higher levels of attainment elsewhere. The IWA is currently carrying out a statistical survey to investigate educational performance in Wales' 222 secondary schools.



Stevie Upton, the IWA's new Research Officer, contributes to this issue of Agenda on page 60

## Connecting Cardiff with the Valleys



The panel that launched the IWA's Cardiff and Valleys Branch: from left to right, former Cardiff Lord Mayor Cllr Russell Goodway; the new Branch Chair Huw Roberts; Professor Kevin Morgan of Cardiff University; Julie Lydon, Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Glamorgan; and Janet Jones, Chair of the Federation of Small Businesses Wales.

Cardiff and its Valleys hinterland should become a single unit of local government with a directly elected Mayor at its head, according to Cardiff's former Lord Mayor, Russell Goodway. He was speaking at the launch of the IWA's new Cardiff and the Valleys Branch in the University of Glamorgan in October in a debate with Professor Kevin Morgan on 'Cardiff and the Valleys: One Place or Two?'

In a lively exchange, in which the two speakers managed to agree on the benefits of south-east Wales developing into a more cohesive city region, Goodway said politicians fearful of losing influence were standing in the way of his vision. It was extremely difficult to get council leaders in neighbouring authorities to stop thinking in competitive terms. "We have to change that outlook," he said. "Across Europe successful regions have successful cities at their heart.

"The M4 does not have to

be a barrier. The only way to break the deadlock that prevents us moving forward is to create a city regional government with a directly elected mayor who could come from anywhere in the region. Only an initiative on this scale could change our direction of travel.

"We cannot leave this to

**"What is the long term future for the Valleys?"**

chance," he declared. "As things stand our governance arrangements in Wales do not meet our economic needs."

Professor Morgan, of Cardiff University, said south-east Wales currently suffered from a "cacophony of voices all straining to be heard" – 10 local authorities, including two cities. He said if he went abroad and came back after ten years he did not believe he would return to a country that

had 22 local authorities. Local government reorganisation was unavoidable in the next decade and perhaps during the National Assembly's fourth term following 2011. The case for a city region centred on Cardiff should be part of the thinking that was gathering pace around another shake-up of Welsh local government.

He warned, however, that while the advantages of a city region approach were clear enough for Cardiff, the case had to be made for the Valleys. He did not believe that people in the Heads of the Valleys would ever see Cardiff as the magnet for jobs that people in the lower end of the Valleys did. Any city region scheme had to have a built-in distribution of investment across its area. Mid-Valley towns such as Pontypridd,

Caerphilly, Blackwood, and Oakdale would need to be seen as complementary development poles to Cardiff.

"What is the long-term future for the Valleys?" he asked. "Surely it can only be a combination of being a commuter belt for Cardiff, but combined with an investment strategy that genuinely spreads resources and benefits across the region."

## Inspire Wales

The IWA is planning to launch an *Inspire Wales Awards* in January 2010 to raise the profile that Welsh men and women are making to our society and to encourage active citizenship.

The aim is to recognise and reward excellence, to underline the importance of innovation in the public, private and voluntary sectors, to encourage active involvement in Welsh civil society, and to champion equal opportunities. The categories will reward those in a variety of different sectors including science, education, the arts, the environment and business.

This new project, which is being undertaken in association with Media Wales, owners of the *Western Mail*, will depend on sponsorship from private and public organisations. Confirmed sponsors to date include: Admiral, Wales and West Utilities, Tailored Solutions Recruitment, Western Power Distribution and Buy As You View.

Sponsors are being asked not only to underwrite a category, but to encourage entrants in that field. With the support of a cross-section of sponsors from the private and public sectors, we anticipate this new award scheme will quickly become recognized as a major event in Wales's national calendar. To be involved in sponsoring an award contact Emma Brennan on 029 20660820 or email [emmabrennan@iwa.org.uk](mailto:emmabrennan@iwa.org.uk).

# Patrick Hannan 1941 – 2009

Geraint Talfan Davies on a man who recorded the first cut of our history

**On several occasions I tried to encourage Patrick Hannan to join the IWA. His replies were increasingly firm – after all, he had heard it all before. “Davies,” he would say, “I ain’t joining. I don’t do that sort of thing.” I should have known better, because deep down I knew his resistance was not just a matter of temperament but of policy.**

Following the death of his father at the age of nine, he spent less than happy schooldays at Cowbridge Grammar School which he dubbed ‘a Woolworth’s version of Harrow’. This, and arguments at Aberystwyth University over his Irish Catholic background, helped him discover “my life’s vocation as a lance corporal in the awkward squad”. He later confessed that he always found “being in a majority uncomfortable and ill-fitting”. But beyond mere temperament, he prized his own independence as absolutely essential to his trade.

He was a professional spectator in a Wales that, he thought, had too many cheerleaders and campaigners, and not enough detached scrutineers. I was about to call him a devil’s advocate, but Patrick would not have taken a brief from anyone, and certainly not from someone as partisan as the devil. He relished the warmth of Welsh life, but was suspicious of its cosiness. He was not going to be beholden to anyone, or to have his independence compromised by even the most token affiliation. That is something I should have respected.

I first worked with him at the *Western Mail* in September 1966 only a few weeks before the Aberfan disaster. Over more than forty years he charted Wales’s progress through events that, industrially and politically, were to change it utterly. His work described that progress, but the shape of his career also told us much about the changing media. As with so many of us, there was an

inevitability about his move from newspapers to television. Soon after he went to BBC Wales in 1970 he became its industrial and political correspondent, the very title reflecting the centrality of industrial strife in the politics of the time. Strikes were a daily occurrence, the big ones often ending in beer and sandwiches at No 10.

His was a daily voice on radio and a nightly presence on our screens. More than anyone else he told the people of Wales their own story. He did so from the palace of Westminster, from picket lines and miners’ conferences, most often standing before steelworks or pits – usually Nantgarw colliery, not because Nantgarw was especially troublesome, but because, as he pointed out, its pit head gear was the nearest scenic prop to the BBC.

Inside two decades that world was gone, the end of Wales as we had known it. Industry and politics became separated in the world of reporting and in the public mind. In politics, too, there was cataclysmic change. Patrick had seen the early days of the Welsh Office, had been at Aberfan, had searched and failed to find the battalions of the Free Wales Army, and was there for the referenda in 1979 and in 1997. In his own words, he had started by reporting on politics in Wales, and finished by reporting Welsh politics. Along the way he gave all sides an equally hard time.

In the middle of the process - and before the last cataclysmic miners’ strike - he left the staff of the BBC for the less certain life of a freelance. The change also meant that he spread his wings in directions that brought his knowledge and love of history and of his own patch more obviously into play. His reporting had always been infused, even if sometimes invisibly, by his knowledge and love of history. After all, he had been taught at Aberystwyth by both Gwyn Alf Williams and Richard Cobb. In numerous documentaries and five books



he sought to make sense of the events and people that he had reported, and with a colour and wit that broadcast news can rarely accommodate.

He was a serious man, but full of humour and fun. He was keen to educate, but just as keen to entertain. He found earnestness tedious and was endlessly amused by our foibles and our myth making. The paucity of outlets in Wales for serious print journalism forced him to channel his gifts as a writer into five books that attempted to make sense of the events he had described. It was a period of insightful and witty reflection. In *The Welsh Illusion* he commented like many others on the role of women in the final miners’ strike, but he went further than others in commenting, too, on the fact that this produced some discomfort in the male world of coal. It was, he said, “as if the Beverley sisters had turned up in the college of cardinals”.

Nothing fazed him, and for good reason. The breadth of his reading was immense – history, politics, biography and diaries, novels and poetry, coupled with an equally wide knowledge of film, and opera from Verdi through Gilbert and Sullivan to Flanders and Swann. This and an Irish obsession with language (he recently signed up for an Irish passport) as well as his prodigious memory armed him for any and every occasion, not least *Round Britain Quiz* that he and his colleague Peter Stead won five times in ten years.

He was not only a diligent and meticulous great reporter, but also a wise, entertaining and wholly necessary bridge between past and present. To have him as the truest of friends was a privilege beyond measure.



Jeff Jones

## Welsh Labour's leadership election

**In the early 1980s in the aftermath of Labour's two election defeats of 1979 and 1983 commentators often asked was Labour at the crossroads. Today some might even argue that Labour has perhaps reached the end of the road and we are at the beginning of another major political upheaval in British politics.**

Whoever becomes the new Leader of the Labour Group in the Assembly faces a very different world from the one faced by Rhodri Morgan when he succeeded Alun Michael. Although for some the result of the first Assembly election in 1999 was a disappointment, Labour was still riding high. In the 1997 Westminster election, Labour had obtained over 58 per cent of the popular vote in Wales.

With the economy booming and the new Labour Chancellor proclaiming the end of 'boom and bust', Labour in Wales could look forward to a world where money would flow from Westminster. Although Rhodri Morgan might still be popular, the same cannot be said of the Labour Party in Wales today. Terrible results in the 2007 Assembly elections were followed by further losses in the 2008 local government elections. The final humiliation was coming second behind the Tories in this year's European election. To make matters worse, in the words of Finance Minister Andrew Davies, "the years of plenty are over". Whatever the political persuasion of the next Westminster government it is clear we face major spending cuts. So whoever

leads Labour after 1 December, when the result of the contest between Carwyn Jones, Edwina Hart and Huw Lewis will be announced, will have to take some tough and unpopular decisions.

Given the uncharted waters that Labour in Wales now faces what do the three contenders for Rhodri's crown tell us about the future path of the Assembly Labour Group under their leadership? Like all politicians all three have strengths and weaknesses. The fact that no one has obtained a decisive lead amongst those who know them best, namely the AMs, also suggests that there is no clear agreement on the way forward for Labour.

Edwina Hart and Huw Lewis represent the two traditional wings of the Labour Party. Edwina Hart with her trade union background and character could be seen as Wales's Ernie Bevin. Rooted in the Labour movement with a no nonsense approach to politics which takes no prisoners, Edwina would not be afraid to take the difficult decisions necessary over the next few years. Her reform of the health service and her support for devolution for the English regions also suggests that she could be open to new ideas on the delivery of public services. The key question of course is could she carry others with her. How would Plaid ministers react to the end of Rhodri Morgan's laissez-faire approach to Cabinet government? Her reluctance in the past to engage with the media also raises serious questions about her ability to persuade a sceptical public to support the difficult decisions required with regard to public services.

On the other hand, Huw Lewis represents the ILP intellectual wing of the Labour Party. At his campaign launch, he talked of the beginning of a battle of ideas. No socialist in the Labour Party could disagree with any of the pledges set out on his website. If the Labour Party is "a moral crusade", to quote Harold Wilson, then Huw Lewis is putting himself forward as the man to lead that crusade in Wales. His supporters would

also argue that he offers a new, more open and more inclusive approach to politics. Huw Lewis will want to see that the traditional Labour moral crusade looks for new solutions to tackle poverty and homelessness in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. He might have opposed the coalition with Plaid, but on many issues it could be argued that he is very close to the radical Adam Price wing of Plaid.

Carwyn Jones is much harder to place in any Labour tradition in my opinion. A politician of real ability and with all the necessary communication skills to succeed in modern politics, some would argue Carwyn is the New Labour candidate for the leadership. Much like the New Liberals before 1914, Carwyn would offer economic competence and pragmatism tempered by a social conscience.

Carwyn's pitch is that he is the candidate who is best able to appeal to all of Wales. His supporters argue that as a former successful Rural Affairs minister he has the ability to reconnect the party with areas in west and north Wales where Labour has lost support over the past few years. His supporters would argue his ability to speak Welsh is also further proof that he is the candidate best placed to reconnect the party with the parts of Welsh society that have deserted Labour in the past 30 years.

On the other hand others would argue that like many New Labour politicians, with their pragmatic 'what works' approach to politics, it is often difficult to tell what Carwyn actually believes in. Whereas both Edwina Hart and Huw Lewis have started to talk about policies and ideas, Carwyn seems to travel 'policy light'. A recent comment in the Wrexham Leader that his aim is to "raise people's confidence" doesn't exactly inspire confidence. Perhaps it could be argued that given the restraints on the Assembly budget in the next few years, rather than asking the three candidates for new ideas, the real question that should be asked is where they would make the necessary cuts. In terms of the coalition with Plaid, I can't see any of the candidates trying to

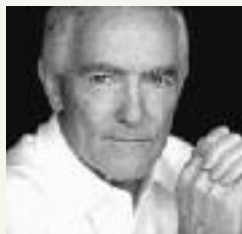
renegotiate the One Wales agreement. Given all the other problems it faces it isn't in Labour's short term interest to do anything that might break up the arrangement with Plaid. Having said that, any new Labour Leader could face problems from a budget for 2011-12 dominated by cuts, or the Jones-Parry Convention report, due to be published on November 18.

As both parties jockey for position in the run up to 2011 the new Labour leader might find that some in Plaid could be arguing that being associated with a cuts agenda set by Labour is not in their long term interest. Given the commitment to a referendum before 2011 the best result for a new Labour Leader from Jones-Parry might be a non committal one stressing that a 'yes' vote is not a certainty.

Despite Rhodri Morgan's personal popularity and the so called 'Clear Red Water' approach, Labour in Wales has continued to lose popular support. For many in the party the key issue in the leadership election is whether whoever emerges will be able to reverse Labour's decline. For two of the candidates their very political survival could even be linked with a revival of Labour support. A recent opinion poll includes both Gower and Bridgend in the list of marginal seats in Wales that the Tories could win next year. On a low turnout in 2011, both Edwina Hart and Carwyn Jones could easily lose their seats in the Assembly.

In my opinion, the long term future of the Welsh Labour Party in Wales will not depend primarily on who is elected on 1 December. It will depend on voters' perceptions of the UK Labour Party. There is no separate Labour Party in Wales. In the digital age most voters do not get their information from Welsh-based media. If the views of voters are influenced by their opinion of the leadership of a party then in the case of the Labour Party, it is Gordon Brown not Rhodri Morgan who is the key opinion former.

**Jeff Jones is former Labour leader of Bridgend County Council, now running the Metier political consultancy.**



Geraint Talfan  
Davies

## **Paddling in a shallow gene pool**

**The row over MPs' expenses, and its much paler shadow at the National Assembly, has given David Cameron the space and lever to promise to cut the size of the House of Commons by 10 per cent, and to cut ministerial pay by 5 per cent. It is hard to know whether this is mere populism, prudent economy or constitutional change. However, we can be certain that if the reduction is ever implemented it will produce a sharp focus on performance and selection procedures in our political parties.**

Putting aside the constitutional implications – and some would argue that it poses considerable risks for the union – the prospect of such a change makes it timely to consider the background of our elected representatives.

In the last issue of *Agenda* I argued that “for those in Cardiff Bay used to hearing gripes about the *calibre* of Assembly Members, it must have been a vicarious pleasure to hear similar complaints about MPs”. But I also argued that we need to take care with this language: “To argue about the calibre of elected members seems to be an act of personal denigration, in the vast majority of cases undeserved. The real issue is about the increasing narrowness of the gene pool from which elected members are drawn, and that is certain to be a much bigger issue for a body of 60 members in Cardiff Bay than for the 646 in the House of Commons”.

This set me wondering whether the general impression of a narrow gene pool within the National Assembly was well founded or not. On the basis of a review

of publicly available biographies of all those elected in the three elections – 1999, 2003 and 2007 – there is one unequivocal conclusion. The dominance of the public sector in Wales has been given full expression throughout the Assembly's first decade.

In the three elections 89 people have been elected. Of those, 33 (37 per cent) claim some experience of the private sector, including the private professions. Of these 33, nine are no longer serving as a result of retirement, death or defeat, leaving the current Assembly with 25 (42 per cent) claiming some time in the private sector: Labour with 9 (26 per cent of their group), Plaid with 4 (27 per cent), Conservatives with 9 (64 per cent) and Liberal Democrats with 2 (33 per cent).

But this is to stretch the definition of private sector experience to the limit. For example, it would include two of the three candidates for the Labour leadership – Carwyn Jones, as a barrister, and Edwina Hart out of banking, although her key involvement was as a trade union official. It would also include Plaid's Gareth Jones, as an educational consultant, although his work would undoubtedly have had a primarily public sector focus, plus the Conservative Nick Ramsay's two years as a driving instructor. I think it is fair to count three farming AMs – Mick Bates, Kirsty Williams and Brynle Williams – in the private sector, although farming puts you pretty close to the public till.

Many careers cross the public/private divide. Every one of the 41 Labour AMs since 1999 has had some prior work experience within the public sector (excluding political service), either in local government, the health service, education, or the BBC. The same is also true of all but four of the 23 Plaid Cymru AMs. The exceptions are Dafydd Wigley, the accountant Mohammad Asghar, and two new regional list members, Nerys Evans and Bethan Jenkins, whose only post-university work experience has been within the party. Amongst the Liberal Democrats only Kirsty Williams has had no work experience in the public sector. The Conservatives are the one party to

buck this trend, with only six of their 18 past and present members having had some public sector experience.

It can be argued, of course, that experience of the public sector is just as important, if not more important to the Assembly, given that the role of government is primarily to do with the delivery of public services. But even then it is pertinent to ask what are the reserves of senior experience in larger organisations – whether public, private or voluntary – on which the Assembly and the Welsh Government can draw. Inevitably, any assessment involves some subjective judgements both about organisations and about the definition of senior experience.

Any tally of those with experience of sizeable organisations would not encompass more than a dozen members across the three terms, half of whom are no longer serving. This leaves Leighton Andrews (BBC), Andrew Davies (Ford), Edwina Hart (BIFU), Rhodri Morgan (South Glamorgan County Council), Nick Bourne (Swansea Institute of Higher Education) and Paul Davies (Lloyds-TSB). Those no longer serving would include two former leaders of large local authorities, Sue Essex (Cardiff) and Pauline Jarman (Rhondda, Cynon Taf), a deputy chief constable, Alison Halford, a vice-principal of an FE college, Alun Pugh, and Dafydd Wigley a financial controller with, successively, Ford, Mars and Hoover.

Such work experience as exists within the Assembly is primarily derived from small scale enterprise, with almost none drawn from the senior ranks of any kind of organisation. Arguably, Alison Halford and Nick Bourne (Deputy Principal, Swansea Institute of Higher Education) are the two who have held the most senior managerial positions in organisations of any size.

The work experience of AMs does, however, cover the gamut of the Assembly Government's functions – health, social services, youth work, teaching and lecturing, equal opportunities, farming, banking and

finance, and the quasi-private sector of small business consultancy. It can also boast no less than seven drawn from journalism, marketing, public relations and the media, not to mention one minister of religion. But what marks out the non-political work experience of too many in this cohort is not the lack of range, but the brevity not to say shallowness of the experience.

Is the picture any different among the 40 Welsh MPs in what is still the senior legislature? Apparently not. If 42 per cent of current Assembly members claim some private sector experience, only 37 per cent of our MPs do so. In the largest party group – Labour – 35 per cent of Assembly members are in that category against only 27 per cent of MPs. In each of the other three parties, two of their three MPs have worked in the private sector. In the 29 strong Westminster Labour group, 24 have public or voluntary sector experience.

Overall, one might also argue that the work experience of MPs is even more limited: one farmer, Roger Williams, against the Assembly's three, Mick Bates, Brynle Williams and Kirsty Williams; three from journalism and PR (Ann Clwyd, Alun Michael and Don Touhig), against the Assembly's five (Leighton Andrews, Alun Davies, Sandy Mewies, Alun Ffred Jones, Kirsty Williams). Welsh MPs can count proportionately more lawyers – two solicitors, David Jones and Ian Lucas, and one barrister, Elfyn Llwyd, to put against the Assembly's two, barrister Carwyn Jones and solicitor, Ieuan Wyn Jones, although one might also want to count Nick Bourne, as a former law professor.

Neither is it easy to find senior managerial experience amongst the MPs. Labour's David Hanson was National Director of a charity, the Society for the Prevention of Solvent Abuse, and Lembit Opik headed the Corporate Training and Organisation Development Department for Procter and Gamble. After that it is pretty thin, and certainly thinner than the Assembly.

However, it would be a mistake to

take too managerialist a view of political representation – management and politics are different disciplines. A key task of politics is representation, and that requires a different knowledge and empathy. But any legislature, especially one that also constitutes an executive, also requires some aptitude for executive action and for the scrutinising of government, for framing and scrutinising legislation, as well as some sense of what constitutes sound strategy and the impact of policy and legislation on the behaviour of organisations as well as individuals.

**Geraint Talfan Davies is Chair of the IWA**



Madoc Batcup

## **Taking control of our own resources**

**The Holtham Commission is currently conducting the second leg of its consultation to identify alternative funding mechanisms for the Welsh Government, including the possible tax varying powers and greater powers to borrow.**

What is needed is a reasonably large source of income which would not severely disadvantage Wales, nor provide undue distortion. Wales may not have oil, but it does have considerable natural resources, and it can be argued that exploitation of the natural resources in Wales should benefit the people of Wales. There are two ways in which income can be generated from such resources:

1. By a tax or levy on any or all aspects of the permitting, building, and exploitation of such natural resources.



2. By the public ownership of such assets.

Wales is a substantial exporter of water and of energy, producing significantly more electricity than it needs. It has one of the largest ports in the United Kingdom for the import of oil and LNG, and a large pipeline under its soil to take LNG to consumers in England. It is starting once again to increase the amount of coal it produces. There is discussion about the exploitation of methane contained within the coal seams underground.

Wales also has a significant number of on- and off-shore wind farms, with plans to expand these significantly. In the case of wind farms there has been partial recognition of the appropriateness of compensating communities affected through the establishment of 'community funds'. However, these appear to be negotiated on an 'ad hoc' basis and do not deal with the fundamental issue of natural resources providing governmental income.

The issue of ownership of assets is one of exceptional importance in Wales. There is a clear question mark as to whom ownership of the Severn crossing will revert to when the concession expires. On a larger scale the UK government is consulting on harnessing the tidal power of the Severn estuary, about half of which lies in Welsh waters. Yet in the financial consultation document by PricewaterhouseCoopers there is no mention of Wales. The design life for the proposed hydro-electric installations in the estuary is 120 years, and it is implicitly assumed that the UK government has the right to sell off the benefit of hydro-electricity generation in Welsh waters over this period as it sees fit.

The value of the electricity generated will depend on a number of issues, including which installations are built and the future price of electricity. However, given the advantages of a secure, sustainable, predictable source of energy with an extremely low cost of production, it is highly likely that the income would amount to many hundreds of millions of pounds per year.

This principle in respect of ownership of natural resources also holds true for water, an issue that particularly rankles in Wales. The Government of Wales Act 2006 gives the Secretary of State for Wales extensive powers to override the wishes of both the Welsh Government and the Welsh legislature, both pre and post any successful referendum on additional power if he or she believes that there may be an adverse impact on resources, quality or supply of Welsh water to England. These powers are contained in Clauses 101, 114 and 152 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 and should be removed.

The Welsh Government should also have the right to charge a transit tax on resources which are transported through its territory, for example LNG.

The current inability of the Welsh Government to benefit from the exploitation of Welsh natural resources makes it more dependent than it need be on largesse from London. It would be preferable for the Welsh Government itself to exploit the very extensive energy and water resources on its land and around its coasts. This would provide a long term funding framework which would go some way to enabling the Welsh Government to raise the income required for its own expenditure.

**Madoc Batcup is a barrister working with financial services in London.**



Alan Netherwood

## **Adapting to climate change**

**On the face of it we have a very progressive government in Wales, committed via the Sustainable Development Scheme to 'One Planet' living within a**

**generation, the three per cent annual carbon reduction target for the Welsh Government's activities, green jobs, and a plethora of other targets for transport, energy efficiency, fuel poverty, and renewable energy.**

The 2008 Climate Change Act introduces the Carbon Reduction Commitment which will set out 'caps' for emissions, and establish systems for the trading of permits between companies, universities and large public bodies in Wales. For carbon reduction, there are strong legal and financial motivations for governments, their sponsored and funded bodies, and companies to respond. Importantly, there will be timescales and targets to respond to. There is a strong framework for accountability.

The other cause for hope is the recently established Climate Change Commission for Wales. Convened by the Welsh Government this is assisting with "the development of new policies and the creation of a consensus on climate change". Most of its work to date has been around the *Climate Change Strategy*, which it has been consulting on during much of this year. Some key questions for the future are how the Commission develops to provide an overview and scrutiny role, how representative it will be, and how independent and critical it can be of government.

A cynic might say that in order to address a policy problem, Governments will always create a new organisation to deal with it and a range of documents to describe the problem and say how the Government will tackle it. There is no doubt that this activity has developed a high level and inclusive discourse on achieving a carbon reduction for the Government. However, translating these words into a 'movement' to achieve carbon reduction in Welsh society, to achieve 'One Planet Living', will be a good deal less easy.

Carbon reduction and energy security provide us with some complex and politically fraught 'wicked issues':

Where are we going to get our

energy from in future? What is the future role of nuclear energy in a ‘nuclear free’ country? Should we use our coal reserves? How can we capture carbon from power stations and store it? How do we initiate road and congestion charging? What is the carbon ‘bang for buck’ for household micro-generation? Is the Severn Barrage worth the effort? How might peak oil affect carbon reduction? How can we balance food production with a need for biomass crops? How can we best store carbon in soils and vegetation?

The *Climate Change Strategy* skirts many of these issues. It contains lists of very worthwhile initiatives which can contribute to carbon reduction, but lacks a clear idea of what difference these will make in relation to the *scale* of the problem.

A great many challenges lie ahead for us in Wales, initially because of past emissions up to 2040, and then post 2040 depending on how efficiently we reduce our carbon addiction over the next 20 years. How do we compensate land owners for ‘managed retreat’ due to rising sea levels, and cope with uninsurable properties and impacts on land values? How can we plan our agriculture to benefit from climate change? How can we ensure a sustainable and secure supply of food in Wales? How can we provide enough water for everyone throughout the year, capture water in our landscape for farming, and continue to supply increasingly water scarce parts of the UK? The *Climate Change Strategy* is vague and unfocused on these ‘adaptation’ questions. It has few targets or objectives other than further research on the evidence base, and mainstreaming adaptation into decision making in the Welsh Government.

We need a national debate about the fundamental adaptation issues of economics, water supply, food supply, health and flood protection in a changing world. These realities will present us with stark choices about funding, priorities and organisational

functions and boundaries. The Climate Change Commission for Wales has a clear role here to air these questions for debate, as has the Sustainable Development Commission and for civil society, Cynnal Cymru: Sustain Wales.

In general there is a weaker framework for *accountability* for climate change adaptation in comparison to carbon reduction. Where in our systems do we take, hold or give account on climate resilience? Until these are established in the governance system I fear adaptation will always play second fiddle to carbon reduction.

Part of the problem is a skills gap in effective long term planning in a political and financial system which encourages short-termism in government. There is also a skills gap in effective scrutiny of decision making on climate change and a need to develop leadership on climate adaptation. I wonder how the Welsh Government will follow Environment Minister Jane Davidson’s forthright lead on climate change when she steps down from office. I also wonder about the critical relationship between Welsh Government and local authorities on adaptation.

Local authorities will be lead organisations in managing the consequence of climate change and getting the system fit for purpose on both carbon reduction and adaptation. Their relationship with the Welsh Government needs to be strong, open and honest with effective leadership at both levels.

My role with the Welsh Local Government Association involves running workshops with Executive Members and Senior Officers imagining the consequences on a local authority in 2040 of a world where climate change has really begun to impact. Some of the comments from these workshops are illuminating:

- *It’s got nothing to do with me, I’ll be long gone.*
- *We only deal with short term issues and delivery of frontline services, it’s central government’s responsibility.*
- *Why should we do anything when*

*China and India are emitting so much.*

Such responses indicate the challenges we have in communicating the role of global equity, stewardship, accountability and good governance. However, other responses are more encouraging:

- *I can’t look my grandson in the eye if we don’t do something radical on this.*
- *We need to plan over the long term and show where we will be in 10, 20, 30 years time.*
- *I need to be providing better leadership on this within and outside the authority.*

Two clear messages come out of this work. One is the power of eliciting an emotional response by making the policy ‘problem’ relevant to the listener. The other is the benefit of creating ‘space’ for leaders and others to explore climate adaptation and carbon reduction in their busy lives.

**Dr Alan Netherwood** is an Honorary Research Fellow with the School of City and Regional Planning at Cardiff University.



Nicola Porter

## **Welsh journalism needs to fight back**

**Isn’t it time we stopped blaming London-centric media moguls for the decline of our Press? The demise of local papers, cemented by online competition and recession-fuelled falls in advertising revenue, are lamented but never tackled. There have been reports, even desperate recommendations for state sponsored**

## journalism, but no made-in-Wales solutions by journalists to the challenges of the digital age.

I have been at the receiving end of London cost cutting exercises twice this decade. In 2000, I was employed as a reporter for the Welsh Daily Mirror. When the edition was pulled in 2003 it was seen as an act of treachery by Trinity Mirror, but it was soon chip paper.

The second time I fell to the London axe was more recently as editor of the specialist education publication TES Cymru, the Welsh edition of the Times Educational Supplement. When I took over the editorship in 2006, TES had recently been re-launched. It was a glossier, some would say dumbed down, version of a publication widely regarded as the education 'Bible' for British teachers for almost a century.

The TES, and its associated publications, had been a cash cow for media tycoon Rupert Murdoch at News International, but he sold the stable for £234 million to private equity group Exponent in 2005. Maybe Murdoch had a crystal ball.

Over the next three years my passionate pleas to London bosses for more resources to reflect educational devolution did result in two more pages and a trainee reporter. However, recession finally sealed the edition's fate. The Wales office in Cardiff has now closed and I, along with a trainee reporter, was made redundant. One TES Cymru reporter remains on patch, working from home and under London news desk control. Gerard Kelly, Editor of TES, told Press Gazette this summer, "We hope we can give the Welsh market a good service but it will be the case of the art of the possible". There is, as he puts it, a "difficult" Welsh market.

But as Wales's devolved government is placed under the microscope as a General Election looms, we urgently need well balanced news coverage in good quality national papers and their websites. In the long term, however, it is Wales not London that needs to deliver that news.

Take education: the system has undergone a facelift since departing from Westminster in all but pay and conditions by the 1998 Government of Wales Act. The nation has long abolished SATs (tests for 7,11 and 14-year-olds). Only now England is catching up, with its teachers desperate for an end to the test mentality. They are said to be 'green with envy' with what is afforded their Welsh colleagues in policy, if not in funding. The played Foundation Phase for under-7s; the scrapping of unfair league tables; and the birth of the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification are all huge coups for Wales. But who would know?

There is still confusion among Wales's 27,000 or so full time teachers, let alone parents, over the startling and growing educational differences between England and Wales. Sadly, specialist news in education or health rarely makes it outside the Welsh border and the majority of news read or watched in Welsh homes, emanating as it does from London-based media, has no bearing on Wales whatsoever.

It is with this backdrop that James Murdoch's words at the Edinburgh Television Festival in August have such resonance. Murdoch, son of Rupert and chief executive and chairman of News Corporation, Asia and Europe, claimed the BBC's "dumping" of free, online state-sponsored journalism was strangling the market and destroying online enterprise. But while the Murdochs might be worried about their plans to charge for news next year, there should be no such fear in Wales.

In 2008, a report by the BBC's independent watchdog, the BBC Trust, found that 136 education related stories coming from the BBC's London-based outlets were not relevant to Wales. Amazingly, 40 per cent thought Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, was responsible for the education portfolio in Wales – not Jane Hutt. If mainstream news reporting of education in Wales is left to the BBC then it is hardly reported at all. Wales is

surely fertile soil for the charging of good quality online news because there is no competition from the BBC in London.

But there's another potential spoiler to journalistic advancement in Wales: the stranglehold of poor quality PR that increasingly leads the news agenda. In depleted Welsh newsrooms it is becoming the norm for overworked journalists to churn out partisan news lines almost verbatim, unchallenged and unchecked. News is increasingly regurgitated in cyber space, plucked from blogs and dumped on pages, electronic or otherwise.

Welsh Editors need to take control and clamp down on lazy and unsubstantiated journalism that has no place in a nation where the values of an independent press are under siege. But they also need to give their staff more time to do a proper job.

There is a further stumbling block to Welsh journalistic integrity: the insecurities of the Assembly Government and the reluctance of many in officialdom to engage with criticism in a constructive way. For Wales to mature as a democracy there must be realisation that for every positive there is a negative. Spin surely went out of fashion with Tony Blair. Voters now demand a balanced picture from public servants.

There has never been a greater need for Wales to be heard on the world stage. Yet good quality journalism is under threat as never before. Wales's media has to embrace the digital age and move on. There is a need to start charging for good quality online news – especially in specialist areas – to service the Welsh nation. It is also the Welsh Press's responsibility to halt the profession's contamination by opportunist PR that has held back the nation's developing democracy. It's time for a journalistic fight-back in Wales.

**Nicola Porter** launched the Education Reporter website, [www.educationreporter.co.uk](http://www.educationreporter.co.uk), in October 2009.

# Fresh air in Cathays Park

John Osmond hears how the new Permanent Secretary Dame Gill Morgan, is dealing with Whitehall arrogance

**Success for the devolution project in Wales was always going to be a slow burn affair, mainly because our political and administrative capacity was so under-developed ten years ago. You might say the Welsh Assembly experiment has been devolution for slow learners.**

A decade in and there are some encouraging signs. The National Assembly itself, with its separation from the executive, legally endorsed by the 2006 Wales Act, is rapidly acquiring parliamentary status. There are signs, too, that the politicians are learning on the job. Kirsty Williams' leadership has given a new edge to the Liberal Democrats, the Conservative Group is providing a credible opposition, Plaid Cymru is gaining experience in government, and Labour's leadership contest is provoking a fresh vitality in a party that desperately needs to reinvent itself in Welsh terms.

Underpinning the whole edifice is the civil service and arguably it has had the toughest time adjusting to the new dispensation. The old Welsh Office was little more than a post box for Whitehall, and had little experience of developing a policy agenda. In the late 1990s it was simultaneously confronted with establishing the National Assembly and putting in hand the European Objective One programme for west Wales and the Valleys. The result was a kind of collective nervous breakdown.

Personalities played their part. Ron Davies's walk on Clapham Common in

October 1998 had more than political fall-out. It was a major reason why Rachel Lomax, the charismatic Welsh Office Permanent Secretary responsible for spearheading the implementation of devolution abandoned it soon afterwards, finding a safer haven in Whitehall.

It was left to her deputy Jon Shortridge to pick up the pieces. With a background in local government he was a safe pair of hands but temperamentally averse to adopting the outgoing leadership style that Rachel Lomax had pioneered. Instead he preferred the back

office, clinging on to civil service norms and seeing the Assembly as an evolutionary extension to the process rather than the revolution it really was.

The fall of Alun Michael in January 2000 and his replacement by Rhodri Morgan changed all that. Coalitions became part of the scenery, the civil service changed gear and has been playing catch-up ever since. The size of the challenge was set out by the Assembly Government's Review of local service delivery *Beyond Boundaries* that was led by Sir Jeremy Beecham and published in July 2006. Comparing outcomes with equivalent areas in England the Review found that in general Wales performed worse across both the health service and local government.

As the Review concluded: "There is too much of a culture of compliance, waiting to be told what to do by the Assembly Government"; "The culture has been defensive about publicising performance"; and "Risk aversion can stifle improvement."

Given this analysis it was significant that in May last year Sir Jon Shortridge was succeeded by a member of the Beecham Review team, Dame Gillian Morgan. Speaking in her office overlooking Cathays Park she said her experience with the Review had persuaded her that Wales could be run differently. "To me our unique selling point in Wales is that you can be more joined-up. You can put policy makers in a room and have a conversation, for instance about the inter-relationship

## Assembly Government Strategic Delivery and Performance Board

- Dame Gillian Morgan, Permanent Secretary
- Emyr Roberts, Public Services and Local Government Delivery
- Gareth Hall, Economy and Transport
- Paul Williams, Chief Executive, NHS Wales
- David Hawker, Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
- Bernard Galton, People, Places and Corporate Services
- Christine Daws, Finance
- Clive Bates, Sustainable Futures
- Kathryn Bishop, Non-Executive Director
- Elan Closs Stephens, Non-Executive Director
- James Turner, Non-Executive Director

Source: [wales.gov.uk/about/managementboard/membership](http://wales.gov.uk/about/managementboard/membership)



Gillian Morgan at work in her office. Photo: John Briggs

between climate change and jobs, or between social policy and housing.”

The strongest indication of a change to a more can-do approach was the Assembly Government’s swift response to the recession. Gill Morgan cited the £48m ProAct scheme, in which companies on short time working can receive up to £4,000 per employee as a wage and training subsidy to keep them in employment. As at October 2009, £15m had been allocated to 115 companies across Wales supporting 6,000 people, with help for another 6,000 or so in the pipeline.

The scheme has won plaudits from elsewhere in the UK and across the European Union, with the Financial Times, for instance, running headlines such as ‘Wales creates envy in the Midlands’. As Gill Morgan said, “It’s notable that Scotland has followed our example with ScotAct, and England is still trying to find a way to emulate what

we have achieved despite two attempts.”

Rhodri Morgan declared the scheme a remarkable tribute to the Welsh bureaucracy. As he told the National Assembly in September, “I had never come across a scheme that had gone from being an idea thrown across the table between the Welsh Manufacturing Forum and Ministers, to being implemented, with application forms out there, in the space of about two months, which included the Christmas and New Year break. For a peacetime bureaucracy at work, that showed an extraordinary level of agility and commitment on the part of our officials.”

In part Gill Morgan attributes the success to her streamlining of the bureaucracy she found at the top of the Welsh Government 18 months ago. “We had a Management Board with more than 20 people around a table,” she said. “That’s a conference, not a management group.” Her response was to slash them

to eight Directors General, excluding the three non-executive Directors. “We needed people whose job was joining up policy and thinking across portfolios,” she explained. “I was determined to attack the silo culture. Now everyone is urged to think of joining up policy.”

The new Directors General link into the Cabinet’s Committee structure, comprising:

- Children and Young People
- Climate Change
- Public Service Delivery
- Regeneration, Skills and Tackling Economic Inactivity
- Strategic Capital Investment

The creation of Directors General, at Deputy Permanent Secretary level, was also a deliberate way of engaging more effectively with civil service departments in Whitehall. Compared with Whitehall departments the Welsh

Government, made up of 6,000 civil servants, is relatively small. As Gill Morgan said, “Our people tend to be taking on responsibilities at two grades below civil servants in London with the same functions and tend to be 10 to 15 years younger.

“The civil service is notoriously hierarchical and it is very difficult to achieve an effective dialogue between civil servants of different grades. It’s easy for people in England to stereotype us as the weaker partner. I want us to stop England seeing us as the younger sister or brother.”

“What I have been struck by in my first year as Permanent Secretary is a lack of genuine commitment to devolution and a culture of arrogance in some Whitehall departments. In many respects Wales is off the radar in London. I believe the restructuring of our management structure, with the creation of more Directors General will go some way to tackle that.”

She adds that as a result of her reorganisation there are now six fewer senior posts with a saving of £500,000 a year. More generally, she says there should be a greater sharing of back-office functions across the public service, especially finance, HR and procurement.

Procurement is a good example where a cross-cutting approach should deliver dividends. “Across the whole of Wales we only have 150 people trained in procurement. Yet this is an area where, by working across departments and the whole of the Welsh public service, including health and local government, we have an opportunity to save a good deal of money.”

Saving money will be a major preoccupation for the Assembly Government in the coming years as the spending squeeze kicks in. Gill Morgan has made it clear that she is looking for strategic savings rather than a percentage

cut across the board. How was she responding to calls that the cutbacks meant we should take another look at the efficiencies of 22 local authorities?

“If you reorganise you lose three years. You’ll spend your life searching out where the deck chairs were three years ago. Personally I’ve been scarred by the number of reorganisations I lived through whilst working in the NHS. In England I believe they’ve had 34 reorganisations since 1948.

“The real 21<sup>st</sup> Century public services question is how to co-ordinate the total public sector spend by the whole raft of agencies, organisations and departments within discrete geographical areas. If you can get a handle on that and start some cross-cutting collaboration you can begin to rationalise paying for administrative overheads and achieve real savings.”

But what about the recent reorganisation of the 22 Local Health Boards, which have been culled into seven Boards – a

Confederation, the body that represents hospitals, mental health, ambulance and primary care trusts in Wales, England and Northern Ireland.

Born in Ynyshtir in the Rhondda she was brought up in Hampshire and Lincolnshire and then qualified as a doctor at University College, London. She became a hospital physician and GP before climbing the NHS management ladder that led to the NHS Confederation. She sees being Permanent Secretary in Wales as the next logical step.

The defining moment of her career came while working as a registrar physician at Clatterbridge hospital on the Wirral. She remembers a particular patient, a retired headmistress and pillar of a village community, who began to show the early signs of dementia. “The whole village wrapped itself around her to provide support.” She might have lived on happily for years, but her prospects plummeted after she was admitted to hospital with an acute lung condition.

Doctors dealt skillfully with the emergency, but she was given sleeping

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**“What I have been struck by in my first year as Permanent Secretary is a lack of genuine commitment to devolution and a culture of arrogance in some Whitehall departments.”**

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pattern some are saying will soon be followed by local government? “The NHS is different to local government,” she replied. “There is always a drive to get more clinicians into management. We never had a sufficient cohort of managers to administer a structure of 22 local health authorities. You need a critical mass of management to manage what is an increasingly complex and technocratic system.”

Gill Morgan has brought a breath of fresh air into the corridors of Cathays Park. Part of the reason is that, though she has a detailed knowledge of its inner workings, she is not a career civil servant. Before taking up the reins in Cardiff she spent six years as head of the NHS

pills to stop her disturbing other patients in the ward where she was recuperating. This exacerbated the dementia. “If we had got that lady out of hospital in two or three days, she would have gone back to being a pillar of her village. Instead, it took me a year to get her rehabilitated on a geriatric care ward. It was an incredible success of medical intensive treatment and an incredible disaster in terms of care.”

This is what Gill Morgan means by the challenge of joining up government. She says she has five years to see it working in Wales, five years in which the devolution experience will be put to the test as never before.

John Osmond is Director of the IWA.

Dafydd Wigley outlines the options for when to hold a referendum on extending the Assembly's powers

# Good timing

There are now three moments when a referendum on giving the National Assembly primary legislative powers, under Part 4 of the 2006 Wales Act, could be held:

1. After the forthcoming Westminster General Election, expected in May 2010, but before the next National Assembly Election.
2. On the same day as the Assembly Election in May 2011.
3. After the Assembly Election of 2011.

Of course, in considering the date the most important aspect is to choose a time when a 'Yes' vote is most likely to be carried. We must bear in mind the various factors that can have a bearing on this. Firstly, international experience shows that voters very often use a Referendum to punish the government of the day. Secondly the economic crisis has created uncertainty and this is likely to worsen.

Thirdly, many Labour MPs are against giving law making powers to the Assembly. We must remember how the 1979 Referendum was lost, partly because Neil Kinnock and his colleagues persuaded voters that devolution was Plaid Cymru's policy. We must also remember how the 1997 Referendum was won, with Ron Davies persuading Labour supporters that devolution was in fact Labour policy. At all costs we must avoid the danger of people thinking that it is Plaid Cymru's policy of independence that is at stake this time. The day will come when we can vote on independence: but not yet!

Fourthly, Conservative voters are more opposed to law making powers



than are Conservative AMs in the Assembly, with the potential that Conservative AMs who support full law making powers could be put in a very difficult position.

All these factors must be borne in mind as we try to establish the ideal time for holding the Referendum.

Before considering the options, it is worth summarising the statutory provisions for holding a Referendum, as they have a direct impact on the possible dates. There are complications with regard to the timetable that arise from both the Government of Wales Act 2006 and from the Political Parties, Elections and Referendum Act of 2000. The steps in this process are:

- A motion calling for a Referendum has to be passed by the National Assembly, with at least two thirds of AMs voting for it.
- The Secretary for Wales then undertakes a consultation process and, if he determines he will take the matter forward, within 120 days he has to place a draft Order authorising a referendum before both the House of Commons and House of Lords. The draft Order includes details of the question, the date on which the Referendum will be held and what is called the 'Referendum Period', the time which is allowed for groupings in support and against the Referendum proposals to be formed

and recognised. The draft Order also has to be placed before the Assembly.

- The Secretary for Wales has the right, after consultation, also to refuse the application for a Referendum. If so he has to give a reply in writing to the First Minister of Wales, with the reasons for the refusal, and this also has to be completed within 120 days of the original application.
- If the Secretary for Wales places an Order before the House of Commons and House of Lords, there will then need to be a further 40 day period before it becomes effective – assuming neither Chamber intends to vote against it.
- Then the Assembly, again, has to vote with a two thirds majority to recommend the draft Order.

This means it could take up to 160 days for a decision to be taken. This would be followed by an open ended period – at least 30 and probably nearer 60 days – before the Referendum can be held.

In practice this means to all intents and purposes that a period of at least three months, and more likely 6 months, will elapse between a decision by the Assembly to call a Referendum and the date on which the Referendum takes place. This is assuming that neither the House of Commons nor the House of Lords nor the Secretary of State block the process from going forward. How do these rules affect the options for a date for the Referendum?

### 1. After the Westminster Election but before the Assembly Election in 2011

There are significant advantages in this option. The last day for holding a Westminster General Election is in early June 2010 and this would still enable a Referendum to be held in the autumn of 2010. That is, unless the British Government deliberately delays the process; and of course a new Conservative Government might well be tempted to do exactly that.

Assuming that the General Election in fact takes place on the most likely date, Thursday, 7 May 2010, and that the process of calling a Referendum is started immediately after that election, it would be possible to ensure a Referendum sometime during the autumn, between early September and late November 2010.

If there is opposition from the newly elected Government at Westminster to the idea of holding a snap Referendum, then quite clearly they can prevent this from happening. But I wonder whether they would want that? They would be seen as frustrating the democratic wishes of Wales if they were to drag their feet. In itself this could strengthen the case for a 'Yes' vote, and it would certainly be harmful for the prospects of the Conservatives in the Assembly Election of May 2011.

If it was possible to hold a Referendum in October or November 2010, what would be the arguments in favour and against this from the viewpoint of securing a 'Yes' vote? The arguments in favour include:

- a) Holding the Referendum in advance of the forthcoming Assembly election would ensure that the party political contest would not drown debate on the issue of more powers.
- b) The electors would hardly regard the Referendum as an opportunity to punish the Government of the day,

since they had just had an opportunity to do that a few months earlier.

- c) If there is a Conservative Government at Westminster, the Labour Members who oppose law making powers for the Assembly will be open to the accusation that they would rather accept Conservative laws from London than those proposed by a Labour-led Government in Cardiff.
- d) The Plaid Cymru and Labour groups in the Assembly would be able to co-operate more easily for a 'Yes' vote at that time than they could during a period leading to a General Election at Westminster or the Election at the National Assembly.
- e) In being free from elections, the media would be more likely to give greater attention to the arguments relating to the Referendum.
- f) If it were possible to have a definitive vote – one way or the other – before December 2010, it would allow the parties thereafter to prepare their election manifestos for May 2011 knowing exactly what would be the powers of the Assembly for the following four year period.
- g) Such a timing would allow Conservative Members in the Assembly who want to support a 'Yes' vote to do so.

There are of course arguments against holding the Referendum in the autumn of 2010 and they include:

- a) If the Labour Party has just lost a General Election, there will be a bloody internal feuding, and Labour will possibly be in the middle of choosing a successor to Gordon Brown as their Leader at Westminster.
- b) In holding back until the autumn of 2010, it is likely that Rhodri Morgan will have retired – but that his successor will not have had an opportunity to make his mark.
- c) A Conservative Government could

argue that a Referendum was part of 'Labour's old business' and that the electors had declared they wanted a fresh start.

- d) As they would then be out of office, some of the Labour former Ministers, who would have had to keep quiet whilst in a job, would be free to argue against lawmaking powers – people like Paul Murphy, Wayne David, Chris Bryant and Glenys Kinnock.

But having said all this, I suspect that the arguments in favour of holding a Referendum in the autumn of 2010 – were that possible – are substantially stronger than the counter arguments.

### 2. The same day as the Assembly Elections in May 2011

Some people have been mesmerised by the possibility of holding a Referendum on the same day as the Assembly Elections in May 2011. The arguments are:

- a) It would save money.
- b) If there has been a change of Government at Westminster, the new Government will be that much more unpopular. Voting 'Yes' in the Referendum would provide an opportunity to kick the Conservative Government in London.
- c) If the Welsh Labour Party campaigns in favour of a 'Yes' vote, as part of their electoral platform, it would be difficult for Labour Members to campaign against their own Government in the middle of such an election campaign.
- d) It would be possible to combine the 'Yes' vote for legislative powers, with those items of legislation which the parties have in their election manifesto – and for people to see the connection between a 'Yes' vote in the Referendum and the legislative consequences in the next Assembly.
- e) By that time the legislative programme of the Conservatives in



the House of Commons will be clearer, and the electors will be aware of the opportunity they have, by virtue of transferring lawmaking powers to the Assembly, to break free from such a right wing legislative programme at Westminster.

On the other hand there are arguments – quite strong ones – against holding a Referendum on the same day as the election to the Assembly:

- a) The attitudes of the parties will be determined by electorate considerations and not by the Referendum.
- b) UKIP, which is against giving the Assembly lawmaking powers, will see their opportunity and are likely to put more candidates in the constituencies in addition to those they have on the regional lists.
- c) Conservative candidates would be more likely to support a ‘No’ vote in order to avoid losing votes to UKIP.
- d) Plaid Cymru would be in the difficult position of having to defend the record of their coalition Government with Labour; having to stand shoulder to shoulder with Labour in advocating a ‘Yes’ vote in the Referendum; and then trying to take votes off Labour in the election on the same day. It would be a nightmare for Plaid canvassers.
- e) The Referendum on the future of Wales would take place on the same day as the Parliamentary elections in Scotland – and the attention of the media in London will be on independence in that context. This might confuse electors in the Referendum in Wales as to whether it is independence on which they would be voting (as happened in 1979).
- f) The leadership of the Labour Party in Wales – including those who support a ‘Yes’ vote – would be tempted to play down considerations of the Referendum, since their priority inevitably will be to win the election and to remain as the party leading the Government of Wales.

Taking all these considerations into account, I believe that holding a Referendum on the same day as the Assembly Election would play into the hands of those opposed to extending the Assembly’s powers.

The final option would be:

### 3. To hold the Referendum after May 2011

The arguments for a Referendum after May 2011 are all the arguments for holding the Referendum in October or November 2010 – namely that the Referendum would not get mixed up with either an Election to Westminster or those to the National Assembly. A Conservative Government (if there is one) will by then be even more unpopular and so Labour voters are more likely to support a ‘Yes’ vote in the Referendum.

On the other hand, a Conservative Government could turn their backs on the 2006 Act as the basis for constitutional development, in favour of putting in its place their own policies for changing the constitution in a way that would reduce the number of Welsh MPs in the House of Commons. Also, the debate concerning independence for Scotland will by that time be at its peak, confusing the issues at stake in the Referendum in Wales. The new leadership of the Labour Party (both in Cardiff and at Westminster) will be in place and we do not know what will be their attitude towards the Referendum question.

So where does all this leave us? My choice would undoubtedly be to hold a Referendum during the Autumn of 2010. If it was possible to organise this – somehow or other – then quite definitely that is the date towards which we should aim.

But there is one other consideration – one that has had very little attention – that could make a Referendum in the Autumn that much more practical. This came to my mind as I read Peter Hain’s

remarks in an interview with *Golwg* in early August. Questioned about the fate of Assembly Legislative Competence Orders which may be before Westminster when a General Election is called, he was asked whether they would automatically fall.

His response was, “If we reach the point where a number of such Orders are well on their way towards being approved, I believe that we could say to the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats – ‘Look, don’t block this since it is the Government of Wales who have asked for it.’”

So, if it were that the Assembly, say, was to make an opening bid for a Referendum in February of next year, and that that application was half way through the system I have outlined by March or April when Parliament is about to be disbanded for a General Election, then the door would be open for Hain to say to the Conservatives, using his own words, “Look – don’t block it.”

If Peter Hain were to get his way, the Order would therefore be approved during the last days of Gordon Brown’s Government and the right to arrange the Referendum would then pass over to the National Assembly, to be held once the Westminster Election is out of the way. If the Order passed by the National Assembly in February stipulates September as the preferred date for a Referendum, that would allow a six month period, enabling both sides to prepare and the administration to be put in place.

In other words it would be totally practical. Working in this way would avoid the uncertainty which would arise relating to the attitude of a new Conservative Secretary of State if they won the Election – and the unacceptable possibility of seeing a Conservative Secretary of State blocking the whole operation.

Dafydd Wigley is Honorary President of Plaid Cymru.

# Infant Parliament

Adrian Crompton provides an insider's view of law-making in the National Assembly

Richard Roger's Senedd Building in Cardiff Bay.

**The first two years of the operation of Part 3 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 is only long enough to permit a preliminary view as to the effectiveness of the new powers. There will also be differing views as to how effectiveness might be defined.**

**However, it would seem reasonable to begin with an assessment based on a comparison of what has now proved possible under Part 3 with the previous history of parliamentary legislation for Wales before devolution, and under the form of devolution established by the Government of Wales Act 1998.**

Between 1945 and 1999 the UK Parliament passed only 11 Acts which applied solely to Wales, an average of approximately one every five years. Between 1999 and 2007, there were a further eight 'Wales-only' Acts, including the Government of Wales Act 2006. This was an average of one 'Welsh' Act each year. In addition there was an increase in the number of Acts containing substantially separate provisions in relation to Wales.

In the two years since the commencement of the 2006 Act, four Assembly Measures have been made and a fifth is currently awaiting Royal Approval. So far, all Measures made have been proposed by the Welsh

Government and have been based on competence conferred directly by an Act of Parliament.

Typically, these Measures have taken around nine months to complete their passage through the Assembly. The NHS Redress Measure - the first to be passed - took 11 months, the Learner Travel Measure six months, the Learning and Skills Measure nine months and the latest to be passed - the Local Government Measure - took eight months. The Measure awaiting Royal Approval is the first Member-proposed Measure to have been passed by the Assembly. A further six proposed Measures are currently under consideration, two of which are proposed by individual Members (rather than the Government) and one by an Assembly Committee.

So, over the first two years of operation of Part 3 of the 2006 Act the volume of Wales-only primary legislation has doubled compared with the previous position under the 1998 Act.

To date, four Welsh Government proposed Legislative Competence Orders have been made conferring legislative powers on the Assembly. Another nine Orders have undergone pre-legislative scrutiny in Cardiff, including two which have been proposed by backbench Members. Typically, the time from the introduction of a proposed Order to the

completion of initial pre-legislative scrutiny by an Assembly Committee is around 12 weeks. This is, of course, just one part of a process involving pre-legislative scrutiny by Westminster committees, extensive inter-governmental negotiation and consideration of a final draft version by the Assembly and both Houses. The four Orders that have been made took 10 months, 13 months, 18 months and 12 months respectively to complete the journey from introduction in the Assembly to being made by the Queen in Council.

Since the commencement of the 2006 Act, the scrutiny of Orders, both in the Assembly and Westminster, has evolved. In the early days, Orders were introduced into the Assembly before Whitehall agreement had been completed and so pre-legislative scrutiny by the Welsh Affairs Select Committee occurred after that in the Assembly. However, more recently pre-legislative scrutiny has taken place more or less in parallel with Assembly and the Commons committees working together, formally and informally, to share evidence and their thinking.

The increasing engagement of other parliamentary committees - most notably the House of Lords Constitution Committee and the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments - has further illustrated the different perspectives and expertise that the

process as a whole brings to the scrutiny of each piece of legislation.

Legislative Competence Orders are not the only mechanism by which the Assembly can acquire further powers. Framework clauses within UK Bills also provide an avenue for the devolution of powers to the National Assembly for Wales. Three Bills containing such clauses were enacted during the 2007-08 session of the UK Parliament (the Education and Skills, Local Transport, and Planning Acts) and a further two are included in the UK Government Legislative Programme for 2008-09 – the Local Democracy, Community Empowerment and Construction Bill and the Marine and Coastal Access Bill.

The picture, therefore, is one of steadily-expanding legislative competence via two distinct routes. When the Government of Wales Act became law in July 2006, it conferred powers on the Assembly in relation to six Matters. Fast forward to September 2009 and the number has grown to 45 Matters of which 13 have been added or amended by Legislative Competence Orders originating in the Assembly. The remaining Matters have derived from the conversion of framework powers in place prior to 2006 (11 Matters, one of which has been amended by LCO) and directly from Acts passed by Parliament since 2006 (22 Matters).

Although undeniable progress has been made in terms of the volume of Welsh legislation, criticisms of its scrutiny have been well rehearsed. Against this evolving backdrop, the Assembly has made important procedural changes to address the rising legislative workload and its committees have sought innovative ways to increase public involvement in making laws for Wales.

For example, the Committee scrutinising the proposed Healthy Eating in Schools Measure felt it was important to consult with children and young people who would be affected by the legislation. Questionnaires were sent to a ten per cent sample of schools in Wales to assess the

views of pupils. Over 700 responses were received which informed the development of the Committee's report.

The Assembly has established five permanent legislation committees, each with an independent, non-voting Chair. Prior to this, a separate committee was created to examine each individual piece of legislation as it passed through the Assembly. Whilst that ad hoc system carried some advantages in the potential policy expertise of the Members assigned, it proved inefficient in the use of Member and committee time. Now, no time is lost in establishing and timetabling a committee each time a piece of legislation is introduced. There can be better management of the flow of legislation through the Assembly and the new system has also established a body of Members and Chairs with increasing expertise in the specialised task of legislative scrutiny.

Most recently, the Assembly's Subordinate Legislation Committee completed an examination of how it can best contribute to the legislative role of the Assembly. The Committee's remit is a wide one – encompassing the work undertaken by five separate committees in Westminster – and allows it to do far more than the 'technical' scrutiny of Statutory Instruments and the consideration of delegated powers in Measures that has traditionally been its staple. Potentially, it is one of the most powerful and influential of the Assembly's committees and it has made a series of recommendations designed to plug some of the gaps that currently exist in the scrutiny of Statutory Instruments, European legislation and the effect of UK Bills passing through Westminster.

The Committee will also begin to examine the 'merits' of some individual instruments, that is consideration of their political or legal importance, the extent to which they achieve policy objectives and whether they implement EU legislation appropriately. Statutory Instruments brought forward as a result of powers given to Welsh Ministers in

Assembly Measures will be of particular interest to the Committee. It will check whether Welsh Ministers have addressed any concerns flagged up regarding their delegated powers during the legislative passage of a Measure.

Generally, the National Assembly has no formal part to play in the processes either of conferring legislative competence on the Assembly through UK Bills, or in the delegation of powers from the UK Parliament to Welsh Ministers, even though Welsh Ministers will be accountable to the Assembly and not to Parliament for how they use those powers. One exception is the requirement in the Assembly's Standing Orders for the Welsh Government to seek the Assembly's consent to the inclusion in UK Bills of provisions within, or having a negative impact on, the legislative competence of the Assembly. The Subordinate Legislation Committee has recommended more detailed scrutiny of such Legislative Consent Motions through the relevant Committee. This would require the Welsh Government to bring forward the relevant motion and accompanying memorandum earlier than is the current norm.

And to adopt a more proactive approach to the examination of powers being conferred by UK Bills on Welsh Ministers and the Assembly, the Committee is now seeking to:

- Identify powers in UK Bills which relate to Wales and consider whether any powers conferred on the Secretary of State should be conferred on Welsh Ministers.
- Consider, where powers have been conferred on Welsh Ministers within a UK Bill, whether procedures for making subordinate legislation are appropriate.
- Consider whether the Welsh Government should seek Measure-making powers, as opposed to delegated powers for Ministers, when Bills relate to fields within Schedule 5 to the 2006 Act.

The Committee has already begun this work by reporting on a number of UK Bills, including the Equality Bill and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill, which would confer powers on Welsh Ministers. These reports highlight the Committee's view that the Welsh Government ought to be taking advantage of the opportunities offered to seek Measure-making powers for the Assembly. Whether committee recommendations for change in UK Bills are acted upon will, of course, be a matter for the Welsh and UK Governments and for Parliament rather than the Assembly.

As the relatively new Welsh legislative system beds down, so too the Assembly's fledgling procedures will adapt to changing needs. In the background is the work of the All Wales Convention and the decision as to whether there should be a referendum on transition from Part 3 of the 2006 Act (legislation by incremental acquisition of competence and Measures) to Part 4 (legislation by Acts of the Assembly across the whole of the devolved fields of policy).

It is crucially important to understand that a change from legislation by Assembly Measure (the current situation) to legislation by Acts of the Assembly under Part 4 of the Act would not affect the nature of the legislative work that Members and the Assembly's staff are already doing. In addition, a transition from Measures to Acts would mean that the scrutiny of proposed Legislative Competence Orders would no longer be needed, thereby freeing up resources currently used to support that activity. The staff of the National Assembly for Wales is fully equipped either for a continuation of the constitutional status quo or, alternatively, for the coming into force of Part 4 of the Act, if the Welsh electorate should so decide.

**Adrian Crompton** is Director of Business, the National Assembly for Wales

## 2 | Assembly Special

# Legislative fog

Marie Navarro and David Lambert probe the boundaries of the National Assembly's powers

**The recent publication of the 'Revised' proposal for an Environmental Protection and Waste Management Legislative Competence Order (LCO) raises the important question as to what exactly are the Part 4 legislative powers of the Assembly on which the voters of Wales might be asked to vote. Do the powers consist solely of the statutory descriptions together with their exceptions as set out on the face of Schedule 7 to the 2006 Act? Or are there further exceptions, which may be of such importance as to require full investigation before the people of Wales are invited to vote in the referendum?**

The Part 4 powers contained in Schedule 7 are certainly more clearly expressed than the powers which the Assembly currently has under the current system of legislative powers under Part 3 and Schedule 5 to the Act.

Schedule 5 demonstrates the current recurring problem of ascertaining the boundaries of devolved and retained powers. This is shown in the various attempts to come up with exceptions to Matters (the Matters being the legislative powers of the Assembly). The first Matters were very narrowly defined and precise without exceptions. Then exceptions to Matters were introduced. Subsequently the exceptions were regrouped in a table at the end of Part 1 of the Schedule 5 and since June this year a new system of three types of exceptions has been devised:

- Specific exceptions, relating only to particular Matters.

- Floating exceptions, applying to all Matters.
- Exceptions to the exceptions, or carve-outs.

These are the provisions contained for example in the draft Environmental LCO which has over four pages of specific exceptions for three Matters. This contrasts with Schedule 7 (the potential extended legislative powers of the Assembly) which at first appears to be a model of clarity, as it shows no exceptions and a clear list of devolved topics.

The analysis in the July report of the Assembly Legislation Committee No 4 of the draft Environmental LCO states that, "The effect of the volume and complexity of these new exceptions will make it extremely difficult for the public... to be clear where the boundaries of the National Assembly's legislative competence will lie."

In this regard we fully agree with Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Chair of the All Wales Convention, in his 21 August interview with the Western Mail that, "Law needs to be clear. It needs to be accessible. That means having some clarity about what is the law and who has the power to change the law." The Environmental LCO fails all these tests.

A particular reason for its complexity, given by the Assembly Minister for the Environment to the Assembly Committee, was that it was necessary to "follow precisely the boundary between the current executive functions of the Welsh Ministers and of UK Ministers". A legal adviser to the Welsh Government told the Committee that the exceptions had been "negotiated" with the UK

Government. And the Minister further added that Government “also has been able to give sufficient comfort to our colleagues in Westminster with regard to those powers being granted”.

The problem about the latest sets of exceptions is that they are based on the same concept as the Government of Wales Act 1998, which is a system of executive devolution. Described as ‘a process not an event’ this system relied on continuing negotiations between the Welsh Government and Whitehall as to the repartition of executive competencies. The result of these discussions would then be reflected in new Acts of Parliament devolving executive powers to Wales. This meant that devolved competencies were changing continually to meet the changing needs of the administrations.

Yet this is not in any way a system suited to legislative devolution. This is because legislative powers make it necessary to have clarity as to the law and who has the power to change the law.

Moreover, inbuilt in the 2006 Act is a further inherent problem. Unlike the devolution settlements of Northern Ireland and Scotland, in the case of Wales the powers reserved to central government are not comprehensively set out on the face of the Act. This is a problem which is common to both Schedule 5 and Schedule 7. It arises from the parallel Parts 2 of the Schedules which contain restrictions or exceptions on the legislation functions of the Assembly. These override all the provisions of Assembly competence in Parts 1, namely that the Assembly cannot legislate to remove or modify any function of a Minister of the Crown which existed prior to the commencement of Part 3 and Schedule 5, or of Part 4 and Schedule 7 without their consent. In turn this means that whatever the number of specific exceptions which are being created in Schedule 5 Part 1, there is also Part 2 of the Schedule to take into account.

What we have in Schedule 7 is a miscellaneous and by no means



comprehensive list of policy subjects (similar to Matters) with or without the exceptions to the Assembly's legislative competence under the 20 Fields. Not all Fields have exceptions, the Field of Environment being an example.

However, the absence of exceptions or the absence of a list of specific exceptions does not mean that the Assembly has all powers in the 20 Fields. This is because of Part 2 of Schedule 7.

These Part 2 Ministerial functions, which restrict the powers of the Assembly, are simply not known. Some of these restrictions may be reflected in general terms in Schedules 5 and 7, as listed specific exceptions to specific Fields or Matters; or as floating exceptions in Schedule 5. However, it is not known whether these exceptions follow precisely the boundary between the executive functions of Welsh Ministers and those of UK Ministers.

So, for example, without a full analysis of all the current legislation relating to environment and waste management, it would not be possible to know whether the exceptions set out in the current Environmental LCO reflect all or just some of the powers retained by central government in relation to the three Matters described. Consideration of the Energy Act 2008, which is not an

Act which is immediately associated with the Environment, controls certain deposits made in the sea. It is not clear from the specific or floating exceptions made in the draft environmental LCO that the exception in the Energy Act is reflected in the LCO exceptions. However the exception still applies because of Part 2 of Schedule 5.

What an extraordinary situation that after four pages of specific exceptions and three different types of exceptions in this LCO, the full extent of the legislative competence of the Assembly under this LCO is still not known. Multiply this by 20 Fields and it cannot possibly be said that there is any clarity as to who has the power to change the law in Wales in the devolved Fields under Schedule 5. Schedule 7 is not immune to the problems arising under Schedule 5.

It is not clear to what extent the exceptions stated in the Environmental LCO in Schedule 5 would apply to Schedule 7. There are no listed exceptions to the Field of Environment in Schedule 7. The only exception governing the powers of the Assembly in relation to Environment under Schedule 7 is therefore the Part 2 general restriction relating to the functions of a Minister of a Crown. Without detailed analysis it is not known whether these specific exceptions

in the current draft Environment LCO are wider than "the functions of a Minister of the Crown"; nor is it known what they are or whether such excepted functions are comprehensive. The example of the Energy Act seems to show that the specific exceptions are not comprehensive.

There is another problem about Schedules 5 and 7, illustrated by the statement from the Attorney General's Office that criminal law is not generally devolved. It was this that prevented the Assembly from having legislative competence over the smacking of children in Wales. This illustrates a possible approach by the UK Government that the functions of UK Ministers are to be defined not only by specific powers in Acts of Parliament but also by reference to generic subjects or 'Retained Fields' for which there is no list. While criminal law is not a devolved Field, aspects of the subject area are available to the Assembly to enable it to enforce its policies.

If a referendum on further powers was won another problem would need to be resolved. This is whether all or some of the recently added specific and floating exceptions to Schedule 5 will transfer to schedule 7 or if they will disappear altogether. This is particularly important as in due course the people of Wales will be asked to vote as to whether the Schedule 7 powers should become the Assembly's legislative powers. However, as with the existing Schedule 5 powers, the extent of Schedule 7 powers is not known precisely.

Surely Wales deserves much more clarification, not only to its legislative competence boundaries, but also on what precisely the people of Wales will be asked to vote upon in a referendum on moving to Part 4 and Schedule 7 of the 2006 Wales Act.

Marie Navarro is a Research Associate and David Lambert a Research Fellow with Cardiff Law School.

### 3 | Assembly Special

# Clearing lines of communication

Peter Hain says the Assembly's new powers are delivering much more than their critics allow

**Wales has benefitted from devolution – a nation quite transformed from the one we all knew twelve years ago. That transformation needs to continue if we are to thrive in the years to come. But, as the prickly history of Welsh devolution demonstrates, it will be threatened if the pace of change is forced too hard or opponents of devolution are allowed to bring the process to a juddering halt.**

Under the new system delivered by the 2006 Government of Wales Act the Welsh Assembly Government request that powers be devolved to the Assembly through Legislative Competence Orders – or 'LCOs' as they are more popularly known – when they need legislative competence to deliver a particular policy aim, and when there is no suitable vehicle in the UK's legislative programme.

In addition, it can request the inclusion of Framework Powers clauses in Parliamentary Bills which essentially do the same job as LCOs, giving legislative competence to the National Assembly and enabling the Welsh Assembly Government to deliver its policy commitments, but in a much more 'permissive' way than had occurred with clauses in Westminster Bills before.

Contrary to criticisms, the new system is no more complex than our system of legislating in Westminster or other purpose-built legislatures like the US Congress. It is much more

straightforward than the legislative processes of the European Union.

There are those with an axe to grind who say that the system is too time-consuming and slow. But again, it is only in an emergency that a Parliamentary Bill would complete its proceedings much quicker than an LCO. Critics neglect to mention that we have put in place a flexible system of devolving powers to the Assembly that allows many LCOs and Framework Powers to progress in parallel. The upshot is that we are able to devolve far more powers, far more quickly under the new system than the old system of primary legislation.

And what do the detractors offer as an alternative? A return to the system we had previously, where we had to fight hard to get just one 'Wales-only' Bill in the annual UK legislative programme? Or a premature leap to full law-making powers via a referendum in which YES supporters like me would be defeated? These alternatives are either undesirable or impractical.

Other critics challenge as impudent or somehow 'anti-Welsh' the scrutiny process in Parliament. But in devolving legislative competence from Parliament to the Assembly, it is perfectly right and proper that Parliament ensures through proper scrutiny that the legislation is clear and achieves its declared purpose. Being over-hasty makes for bad legislation and bad government.

There is plenty of evidence that such scrutiny has improved the drafting of an

LCO. For example, in the case of the Welsh Language LCO, the scrutiny undertaken by the Welsh Affairs Select Committee has resulted in changes to the Order to ensure that Welsh language duties are imposed in a reasonable and proportionate way.

However, I freely admit that we could have done things much better at the



“Contrary to criticisms, the new system is no more complex than our system of legislating in Westminster ...”

outset. The desire to show immediate momentum in 2007 meant that some of the early Orders lacked precision and were not underpinned by clear objectives. Consultation with UK Government Departments before LCOs were launched had been practically non-existent.

Criticism has inevitably focused on the larger LCOs – notably Housing and Environment – published when the process was in its infancy and which ran into difficulty. Unsurprisingly, each has presented particular challenges. Nonetheless these have been, or are being, overcome, such as agreeing the content of the Assembly’s powers in complex and technical areas of policy and defining where the boundaries of those powers should be.

As the House of Commons Welsh Affairs Select Committee – a committee whose members represent all four political parties in Wales – commented, the “process is working well and increasingly so over time”. In just two years four LCOs have been delivered dealing with additional learning needs, non-residential domiciliary care, vulnerable children and child poverty, and the Welsh red meat industry. This is twice the amount of legislation made under the old system.

A further eight LCOs are in the

pipeline – either as draft LCOs awaiting approval by Parliament and the Assembly, or proposed LCOs subject to pre-legislative scrutiny by the Welsh Affairs Select Committee and a committee of the National Assembly. These LCOs cover a wide range of policy areas including local government, the Welsh language, mental health, carers,

waste and environmental protection.

Since 2006, seven Acts of Parliament have included framework powers, devolving powers to the Assembly on subjects as diverse as health, planning, education and skills, local government and local transport. Two Bills in the current Parliamentary session include four framework powers enabling the Assembly to legislate for better access to the Welsh coast and for a path around the coast, and on the way in which Welsh councils are organised. Again, massively more powers being delivered much more quickly than before.

Once made these further LCOs and framework powers will represent up to three times the legislation for Wales passed at Westminster under the old system over an equivalent period. Devolution has delivered powers for the Assembly in a total of 45 different areas since the new legislation of 2006. This is massively more than before, more than six times more powers than under the 1998 Act.

However, like any other, this process can be fine-tuned and indeed already has been to make it quicker and better. For example, the whole process is now subject to far more rigorous project management to ensure LCOs are agreed between the Welsh Assembly and UK Governments

to agreed timescales. Back in 2007, when the LCO process began, there was far too much of a ‘them and us’ culture, both in Cardiff and around Whitehall. The two Governments were not talking to each other freely enough about their respective aims and concerns for each LCO. As a result some early LCOs were published without all aspects having been agreed.

Things are very different now. We have London and Cardiff working together from the start of the process. Project teams are established, comprising officials from the Welsh Assembly Government and Whitehall departments, to steer the process of agreeing the LCO and work through any thorny issues before they could develop into serious problems. A timetable for reaching agreement on an LCO is decided by the team, informed by the Welsh Assembly Government’s legislative programme, with clear milestones in place for each stage of the process.

This early engagement between Cardiff Bay and Whitehall has meant that the lines of communication are much clearer than before, and that information is better shared between the two Governments. This tighter management of the process has, in turn, resulted in more concisely drafted proposals agreed jointly between the Welsh Assembly Government, the Wales Office and the relevant Whitehall departments. They have specified clearer boundaries to the competence and set out a clearer rationale for the powers being sought.

These changes have meant that LCOs are moving through the system far more quickly than before. They are tighter and have a clearer scope. Most importantly, they are moving forward in a spirit of shared endeavour, with London and Cardiff working together closely and co-operatively to deliver the powers that Wales needs.

**Peter Hain** is Secretary of State for Wales. This is an extract from a speech he delivered to the Wales Governance Centre at Cardiff University on 29 October 2009.

# Spending trauma

Eurfyl ap Gwilym says the Welsh Government should look for alternative sources of funding to plug cuts in its budget over the coming years

Everyone knows that public expenditure will come under great pressure during the coming years. Given the current economic uncertainties, forecasting is a hazardous exercise.

The latest example of the pressure on public expenditure was demonstrated with the publication of the draft Welsh Government budget for 2010-11 on 5 October. It states that the Departmental Expenditure Limit for Wales for 2010-11 is £15.7bn. However, the sums allocated to the main expenditure groups show a year on year reduction of 0.5 per cent to £15.11bn compared with the corresponding total of £15.19bn in

2009-10. In practice the *real* reduction will be higher because taking the Treasury's estimate of the GDP deflator next year of 1.5 per cent implies a *real* cut in Wales's budget of 2.0 per cent. These estimates exclude the allocation to reserves (see Table 1).

Reductions in planned spending have arisen from UK budget decisions. As can be seen the cuts in spending in 2010-11 will be concentrated on departmental capital investment, with a reduction of 21 per cent compared with this year. Some 7 per cent of this reduction is due to the bringing forward of investment into earlier years. Current expenditure will grow by 2.1 per cent in *nominal* terms and

0.6 per cent in *real* terms (that is, after taking account of inflation).

The capital reserves for 2009-10 and 2010-11 include funds available for the Strategic Capital Investment Framework of £50 million and £342 million respectively. To complete the picture Annual Managed Expenditure spending (programmes that cannot be reasonably restricted to three-year cycles, such as public sector pension spending, and student loans) will increase from £658 million to £721 million.

There will be a reduction of £61 million in capital investment in Economy and Transport and a reduction of 17 per cent in investment in housing. Perhaps the most striking

Table 1: Allocation of Assembly Government DEL Budget (£000s nominal)

Main Expenditure Group	2009-10			2010-11			Change
	Revenue	Capital	Total	Revenue	Capital	Total	
Health and Social Services	5,652	412	6,064	5,798	297	6,094	0.50%
Social Justice & Local Government	4,327	76	4,403	4,424	78	4,502	2.25%
Economy & Transport	718	492	1,210	723	431	1,154	-4.6%
Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills	1,678	265	1,943	1,693	183	1,876	-3.4%
Environment, Sustainability & Housing	350	450	800	369	349	718	-10.2%
Rural Affairs	135	18	153	136	17	153	-
Heritage	145	17	162	147	15	162	-
Public Services and Performance	59	-	60	55	-	55	-8.3%
Central Services and Administration	355	40	395	361	36	397	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,419</b>	<b>1,771</b>	<b>15,190</b>	<b>13,706</b>	<b>1,406</b>	<b>15,112</b>	<b>-0.5%</b>
Reserves	80	50	130	226	342	568	-
Other	-	-	59	-	-	58	-
<b>Total expenditure within Wales DEL budget</b>			<b>15,379</b>			<b>15,738</b>	<b>2.3%</b>



reduction is that of 3.4 per cent in expenditure on Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills. This is a measure of the pressure on the Assembly Government which has, of course, no powers either to tax or to borrow but has to make do with the sums allocated by the Treasury.

What is the outlook for spending beyond next year? When the UK Budget for 2009-10 was presented to Parliament in April 2009 it contained forecasts for the planned expenditure in 2010-11 and some clear indications of the probable levels of public expenditure for the following three years.

Whilst the Chancellor of the Exchequer avoided the word 'cuts', it was clear from the very first page of the Budget Red Book that material reductions were planned from 2011 onwards. Capital expenditure cuts of 17 per cent per year for each of the three years from 2011-12 were made explicit.

Meanwhile, the expected reductions in current expenditure could be deduced from the overall changes in spending once an estimate was made of the

According to the leaked Treasury Documents, Department Expenditure Limits will on average be cut by 4 per cent in 2011-12, with cuts of 1.8 per cent and 3.0 per cent, respectively, in

**As can be seen it is capital investment that will take the biggest hit.**

the following two years – a cumulative reduction of 8.6 per cent in real terms. If there are comparable reductions for Wales (and this will depend on the distribution of cuts across the various UK spending departments) then the Department Expenditure Limit for Wales in real terms and using this year as the base year, will be as shown in Table 2. Between 2011-12 and 2013-14 there could be a cumulative reduction in the

expenditure will remain, in effect, the responsibility of the UK Government. For example if there are moves, as suggested by the Conservatives, to freeze public sector pay, then this will in many cases automatically feed through to Wales given the UK-wide nature of most of the public sector pay agreements. The Welsh Government will continue its efforts to improve efficiency through its *Making the Connections* programme and other initiatives.

As can be seen it is capital investment that will take the biggest hit. Here Wales should be better placed than the rest of the UK because of its low use of Public Private Partnerships and the Private Finance Initiative in the past. England and Scotland have large forward calls on current expenditure to pay for their heavy use of these interventions. Wales receives its Barnett share of such funds but has a relatively low commitment to such contracts.

Is it not time, therefore, for the Welsh Government to look for creative ways of using private sector funding to finance capital investment and thus plug, in part at least, the hole that is now appearing thanks to the UK Government cutbacks? It should be possible to devise mechanisms that use privately sourced capital but leave the management of the public services in public hands.

To those who object in principle to the use of private capital it needs to be noted that the UK Government raises its loans in the private capital markets. This year alone it is due to raise £220bn. The Welsh Government has had some success in raising capital for housing through the European Investment Bank and private sources. The grim outlook for capital investment funded by government over the coming years should be a catalyst for developing additional alternative funding approaches.

*Dr Eurfyl ap Gwilym sits on the boards of a number of public companies and is Plaid Cymru treasury adviser.*

**Table 2: Departmental Expenditure Limits: Wales (£bn real)**

	Plan*		2011-12	Estimate**	
	2009-10	2010-11		2012-13	2013-14
Current	13.56	13.79	13.46	13.44	13.20
Capital	1.82	1.72	1.43	1.18	0.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.38</b>	<b>15.51</b>	<b>14.89</b>	<b>14.62</b>	<b>14.18</b>

\* Table C 11. HM Treasury Budget 2009 and WAG Draft Budget 2010-11.

\*\* Author's estimate based on Treasury forecasts.

increased spending on servicing the burgeoning national debt and on social protection (in particular financial support for the unemployed). In the event, Treasury papers leaked in September 2009 show that growth in spending on interest and social protection is expected to be even higher than those estimated by independent commentators in April. As a direct result the corresponding cuts in Department Expenditure Limits will be deeper.

Welsh budget in *real* terms of £2.84bn compared with the position if funding remained at the 2010-11 level for each of the following three years. Of this reduction £1.27bn is in current expenditure and £1.57bn in capital expenditure.

Given this difficult outlook what can the Welsh Government do? Just as the Welsh Government has no control on the amount of money it receives, some of the key drivers for cutting

# Road to resilience

Peter Davies puts the spotlight on the Welsh Government's Green Jobs Strategy

In an episode of *The Simpsons*, a shady group called the Stonecutters declares itself responsible for a number of mysterious happenings. Today, one of those claims has particular relevance: "Who holds back the electric car?" they ask, "We do! We do!". The Stonecutters may be fictional, but electric vehicles are fast becoming a reality. Mini, Smart and Mitsubishi are among the brands now engaged in a race to bring the technology once seen as science fiction fantasy to the masses.

This sea change in automotive technology is just one part of a global revolution which presents massive opportunities and challenges for business and government and, with it, the potential for large numbers of 'green jobs'. The concept applies as much to changing existing jobs as it does to creating new ones and it's relevant to all sectors of our economy, from call centres to hotels and from farms to factories. It's as much about helping Wales out of the recession and building a resilient economy as it is about tackling climate change. A green job should also contribute to a strong, healthy and just society.

Two key drivers of this revolution both relate to energy, likely to be a major challenge for business and government in the years ahead. First, the threat of 'peak oil' – when world oil output peaks and enters a terminal



Stevens of Port Talbot's battery driven ZeCar® is designed for green city driving. It has five doors, is 3 metres long, and is 1.76 metres high. Top speed is 56 mph, has a range of up to 100 miles. It takes eight hours to top up the battery. Most important it costs just 2p a mile to run. On the road price is between £20 - 25,000. The makers claim it will pay for itself within three years.

decline – hasn't gone away. The International Energy Agency estimates that peak oil could arrive as soon as 2020. Others believe that problems could emerge sooner. Last year the UK Industry Taskforce on Peak Oil and Energy Security warned that oil prices will be escalating rapidly by 2013. We need to ask ourselves what shape our economy needs to have in order to protect jobs and create new ones.

Secondly, on climate change, governments are setting tougher targets to cut emissions, driving demand for low carbon products through procurement and regulation. From 2011, the Welsh Assembly Government has committed itself to 3 per cent annual emissions cuts in devolved areas and from the same year the One Wales government aspires for all new buildings to be zero carbon. At a UK level, the government has set a target of an 80 per cent cut by 2050. From April, the Carbon Reduction Commitment will provide a financial incentive for larger businesses to take action.

The low carbon goods and services market is currently worth £3trillion per year, predicted to grow to £4.5trillion by 2015. Wales has a huge potential to be at the heart of this revolution, turning the world's first industrial nation into a world leader in clean

technology and providing both a way out of the recession and the foundations for a more resilient economy.

So the imperative to act is clear, and to make the necessary transition government and business must work together. We already have pockets of innovation. Stevens of Port Talbot is already supplying electric vehicles. In the solar energy sector we have G24 in Cardiff and Sharp in Wrexham. However it's now essential that we support a transition to make low carbon technology a core part of our mainstream economy in Wales.

The Welsh Government has recognised the challenges of building a sustainable, low carbon economy and unveiled its Green Jobs Strategy *Capturing The Potential*, which states: "Our aim is to support businesses in Wales in the transition to a more sustainable economy and to capture the potential opportunities in new technology and innovation. We also need the Welsh economy to become more sustainable and resilient as it comes out of recession in due course."

There is, however, much more to do to turn this vision into a reality. As it stands, this is something of a 'bolt-on' strategy. What we really need is for every job in Wales to contribute to a low carbon, resilient economy. No

Welsh worker can be left out of this agenda – whether they are on the factory floor or at a desk. By taking the right action, we can be ahead of the game in the global transition we see beginning to happen.

We also need a clearer definition of what constitutes a ‘green job’. Building a sustainable economy isn’t just about reducing energy use or carbon emissions, important though these things are. For the Sustainable Development Commission, a sustainable economy is one that contributes to a strong, just and healthy society, within environmental limits. As the United Nations Environment Programme says: “Green jobs need to be decent work, that is good jobs which offer adequate wages, safe working conditions, job security, reasonable career prospects and worker rights. People’s livelihoods and sense of dignity are bound up tightly with their jobs. A job that is exploitative, harmful, fails to pay a living wage and thus condemns workers to a life of poverty can hardly be hailed as green.”

This is reflected in the Welsh Government’s ‘One Wales: One Planet’ scheme, which established sustainable development as the central organising principle of government in Wales. It names integration of economic, social and environmental factors as one of the ‘core principles’ of policy making.

We need to dispel the myth that this type of thinking is some sort of expensive add-on for government or business. In fact, it’s quite the opposite. With policy makers in Wales facing tight public finances, we need to squeeze maximum value from every pound spent and deliver multiple benefits. Wise spending on the economy will also help government improve health, the environment and social justice. The Sustainable Development Commission is also calling on Ministers in Wales to seize the potential for a ‘green recovery’ – using the post-recession period to build resilience by investing in areas such as renewable energy, sustainable transport and making homes more energy efficient.

By adopting these principles,

businesses can build long-term resilience, such as minimising the risk of high fuel prices by producing some of their own energy. However, they will need the right support to make the transition. The Welsh Government is already incorporating sustainability into its Flexible Support For Business (FS4B) programme. Going forward, we need to ensure that businesses get the advice they need to flourish in the long term, be it ensuring a healthy workforce to retain effective staff or cutting heating costs by insulating offices. We need a clear picture of the skills that workers will need to contribute to the One Wales Government’s vision of a more sustainable economy.

Public spending will be an important factor. The Green Jobs Strategy refers to using carbon measurements in calculating levels of business funding or other support. Developing this agenda, as well as setting standards in procurement, could make a big difference in developing sustainable products and services. Used in the right way, EU Convergence funding can also help this process in the poorest parts of the country.

While new technology offers great potential, much of the technology we need for green jobs already exists. Recycling, renewables and resource efficiency aren’t new and neither are good employment practices or safe, healthy working environments. These sustainable practices aren’t, however, consistent and widespread. While we promote high-end innovation, let’s not delay rolling out best practice across the whole economy.

Making sustainable development the central organising principle of economic policy will mean substantial, long term changes, but we can take inspiration from the electric car. From comic fiction in the nineties to today’s business revolution, it shows that change really is possible.

**Peter Davies is the Commissioner for Wales, Sustainable Development Commission and an IWA Trustee.**

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# Coal in a warm climate

Gordon James says coal use must be reduced if we are to stand a chance of combating global warming

One of the world's leading climate scientists, Professor James Hansen of NASA, was arrested earlier this year for purposely trespassing onto an American coal mining site. He believes his action was justified by the immense threat to our future of the continued burning of coal. Professor Hansen has called coal-fired power stations "factories of death", and states that "coal is the single greatest threat to civilisation and life on our planet."

His criticisms are echoed in Wales, in slightly more moderate tones, by Sir John Houghton, the former chief scientist at the Inter Governmental Panel on Climate Change. Quoted in the Western Mail in September 2008, he said, "We should put a block on coal leaving Wales to go into new coal-fired power stations unless they've got carbon capture."

So influential in shaping Welsh society, coal is the largest single cause of climate change. It is responsible for half of all the carbon dioxide that humans have emitted. Its powering of the industrial revolution is the main reason why Britain has pumped more carbon dioxide per head of population into the atmosphere than any other country.

Condemnation of coal has grown alongside the growing awareness of the immensity of the threat posed by climate change, as new research consistently reveals the situation is worse than previously thought. For instance, in May a Massachusetts

Institute of Technology study predicted that we are on course for a global temperatures rise of up to seven degrees C by the end of the century. This is almost double the estimate they made in 2003.

In September the UK Met Office made the frightening prediction that, if greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise unchecked, we could see a four degrees C rise within the lifetime of our children. A two degrees C rise is regarded by many as the tipping point beyond which catastrophic consequences, and runaway climate change, are inevitable.

James Hansen believes the situation is so serious that protest and direct action are now a valid way to tackle the problem. The democratic process, he says, is not working because it has been undermined by corporate lobbying. His viewpoint has resonance in Wales.



Opencast mining above Merthyr.

Here, direct action is on the rise with the notorious Ffos-y-Fran opencast coal site at Merthyr Tydfil the main target of the climate protestors. Sited just 36 metres from homes in one of our most deprived communities, this massive hole in the ground should never have been given the go-ahead by a Welsh Assembly Government that claims to have sustainable development as its guiding principle. The fact that it did, seemingly as a result of pressure from Westminster, will be a significant black mark on the legacy of Wales's popular First Minister.

Letters obtained by local residents under the Freedom of Information Act reveal that UK government Energy Minister Stephen Timms wrote to Rhodri Morgan urging quick approval of the planning application. Timms, whose officials had had regular contact with the mining company (Miller Argent), said the coal would help to keep open Aberthaw power station, Wales' largest single source of pollution.

Whatever it was that happened within the corridors of power, approval for the mine was granted. Shortly after the bulldozers began their excavations, the Welsh Assembly Government issued its delayed 'Coal Mineral Technical Advice Note' – recommending a 500 metre buffer zone between opencast sites and properties.

As we confront the horrifying prospect of a rapidly changing climate, we are still moving in the wrong direction. Despite the siren calls on climate change, UK production and



The Ffos-y-Fran opencast coal site at Merthyr: "Sited just 36 metres from homes in one of our most deprived communities, it should never have been given the go-ahead by the Welsh Government."



Demonstrators against opencast in Merthyr make their point.

imports of coal in the UK rose between 2007 and 2008, with imports accounting for over 70 per cent. The biggest rise in the UK has been in opencast, with output increasing by over 10 per cent in the second quarter of 2009 compared to the same period last year.

The latest Welsh community to wake up to the threat of an opencast mine on their doorstep is the Gwendraeth Valley. But, as the local press reported on the 19th September, villagers in the valley are vowing to fight the plans because of concerns about local health and environmental impacts.

There remains a strong cultural and emotional attachment to coal in Wales. Welsh industry was built on it, and

much of our culture is the product of the strong communities the industry spawned. And while some have welcomed the demise of an industry that caused so much ill-health, premature death, pollution and social deprivation, a number of influential voices believe that 'king coal' still has a glowing future because it can be burned 'cleanly'.

One of these, Tyrone O'Sullivan, makes a strong point when he stated in the *Western Mail* on 20 March that you cannot run the world without coal. Coal provides over a quarter of global primary energy needs and generates 41 per cent of the world's electricity. It would be impossible to completely switch off this energy source in the

short time needed to cut carbon dioxide emissions. As well as slashing its use, we have to develop systems to capture and store safely underground the carbon dioxide it emits.

James Hansen agrees. Speaking at Coventry Cathedral in March he said, "The only way to solve the problem is if we agreed to only use coal if you captured the carbon dioxide and sequestered it."

Friends of the Earth Cymru's energy campaigner, Neil Crumpton, sits on the government's advisory body on carbon capture and storage. He reports that several of its demonstration schemes, which capture about 90 per cent of the carbon emissions, have been awaiting a green light for two years. It is Treasury policy, not technical issues, that are holding things up. As a result, a fully developed plant is not likely to be commercially available until around 2020.

In the meantime, the government has announced plans to allow the building of four large coal-fired power stations with small demonstration carbon capture systems. This sadly will be nothing more than a fig leaf to allow the burning of more coal. What is required is for the government to back stand-alone demonstration carbon capture and storage schemes close to the North Sea, where the CO<sub>2</sub> can be buried in redundant oil and gas wells.

Does this mean there is no place for Welsh coal until carbon capture is a commercial reality? If Welsh coal replaced imports it could provide a temporary lifeline, and would save the carbon cost of transporting millions of tonnes from Russia and South Africa.

However, the risk is that Welsh coal output and imports would both increase on the promise of carbon capture in the future. This would be disastrous. Coal use has to be reduced everywhere if we are to stand a chance of overcoming the immense threat of climate change.

**Gordon James is Director of Friends of the Earth Cymru.**

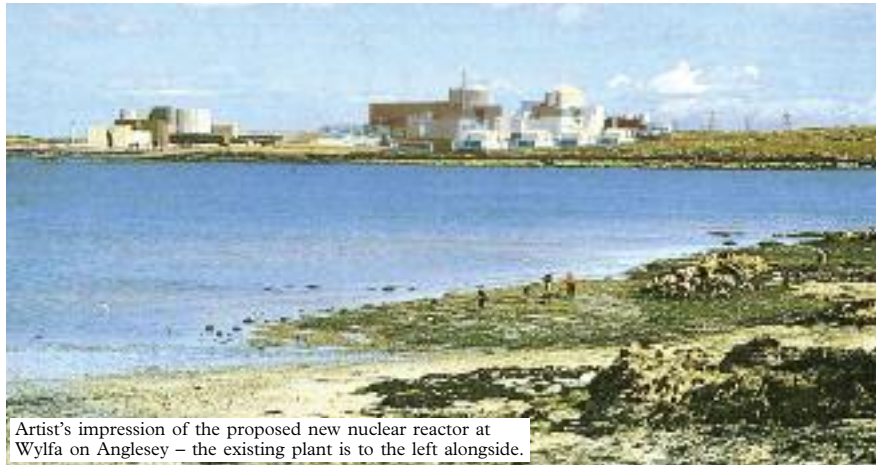
# Questioning the nuclear option

**Hugh Richards** reveals uneasiness inside the Assembly Government about the next generation of nuclear reactors

**An unintended consequence of devolution is that Wales is finding itself at the centre of international questions about the long-term viability of radioactive waste. Questions being asked by the Welsh Government have uncovered disturbing and hitherto concealed facts about spent nuclear fuel from new nuclear reactors.**

Starved of orders for decades, the nuclear industry is trying to compete in a liberalised electricity market by cutting costs, both in new designs and the operation of existing reactors. To boost the efficiency of their reactors, operators have progressively enriched the uranium they use as fuel to increase its 'burn-up' rate. This means that the fuel rods can be left in the reactor for longer, extracting more energy from each tonne and producing less waste per unit of electricity. Enthusiasm to allow ever greater 'burn-up' of fuel to assist reactor operators has until now masked growing concern about the resulting waste.

High burn-up spent fuel from the reactors proposed for sites such as Wylfa on Anglesey and Hinkley Point in the Severn Estuary will be twice as hot and twice as radioactive as the legacy spent fuel that the government wants to dispose of underground. Sites of new nuclear power stations will accumulate and store this hazardous material above ground over very long periods. The International Atomic Energy Agency knows that any benefits of lower electricity costs during the operation of reactors in this way will be offset by an increase in the cost of managing the spent fuel. The problem is that the costs



Artist's impression of the proposed new nuclear reactor at Wylfa on Anglesey – the existing plant is to the left alongside.

will long outlast any benefits.

In March 2009 a meeting of experts, convened in Cardiff by Environment Minister Jane Davidson, heard that the very high burn-up spent fuel proposed for Britain cannot be put underground for a hundred years because it is too hot. The use of such fuel is in its infancy and there is no experience of its long-term management. Communities such as Ynys Mon where there is political clamouring for a new nuclear power station, could find that their 'interim spent fuel stores' become the 'de facto' nuclear waste dumps of the future. Coastal sites, particularly those on the Severn Estuary could face the daunting task of defending interim stores against centuries of rising sea levels.

For over thirty years radioactive waste has been identified as an issue that is central to the acceptability of nuclear power. Responding to a Royal Commission demand that a method be demonstrated for the safe containment of long-lived, highly radioactive waste for the indefinite future, the UK government pledged as far back as 1977 that it would "ensure that waste management problems are dealt with before any large nuclear programme is undertaken".

Twenty-five years later in 2002, a

UK government energy review confirmed that "the unsolved problem of long-term nuclear waste disposal" was the main focus of public concern about nuclear power. In 2002 the Welsh Assembly Government joined with the UK Government and the other devolved administrations to set up a programme to tackle the problem of Britain's legacy waste. However, the Assembly does not accept that this sets a precedent for the disposal of waste from any new nuclear power stations. Last year, Wales' Environment Minister Jane Davidson started inquiring about the nature of new build waste.

The current UK government has decided to facilitate a new generation of nuclear reactors, pointing to progress that has been made in establishing the concept of a deep geological repository for our existing 'legacy' radioactive waste that could be extended to take the waste from new reactors. This 'extendibility' has now been thrown into doubt.

In January 2008 the Nuclear Industry Association said that such a repository could readily accommodate the "smaller volumes of easier-to-handle wastes from that new generation of nuclear plants". However, the type of fuel that they intend to use brings uncertainties about its safety and the feasibility of its long-

term storage and disposal.

In March 2007 the International Atomic Energy Agency reminded Britain that it must not go ahead with a new generation of nuclear power stations until it has a "clear and robust" plan in place for the waste. In particular, if the public is to be convinced, a credible and satisfactory answer to the management of spent fuel is required. We are witnessing a clash between the competitiveness of nuclear power and the long term safety of its spent fuel.

**Chart 1** illustrates that the burn-up of nuclear fuel has doubled over the last thirty five years and is forecast to continue rising. Spent fuel to be discharged from the European Pressurised water Reactor at Olkiluoto in Finland, with a burn up of about 45,000 MegaWatt days per tonne of Uranium (MWd/tU), is at the limit of temperature output that can be disposed of in the Swedish repository adopted by our Nuclear Decommissioning Authority as a reference design for the disposal of Britain's legacy waste.

Because the new nuclear fuel is left in the reactor for longer its cladding will become thinner, with higher gas pressure within the fuel elements, and this vulnerability will persist throughout

its long-term storage and disposal. Long-term dry storage of spent fuel above 45,000 MWd/tU is predicted to lead to the failure of fuel cladding. The International Atomic Energy Agency long ago acknowledged that there should be a plateau burn-up level in confrontation with regulatory constraints but they have yet to enforce one.

High burn-up spent fuel will emit ten times as many neutrons per second as legacy spent fuel, requiring greater shielding. More demanding at every stage of the nuclear cycle, it will increase potential worker and public exposure to radiation. But it is the generation that has to retrieve the spent fuel from long term storage, condition it, encapsulate it and place it deep underground that will be most exposed to the health detriments.

The Department of Energy and Climate Change propose that the operators would, after a period of storage to allow the spent fuel to cool down and become less radioactive, encapsulate it in containers for disposal, and at that time the taxpayer would take title to and responsibility for the waste. Resources set aside during operation are to cover the costs. Should these evaporate, in some global economic

break down, future generations may find themselves with the liabilities of nuclear waste management, but without the means to pay for them.

Although it is more hazardous to manage, insufficient information has been supplied to judge the long-term safety of high burn-up spent fuel, its containment design, or its ability to withstand aircraft attacks.

After 18 years in cooling ponds the spent fuel from Westinghouse reactors would be transferred to vertical dry casks with only their tops above ground, but these are only licensed for 20 years in the United States, and the effects of heat build up on the long term integrity of the fuel is unknown. AREVA, the French reactor company have designed dry casks but have decided to store their British EPR spent fuel in ponds until it can be conditioned. In France they are considering pond storage for up to 300 years for high burn-up spent fuel. The problem with 'wet storage' is that pumps have to be kept going continuously and safety could be compromised by a terrorist attack that partially or completely drains the spent fuel pool. This could lead to the rapid heat-up of spent fuel to temperatures

Chart 1

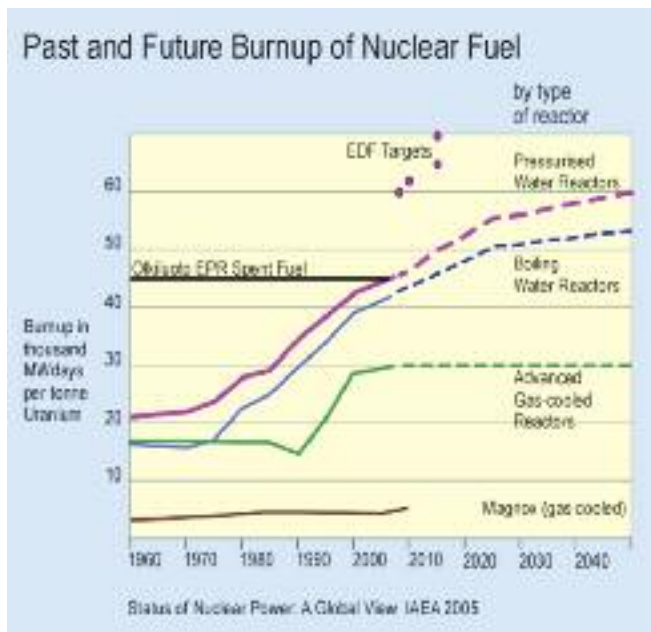
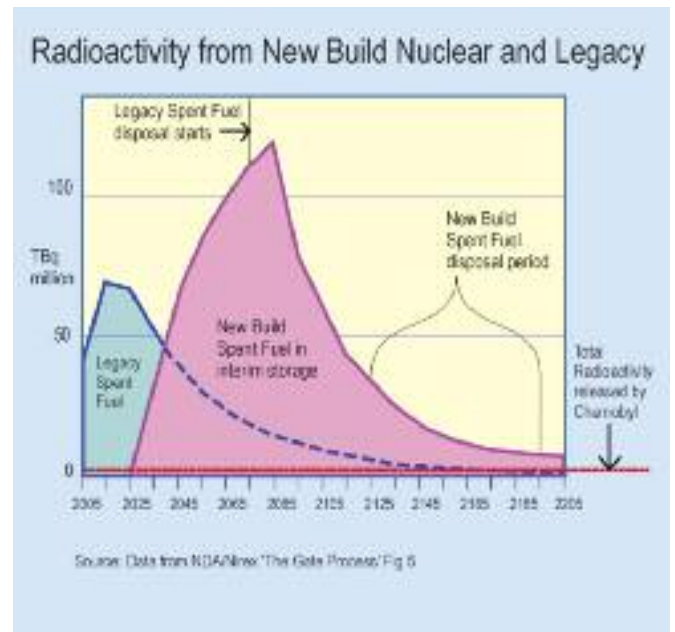


Chart 2



at which the zirconium alloy cladding would catch fire and release radiation.

**Chart 2** is based on official estimates of the amount of radioactivity that would be created by a 10GW new build nuclear programme, and stored on sites. There are no historical precedents for private corporations conditioning their hazardous wastes a century after the income stream has ceased.

Nuclear regulators have confirmed that they do not want to see wastes created that cannot be managed through to their final disposal. Yet the Department of Energy and Climate Change is reshaping nuclear regulation in order to speed it up. Under European law any decision that alters our exposure to radiation should do more good than harm. This principle is known as justification.

However, the danger of allowing a department promoting nuclear power

to make regulatory decisions is that in 'reducing regulatory risks for investors' it will pre-empt proper consideration of health detriments and dilute the robust and effective regulation of nuclear hazards. A predictable outcome of presenting Britain as the best place in the world in which to invest in nuclear power is that untried, untested ideas are being pushed harder in Britain than elsewhere. In the face of new build nuclear reactors it is unsurprising that no community in Wales has 'volunteered' for a deep geological repository for our legacy waste.

The justification process for new nuclear reactors has come at a time when regulatory 'confrontation' is required. Waste management and disposal is an integral part of nuclear power generation so we have to consider all detriments, including that from the

waste, before allowing any new nuclear programme. Jane Davidson is right to be concerned about the management and security of radioactive waste from new reactors and to support the call for a public inquiry into justification.

**Hugh Richards** is a member of the Nuclear Consultation Group comprising many of the leading UK experts in the fields of environmental risk, radiation waste, energy policy, energy economics, and democratic involvement. It has published Nuclear Consultation: Public Trust in Government. The minutes and background papers of the March 2009 meeting convened by Environment Minister Jane Davidson can be found at: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/epq/chemicalsradioactivity/radioactivity/radioactivewastemanagement/policyboard/march09/?lang=en>



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# Putting citizenship centre stage

Roger Thomas asks what our public services can learn from Denmark and New Zealand

Wales has an undeniably complex model for delivering public services that is arguably a consequence of our long full membership – ended just ten short years ago by devolution – of a quasi-country called ‘England-and-Wales’. This modelled its public services around delivery to a population of about 50 million, from within which there was a rich seam of talent to exploit. Despite the complexity, there was generally little shortage of skilled people, although even then Wales’s best were often lured away by the perceived brighter lights of England’s Home Counties.

But for the last decade we’ve had the freedom of self-determination that comes with our changed status as associate members of ‘England-and-Wales’. And after ten years of devolution we know, both anecdotally and from in-depth studies such as the Beecham Review, that our complex delivery model is poorly understood by the public, who are largely disengaged from the very services that are there to meet their needs.

Furthermore, having the public services model of a large country carries, for a small nation, serious risks, primarily because resources become spread very thinly. This can lead to a lack of connectivity between services, resulting in unintended duplication, missed opportunity and consequently low public satisfaction. Moreover, a

complex organisational model such as ours inevitably contains a high degree of inertia, making it insufficiently agile and coordinated in the face of such demanding challenges.

To this mix we should add that the times we live in are probably more challenging to the human race than anything that has gone before, with the real possibility of runaway climate change alongside the fallout from the credit crunch. All these are characteristics of Wales, yet anyone who has worked with or alongside our public servants at the individual level cannot fail to have been impressed by their almost universally-high level of commitment and sense of purpose.

So can we learn something from the ways that things are done in other small

personal sense of civic duty and acceptance of comparatively high taxation – fits less well with Wales.

Through its long association with the UK, New Zealand is culturally much more like Wales and probably a better place to learn lessons that may be more easily applied here. But both countries have pointers for us.

From a personal study of public services in these countries, there are four dimensions which could bring our public services closer to the Welsh public, with consequent gains in efficiency and effectiveness: simplicity, engagement, collaboration and citizenship.

Firstly simplicity, because there is a direct relationship between this and understanding. Looking back at New Zealand in the late 1980s, the

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## Through its long association with the UK, New Zealand is culturally much more like Wales...

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countries where public services are perceived by their populations to be more successful? Denmark and New Zealand are two such countries, with populations similar to Wales. Denmark is also of a similar geographical size, whilst New Zealand shares our challenge of an administrative centre that is remote from a significant proportion of the population.

Of these two countries, the Danish culture – typically Scandinavian in the

policy/provider split had become discredited with the realisation that there were simply too few resources to support the model.

The response has been to organise public services around the balance between the importance of consistency (in the service received by the individual) and the influence of the local context (on the service that was being delivered). Where the need for consistency is paramount – generally for



## New Zealand

Population: 4.31 million  
 Land area: 103,738 sq miles  
 Maori speakers: 4.2 %

### Government

122 members Parliament

### Local Government

12 Regional: 135 Councillors.  
 73 Territorial: 864 Councillors  
 80 Community Boards: 700 Members  
 The following are also elected -  
 District Health Boards - 147 members  
 Miscellaneous trusts - 141 members

those services personally-received, such as health and education – their organisation is centralised. For the very largest of these services, potentially accessible by anyone within the population at any time, a regional dimension to delivery is added.

Thus health in an integrated service inclusive of community, public health and hospital, is structured around District Health Boards. Delivery by these Crown Entities (New Zealand for quango!) was believed at the time – borne out by subsequent experience – to facilitate innovation and entrepreneurship, whilst ensuring that the all-important goal of consistency of individual experience was supported.

Public services such as district planning, urban renewal, water supply, waste management, and local roads that are important within, and ultimately determined by, the local context are the province of local authorities. A



## Wales

Population: 2.98 million  
 Land area: 8,015 sq miles  
 Welsh speakers: 20.5%

### Government

40 members Parliament  
 60 Assembly Members  
 4 Europe

### Local Government

22 Unitary: 1,264 Councillors  
 732 Community: 7,994 Councillors  
 1,000 public positions are filled through WAG appointments

reorganisation reflecting this division made local authorities in effect, infrastructure companies. Around 85 per cent of their funding was raised through local taxation with the result that they became highly accountable to their electorates.

At the same time regional authorities were necessary to deliver larger scale functions such as regional transport, and bulk water supply, or where there was a need to assemble a critical mass of necessary skills, for example permits to extract natural resources and discharge emissions.

The risk of a retreat into a silo mentality in any particular nationally-delivered service is real. This risk is effectively managed in New Zealand at the central government level through the joint development of a common agenda for public services by the Cabinet, Treasury and State Services Commission.

For the public, simplicity leads to

understanding, ready scrutiny and feedback on service quality. This is analogous to the business efficiency cycle of ‘Plan, Do, Monitor, and Review’, with an obvious impact on continuous improvement.

Engagement with the general public is achieved through face-to-face meetings. Politicians and officials expend considerable energy in being available locally and using every possible means of communicating. Social networking sites are commonly used in New Zealand to gather views on needs and to gauge opinion on the resultant plans and projects. At Wellington City Council I witnessed a live Facebook debate on a local plan drawing in comment from sectors of society such as younger people, who simply would not be engaged in such issues in Wales.

The power of basing communication methods around the preferences of the intended recipients was palpably evident. The overall outcome is that wants are more easily separated from needs and that needs can then be defined.

Decisions made on delivery are widely communicated in the same ways so that expectations are managed.

There is a further level of participation in New Zealand. Community advisory boards are common throughout public services, the view being that these are an essential component of engagement.

Feedback on satisfaction with public services is key to improvement, and satisfaction in both countries is high. New Zealand has developed the Kiwis Count annual survey to track its progress in improving public satisfaction. It followed an exhaustive review of worldwide best practice that identified Canada as the leading exponent of the art. The hallmark of Kiwis Count is the simplicity of the nevertheless comprehensive survey questions. Overall satisfaction with public services is now at 68 per cent (the private sector is at 58 per cent) and on a rising trend. Even so

it's interesting to note when looking behind the figures at individual services that the taxman (at 42 per cent) props up the league table.

Collaboration is a common feature of public services in both countries. Where individual delivery of a service by a local authority is frustrated by resourcing that falls below the critical mass, collaboration will be taken forward without any central government intervention. Central and local government nevertheless do meet, in forums that explore the issues and the best way of addressing them. These are perhaps similar in concept to our Local Service Boards.

The appointments of public service leaders are jointly managed between the appointing department or body and the State Services Commission. Their personal development is managed by the SSC-associated Leadership Development Centre. This brings leaders together on a regular basis, facilitating a good understanding between them of the individual departments and organisations that they lead, thereby facilitating all sorts of collaborations.

Citizenship is particularly evident in Denmark, where there is a general and widespread sense of civic duty leading to participation by most individuals in community life. Community groups get together around all the important aspects of society, with most people freely giving up their time to contribute to one or more groups. Citizenship is developed through being a core subject in the education curriculum. Learning is reinforced through opportunities for school pupils to play their part in society. This results, for example, in the turn-out of first time voters in Denmark that is close to 100 per cent.

In New Zealand, the sense of citizenship is nowhere near as high, but the government has worked with the electorate to establish the nation's values, amongst which lifestyle and environment feature most prominently. This has firmly established the 'clean, green' image to which most, if not all, New Zealanders subscribe. The simple

evidence is the general lack of litter in both urban and rural areas.

The New Zealand ideal that all votes should count equally is delivered in two ways. Boundary adjustments average out the electoral populations of parliamentary constituencies. And a system of proportional representation – Mixed Member Proportional representation, or MMP as used in Germany – has replaced the traditional First Past the Post (FPP).

Together these have helped to increase voter turn out. If MMP had been applied to the 2007 Assembly election in Wales, Labour would have returned 24 AMs, Plaid 15, Conservative 15, Liberal Democrats 8, and Independents 1. The Labour total includes three 'overhang' seats – that is, seats granted for the lifetime of this Assembly because the party gained three more FPP victories than the number of seats they warranted under MMP. This would temporarily have increased the Assembly to 63 members, but arguably have resulted in a more representative parliamentary body.

The situation at the local authority level in New Zealand is particularly interesting. The average ward size in cities is 14,000, leading to a small number of councillors. For example, Wellington, with a population of nearly a third of a million, has twenty elected members. In these situations Cabinets are not formed on a party basis since it would be unlikely that any one party would have sufficient members, and portfolios are therefore vested in the most competent individuals. The small number of councillors also means that the city can afford to pay them, thus opening up the opportunity of wider representation.

The challenge for Wales is to learn from these examples of simplicity, engagement, collaboration and citizenship to travel more swiftly to where we want to be. What actions might give the greatest returns? At least four should be considered:

- We can be clearer about the roles and funding of national and local

government by separating them into nationally and locally delivered services, as in New Zealand. This would surely help deliver the Beecham aspiration of clarity for the citizen.

- Clarity on service provision and improvement in service delivery have also been aided in Canada and in New Zealand by a citizen satisfaction survey that manages to be both comprehensive and simple in expression of the results. Our own 'Living in Wales' survey could be developed to emulate the good examples of these two countries.
- We are already talking in Wales about how we use social networking opportunities to increase engagement and participation – we simply need to accelerate this up our agenda.
- We should take a leaf out of the New Zealand manual and nurture our public sector leaders together. This is currently under consideration within the public service in Wales - we need to make it happen.
- And for the long game, we surely must incorporate citizenship much more comprehensively into our education system. We should make it a core subject, with opportunities to participate within and outside school, throughout the primary and secondary curricula.

To end on a note of wry amusement, it was remarkable during the pleasantries that preceded each of my meetings in New Zealand how often the Deans try of 1905 was raised. This was undoubtedly a pre-emptive strike against any mention of Andy Haden's lineout antics in 1978 – and which I therefore took as a tacit admission of guilt.

**Roger Thomas** is Chief Executive of the Countryside Council for Wales. His research in Denmark and New Zealand was associated with the leadership programme linked to the Welsh Government's Public Services Management Wales initiative.

# Royal scholarships will help economy punch above its weight

Dylan Jones-Evans on a new initiative to bring global talent to Wales

**In a world of increasing global competition and rapid technological change where small peripheral nations such as Wales can be at a disadvantage, economic prosperity will increasingly depend on the ability to innovate successfully.**

Last year, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge suggested that the UK was not providing enough resources to recruit sufficient extraordinary people to be at the frontier of research excellence. If Wales is to succeed as a small clever nation, then it must harness the best of its academic talents whilst nurturing the innovative capacity of its business sector.

This is why the University of Wales has launched the Prince of Wales Innovation Scholarships to attract 100 of the brightest university graduates from the world's best academic institutions to work on research projects within Welsh companies.

So far 23 scholarships have been approved for support by an independent panel of experts. Supervised by Welsh academic institutions, these will be based in a range of Welsh companies operating at the cutting edge of technology in areas as diverse as software applications for the construction industry, cutting edge medical research, advanced manufacturing, fuel efficient engines and LED lighting technologies.

Supported by European Structural Funding, the private sector and the University's own resources, this £11.4 million programme will offer one of the

best research stipends in the world to bring in the best talent to help improve the Welsh economy. As a result, graduates will undertake three-year placements with Welsh businesses, working on science and technology based projects that are of direct relevance to enhancing the innovative capacity of each participating company.

The aim of the programme is to

## Innovation Scholarship programme links with Softech Systems in Swansea

Softech Systems Ltd is a small company, based in Technium Swansea, that has just relocated its headquarters to Europe as a means to expand in to new markets from their South African operations. The company designs, sells and supports sophisticated multi-user software packages providing secure, transactional, cashless and associated service management information systems for the hospitality and associated market sectors throughout South Africa.

Softech saw the opportunities underlying the Innovation Scholarship Programme since the early stages of the initiative, and worked closely with the Global Academy Innovation Fellow, Daniele Doneddu, to craft a plan for research, development and commercialisation that would take the company leaping into a bright future. Dr Ian Wells and Dr Kevin Palmer from Swansea Metropolitan University have been brought in to provide academic supervision for the project.

bring the best global graduates to work within Welsh industry to help build up research capacity and enhance innovative potential. By identifying a specific research project, each participating business will recruit a qualified graduate to develop its R&D capability and cutting edge thinking. Supported by academic supervisors, the project will focus on developing research that will result in new patents, new products, processes and technologies and the creation of spin-out new firms or cost centres to pursue the commercialisation opportunities.

For potential scholars, the annual stipend will be one of the highest in the world - £20,000 a year - and tuition fees will be waived by the participating institutions. The scholarship holder will also receive a research grant of £5,000 to cover the cost of equipment, books and travel.

These projects will not only enhance the R&D capability of businesses, but will boost their capacity to develop new market-led processes, products, technologies and services, thereby improving the innovation potential and the competitiveness of the Welsh economy.

To make the most of the talents available, the University of Wales is also establishing a full support programme to enhance the capacity and capability of each graduate, thus ensuring that they are fully contributing to the activities of the participating company.

Innovation scholars and participating businesses will be invited to participate



Global aspirations at the University of Wales: from the left, Chair of the Industry Panel for the Scholarships Professor Jeremy Stone, Director of Research Professor Dylan Jones-Evans, Vice-Chancellor Professor Marc Clement, and Chairman Hugh Thomas launch the Prince of Wales Innovation Scholarships in June

in a number of events throughout the course of the programme, with the emphasis on innovation management, leadership and entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs and executives from the best international companies will act as lecturers and advisors, providing participants with the benefit of their experience and expertise in the field of business innovation.

The Innovation Scholarships programme will make a significant impact on innovation in Wales and has the capacity to help change the Welsh economy. Already, a number of high technology innovative firms have signed up to the project to help the University ensure that innovation and enterprise become a by-word for the Welsh business sector and to show that a small economy can punch above its weight and compete successfully with the best in the world.

Already, the University of Wales has been in detailed discussions with some of the world's leading research universities in Europe, the USA and Asia to discuss ways of collaborating on this project and bring some of the best students to Wales.

Earlier this year, Professor Marc

Clement - the Vice Chancellor of the University of Wales - met with the President of the University of California to examine how both institutions could work together to develop innovation within Wales. With over 50 per cent of the high technology firms established in Silicon Valley being started by non-Americans, California has demonstrated that the attraction of graduate talent from overseas can boost the economy. Indeed, the fact that the digital revolution is being led by companies such as Google, YouTube and Yahoo is testament to how young scientific talent can boost entrepreneurial potential.

These sentiments were recently echoed by the former Lord Mayor of London, Sir David Lewis, who stated that "Wales needs to become less insular and more international if it is to match rival UK countries. We are not outward-looking and expanding the way that we should be. The way to grow is to look outward, not inward. That can be addressed through education, by welcoming foreign expertise to Wales".

Another demonstration of the commitment of the University of Wales to link with global talent is the formal partnership with the Massachusetts

Institute of Technology (MIT), one of the most entrepreneurial universities in the World. According to recent research, MIT students, alumni and faculty have founded over 5,000 companies, which now account for employment of over 1.1 million and annual sales of more than £200 billion. The partnership with the Industrial Liaison Programme will give Welsh companies which participate in the Innovation Scholarship scheme direct access to the research expertise at MIT and enable our universities to learn from some of the best academic entrepreneurs in the USA.

By focusing on bringing the best academic talent to bear on the Welsh business community, the Innovation Scholarship programme will make a real difference to the potential of the Welsh economy and, more importantly, will signal to graduates and businesses alike that Wales is open for business and ready to innovate.

**Professor Dylan Jones-Evans** is Director of Research and Innovation with the University of Wales. For more information on the Innovation Scholarships programme visit [www.globalacademy.org.uk](http://www.globalacademy.org.uk)

# Airconditioning for the planet

Ru Hartwell reports on an initiative to sustain an area of tropical rainforest 'the size of Wales'

As the world prepares to come together to address tropical deforestation at the Copenhagen Climate Summit in December, there is a growing recognition that we all need to take much more responsibility for the problem. The 'Size of Wales' Project sets out the vision for a national scheme aiming to sustain an area of tropical forest in Africa equal to the land area of Wales.

Whilst small countries such as Norway have governmental initiatives to protect tropical forest, the Size of Wales project would be a world first: the first time that civil society, the private sector and the state would come together to fight climate change in an integrated manner. Our hope is that if this ambitious aim can be accomplished other small nations may be inspired to emulate our ground-breaking model.

The project, which would be implemented by the Wales Millennium Development Goals Task Force, is about partnering with a variety of communities in a range of African contexts to assist them in moving towards sustainable use of their forest resources. It is not about preserving a single tract of virgin rainforest. It would aim to raise awareness and engage all sectors of Welsh society in the defence of this critically important and carbon-rich ecosystem through a variety of innovative interventions.

We are all familiar with the phrase 'the size of Wales' which is commonly

used to describe rates of environmental degradation (typically deforestation) as in: "We lost an area of rainforest six times the size of Wales last year." So unwittingly, and perhaps unfairly, our nation has become associated with a process that is endangering the future of life on earth. Our purpose is to turn this negative association on its head and engage the whole country in a unified response to the problem.

Why should Wales unite to defend tropical forest? At this time of economic difficulty when many of us face an uncertain future, shouldn't we be focusing on problems closer to home? The answer is quite simple. Tropical forests function as the entire planet's air conditioning system.

What is the size of Wales?

8,015 sq miles or  
20,758 sq kms.

In 2006 the Stern Report identified the protection of these forests as our most *cost effective* strategy to slow climate change, with annual emissions from tropical deforestation more than those from all the world's transport systems combined.

According to a 2007 report for the National Assembly, Wales is ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the world in terms of annual per capita CO2 emissions. However, this takes no account of our 'legacy carbon', the greenhouse gas we have been releasing continually since the industrial revolution, or the heavy methane footprint of our ruminant based agricultural sector. The unfortunate and unpalatable reality is that our carbon intensive way of life is linked directly



Christine Konini, one of 50 'Size of Wales' participating farmers of the Bore Community at Malindi near Mombasa, Kenya, tags a cashew nut tree bought by a customer in the UK wishing to offset carbon emissions



**Our planet is on the cusp of a catastrophe. This is a crisis situation and in such circumstances we need to employ every strategy at our disposal to reduce emissions.**

and causatively to climate change. The irony is that in large part it is the poor communities of the underdeveloped world, typified by sub-Saharan Africa, that are bearing the brunt of the climatic changes that our carbon effluence has created.

Could the Size of Wales project help us make the difficult transition to becoming a carbon retentive society? Some might argue that a national project to protect tropical forest may even encourage a laissez faire attitude towards our own carbon emissions. People might feel that if we were to have an integrated national scheme to retain the carbon in these African tropical forests, we could relax about reducing our home footprint.

The answer here is again simple. Our planet is on the cusp of a catastrophe. This is a crisis situation and in such circumstances we need to employ *every* strategy at our disposal to reduce emissions. That means using fewer fossil fuels to heat, eat and travel *as well as* helping tropical communities to preserve their forest carbon. The two strategies are both part of the continuum of responses that we need to adopt to effectively address climate change.

We aim to have examples of a variety of interventions up and running by early next year. The foremost of these and the backbone of the project would be provided by a network of community partnerships linking grass roots forestry projects in Africa with a

diverse array of community groups in Wales. These partnerships would enhance existing community links such as those under the immensely successful Gold Star Communities Scheme and would also provide a perfect opportunity to educate and raise awareness of the issues with a clear overlap to the Assembly Government's Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Strategy.

Private sector involvement would be essential to the long term viability of the scheme and there should be a wide selection of ways for Welsh business to participate. Options would include protection of Kenyan coastal forest by the 1,000 hectare and sponsorship of community tree planting in Mali through to a certified carbon compensation scheme supporting small scale forestry in Uganda. Individuals wishing to take part would do so through the Size of Wales website featuring information on the project portfolio in Africa and allowing online donation on a project specific basis.

We have yet to feel the full effects of climate change in Wales and it is tempting to ignore problems in distant parts in favour of pressing needs closer to home. Tropical deforestation is one problem we would do well not to ignore. The Size of Wales project is one way a small country can punch well above its weight to show decisive leadership, take responsibility and make a real difference in our transition to global carbon retention.

**Ru Hartwell** is Consultant to the Size of Wales project. The Project is an initiative of the Wales and the Millennium Development Goals Task Force and is supported by the Waterloo Foundation. The newly appointed Project Manager for the Size of Wales project is Hannah Scarse, formerly Woodland Officer with the Woodland Trust and Chair of the Board of Directors of the UK Forest Stewardship Council UK. Contact [info@sizeofwales.org](mailto:info@sizeofwales.org)



# Garlic's secret weapon

Andrew Shearer on how a Welsh discovery could have global impact

It is estimated that Wales's 10 million sheep and 240,000 cattle emit about 2.3 million tonnes of methane every year, which is 5.5 per cent of the country's 'official' total of 42 million tonnes. This may not appear a great deal. However, unless we tackle the carbon footprint of our ruminants, then by 2050 they will account for half our greenhouse gas emissions if we achieve the UK target of reducing our overall emissions by 80 per cent.

Which is why feeding them with the garlic extract Mootral, developed by the Cardiff-based natural products extraction company Neem Biotech, could be so important. Allicin is the active agent in garlic (giving it its pungent smell and taste) which has significant antibacterial properties. Mootral is an animal feed additive containing allicin, which limits the growth of the methane-producing bacterial colonies in a ruminant animal's first stomach.

Neem Biotech worked with scientists at IBERS Aberystwyth University to test more than 3,000 plant extracts. Of these, allicin was discovered to be the 'secret weapon'. In a rumen simulator, the researchers found that the garlic extract cut methane output by 94 per cent. Not only that, but because allicin is an antibacterial it can potentially benefit the animal's health, with potentially less need for antibiotics, increased resistance to bovine tuberculosis and mastitis and

killing of intestinal worms.

Neem Biotech is pushing for sustainability not only in its products but in its business model as well. It plans to provide the Mootral feed additive free to farmers, with revenue derived from offsetting of carbon credits. Carbon emitters such as the airlines will invest in the feed by offsetting their emissions via carbon credits which would be used to buy the feed to be distributed to farmers. Where possible the product will be produced locally in the countries in which it is intended for use. This will significantly cut the costs

examples of areas of interest include solutions for Hospital Acquired Infections such as MRSA and *C difficile*, malaria and cancer. The garlic extract's properties include being highly anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-viral, immuno-boosting, and insect repellent.

The Company has developed patented technology for the low cost extraction of compounds from plant biomass without the use of column chromatography, a high cost process. As well as allicin from garlic it is extracting azadirachtin from the seed

**Neem Biotech focuses on commercially viable and sustainable projects where there is a clear market need for new innovative products.**

of transportation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions further in the process. Not only that, cows produce more methane in the developing world than in the developed world, because of their feed.

Neem Biotech focuses on commercially viable and sustainable projects where there is a clear market need for new innovative products. It sees itself as well positioned to take advantage of the trend away from chemicals to more natural alternatives. As well as methane reduction, other

of the Neem tree which grows in tropical regions of countries such as India. This has potential applications in head lice shampoo, soap, toothpaste and insect repellent.

Neem Biotech undertakes research into scaling up to kg scale. Typically only 0.1 per cent of a particular compound is found in a plant and it undertakes to develop methods to scale up 10 per cent plus of a particular compound in the fraction. This is often the most difficult step and makes it





It is estimated that Wales's ruminants emit 2.3 million tonnes of methane every year, some 5.5 per cent of our greenhouse gas emissions.

considerably easier for further purification by others.

Significant progress has been made during 2009 in the production of stable garlic metabolite, ajoene, and a patent has been lodged on its production and certain applications. Ajoene has anti-clotting properties, which helps prevent platelets in the blood from forming blood clots, potentially reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke. It is also known to have effective broad-spectrum antibacterial and antifungal properties, helpful in preventing yeast infection and treating athlete's foot, for example. Ajoene has even been shown effective in inhibiting tumor cell growth.

Work is also underway on a simplified method for the production of high-purity artemisinin, which is used for the treatment of many illnesses, such as skin diseases and malaria.

This has been a good year for Neem

Biotech. Together with the sustainable business model, Mootral has been short listed as one of five solutions to solve Climate Change in The Financial Times Climate Challenge Competition 2009. The product also reached the final of the 2009 Dutch Lottery Green Challenge Competition and is currently in the final of the 2009 World Challenge Competition, aimed at finding projects or small businesses from around the world that have shown enterprise and innovation at a grass roots level. Neem Biotech sees itself as an active force in the development of methods of extracting active compounds from plants worldwide. It is interested to collaborate with others to develop standardised plant and marine extracts in a variety of market sectors promoting Welsh innovation worldwide.

**Andrew Shearer is Director of Neem Biotech.**



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IWA Fellow, Labour Peer

**Lord Gwilym Prys Davies**

“I am an admirer of the quality of the work produced by the IWA. Its research and publications are of inestimable value to Wales and its people.”

IWA Fellow, Liberal Democrat Peer,

**Lord Livesey of Talgarth**

“The IWA fulfils a vital role in Welsh civic society. If it were not there it would have to be invented.”

IWA Fellow, **Rt. Hon. Dafydd Wigley**

Honorary President, Plaid Cymru

“As someone who has been involved all of my professional career in thinktanks, research bodies and policy units, I would like to pay tribute to the way in which the IWA has clearly established itself as a leading forum for debate in Welsh political life.”

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**Lord Griffiths of Fforestfach**

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# Quality analysis from the iwa

Late last year the IWA launched a blog site ([www.iwa.org.uk/blog](http://www.iwa.org.uk/blog)) to deliver expert comment on a wide range of issues. We are now only weeks away from launching a wholly new website which will include [clickonWales/clicarGymru](#) as an expanded site featuring a wealth of information about Wales and high level commentary on Welsh topics. The new website will also make it easier for the IWA to engage with its members and with the wider public. Here is a flavour of what has appeared in recent months.

## Assembly should debate Lisbon Agenda

23 October 2009

Hywel Ceri Jones, a former Director General with the European Commission, argued that Wales should be alert to the opportunities from more co-ordinated European Union economic and social policies in the wake of the Irish Yes vote on the Lisbon Treaty.

"The search for a more effective architecture of global governance, across the whole range of policy concerns, is leading inexorably to stronger EU level machinery to negotiate at the global level, as occurred earlier in the field of external trade following the creation of the single European market.

Despite the limits and weaknesses of the Lisbon Treaty, one of the most significant reforms it will introduce will give much greater authority to the European Parliament as a co-decision making institution with the Council of Ministers on most areas of EU policy as well as in determining the EU budget. National Parliaments, too, will have a greater say in the process in future.

The same will be the case for those 'regions' like Wales which have legislative powers and which will have the right of pre-scrutiny of proposed EU legislation as an explicit part of their Member state scrutiny. Consequently, the new Treaty will represent a considerable though still incomplete move to improve the democratic governance of the Union.

The scale and impact of the recession are now being felt throughout Europe. The

EU's central challenge will be to focus as much on the social situation as on economic growth. We have lived through a period dominated by the unregulated rule of market forces. Now they need sound regulation which is properly policed and implemented.

Sustainable development and the wellbeing of people need to be clearly seen as an integral and inclusive part of this policy agenda. Indeed, economic growth will be increasingly dependent on successful sustainable development policies. That is why the so-called Lisbon Strategy will again dominate the EU policy debate, with this new switch of emphasis and concern.

Crucially, too, the policy priorities defined in the Lisbon Agenda are being adopted as requirements for the application of the EU's Structural and Cohesion Funds. This, of course, will primarily affect those Member States which are beneficiaries and put pressure on them not to make the error of the past committed by some Member States of clawing back the additional European resources to prop up their own budgets rather than breaking new ground with the necessary reforms.

For Wales, in the remaining period till 2013 of the present allocation of Cohesion funding, this is of crucial importance. The National Assembly should debate the thrust of the Lisbon Agenda and its relevance to the needs of Wales. It should identify more effective ways of linking EU with domestic policies to achieve greater impact. After all, such linkage was one of the four claws of the Celtic Tiger's success story in generating strong growth before the present calamitous housing bubble hit Ireland."

## All they want is a job

20 October 2009

Howard Williamson, Professor of European Youth Policy at the University of Glamorgan, focused on NEETS – young people not in employment, education or training – ahead of an IWA conference on the issue. The 'official' estimate for Wales is that 12,000 young people – between 10 and 12 per cent of the age group – fall into this category.

"Yet the scale of the challenge is but one part of the context. Where policy has failed rather miserably is in differentiating between the 'disengaged'. They are by no means all the same and of course there are different criteria on which they can be disaggregated, such as attitudes, previous experiences, current circumstances or something else.

My own 'classification', some years ago, related to the 'seriously confused', the 'temporarily sidetracked' and the 'deeply alienated'. The first two groups were not fundamentally opposed to 're-engagement' – the former needed attention and encouragement, the latter understanding and patience. In contrast, the last group had switched off from mainstream participation, and had either sunk into 'purposeless' behaviour (drinking, drug misuse) or become active in more 'purposeful' behaviour (instrumental criminality).

As one lad said, 'I've got alternative ways of living'. The point here is that policy approaches have also to be differentiated in recognition of these differences. Too often, they are not.

Policy has to consider both preventative measures and 'bridge-building' opportunities. The latter have to be sure that they command some level of relevance and credibility for the individuals in question. Too often, they do not. What many, if not most, of these young people want is work and income, in other words a job. They are unwilling to be fobbed off with what they

often see as meaningless and unattractive training 'opportunities', even if – to the labour market analyst – these make most sense to a particular context.

And this is the overarching issue. How do we reconcile what may appear to be a rather wishy-washy 'youth work' approach to those who are NEET? How do we connect the often devastating consequences of teenage idleness with the tough-nosed labour market and economic imperatives that usually govern the recruitment strategies for the jobs that these young people really want? These are the vital questions that policy makers need to address."

## Money going begging

9 October 2009

**Geraint Talfan Davies, Chairman of the IWA, reported on a conference of UK trusts and foundations in Cardiff convened by the Waterloo Foundation and the Association of Charitable Foundations. Almost all the delegates claimed that they did not get enough funding applications from Wales.**

"Why should this be? Graham Benfield, of the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, told us that there were 30,000 voluntary organisations in Wales, representing half a million volunteers. This speaks volumes for the community spirit in Wales. Uniquely in the UK, this has been recognised in the devolution statutes that decree a partnership between the Assembly and the sector, complete with a Voluntary Sector Partnership Council and County Volunteer Councils in every county.

The awful thought occurred that Welsh organisations may be passing up the chance of funding from trusts and foundations because, as Professor Kevin Morgan of Cardiff University often argues, Wales has become too Welsh Government-centric.

The thought was buttressed by Benfield's data which showed that 43 per cent of the income of the voluntary sector in Wales comes from public sources: 22 per cent from the Welsh Government, 17 per cent from local government and health

authorities, 4 per cent from Europe, with another 4 per cent from the National Lottery. As for the remaining 53 per cent, the public donates 26 per cent, with another 20 per cent coming from trading and investments, 4 per cent from business and only 3 per cent from trusts and foundations.

There is just the possibility that voluntary organisations in Wales, often with tiny staffs or no staff at all, find it easier to apply for public funding schemes in Wales than to research the thousands of private trusts that exist, most of them outside the country.

The Trusts themselves acknowledged that there is often a difficulty in dealing with the small scale of almost everything in Wales. In discussion several started to think in terms of what consortia of private trusts could do to tackle issues in a coordinated way, either on an all-Wales basis or, more likely, across a more limited area.

Equally, there might be a role for the WCVA, by adding to its existing training and support services with more research and brokerage, leading to the aggregation of the needs of organisations with similar issues into larger applications.

It's not just a question of bringing more money into Wales, although we could certainly do with the extra £66m that would bring us up to the magic 5 per cent share of UK trust giving. It's also a question of philosophy. The underlying value of the voluntary sector is to keep open that public space that is neither tied to government nor private business. We must be careful not to let our voluntary sector be nationalised."

## Only in America

18 September 2009

**Rhys David, former Financial Times executive and an IWA Board member, contrasted the blanket coverage of the US Presidential election last year with the sparse coverage in Britain to the elections in Germany and Japan.**

"Why is it that when the second and third biggest economies in the world – Japan and Germany – hold elections, so

little attention is paid by the British media? Indeed, how many people in Britain even know elections are going ahead, leave alone could hazard a guess at the names of the parties or the candidates?

While neither country has the same inter-connections with Britain politically, socially, militarily or culturally as the US, Germany is a key partner of the UK within the EU, as well as being its biggest member. As such, many of the objectives Britain is seeking to achieve within the EU, will require close co-operation with the German government. As such the outcome of the German election is important to Britain (and Wales) and the public deserves to be better informed.

Japan is perhaps a different case but it, too, is a very significant trade partner and has much experience of dealing with the impact of recession. In its way, too, the Japanese election result has been as significant and momentous as the election of the first black president. The new prime minister Yukio Hatoyama leads a party which has just broken a 50 year stranglehold on power by Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and may have a very different take on the economy, society and international relations from its long-lasting predecessor.

Getting people in Britain, and in Wales, to take an interest in political developments even closer at hand has become increasingly difficult and as newspapers circulations have declined, managements appear to have taken the perverse and even counter-intuitive view that even more of the same sad formulae which now account for most daily coverage – crime, celebrity, and sport – is needed to stop the rot.

If newspapers are a lost cause, however, it is surely time the BBC looked at the overwhelming emphasis it places in its coverage of world affairs on the US and provided the British public with a much fuller account of what is going on in other important partner nations, particularly our continental neighbours. The German and Japanese elections would have been a good starting point."

# Life source

David Culshaw reports on the decline of the honeybee

**Honeybees are in decline. It is not only in Wales and the rest of the UK that this is happening, but also on most continents around the world. The decline may be for different reasons in each country, but we need to find an effective treatment for the decline in our own honeybees.**

In recent years the decline has reached 30 per cent a year, up from about 6 per cent in 2003. Feral colonies of wild bees have become virtually extinct. Honeybees are under threat from pests and diseases, treatments for which are not always fully effective. To some extent the decline of the bee reflects the loss of wild habitats, intensive farming and overuse of pesticides and herbicides. The simple truth is that bees need flowers, and there are fewer flowers to be found in the farmed countryside these days. The wet weather over the last three years has also been the cause of very poor honey

harvests, which has caused an increase in the price of local honey. There is nothing we can do about the weather, but we must do something about the decline in honeybee stocks.

The role of honeybees as producers of honey is well known, but their loss is a major threat in the biodiversity of our countryside. They are a major pollinator of the food that we eat, and of wild plants that feed birds and wild animals.

Bees pollinate more than 90 of the flowering crops we rely on for food. Among them are apples, nuts, pears, avocados, soybeans, asparagus, broccoli, celery, squash, tomatoes, sunflowers and cucumbers along with citrus fruit, peaches, kiwis, cherries, blueberries, cranberries, strawberries and melons. Crops like oilseed rape (increasingly used in biofuels), alfalfa, peas, runner beans and broadbeans also rely on visits by bees and other pollinating insects to improve the quality and quantity of fruits and seeds produced.

It's hard to believe that one small creature can be so important to our food supply. Albert Einstein was certainly well aware of the connection. As he is

reputed to have said: "If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe, then man would only have four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more plants, no more animals, no more man."

Honeybees live in colonies, which survive through the winter. Come spring, in a healthy colony, the queen will start to lay eggs at an increasing rate. In late spring the queen will lay approx 2,000 eggs a day. This results in a colony of 20,000 to 50,000 bees for the summer. It will be seen from this that in numbers, the honeybee is a major pollinator.

A colony of honeybees has one queen; she is the mother of all the other bees in that colony. Her normal useful life is about two years, but she can live longer. The usual population of a colony varies from 10,000 in the winter to 50,000 in the summer, and is made up of female workers all the year round and a few hundred male drones in the spring and summer. Female workers are the product of fertilized eggs.

The workers do many and varied jobs in the colony, including feeding the queen and brood, and the drones,

generally cleaning the hive, storing nectar and pollen. Later in their life they become foragers, which you will see collecting pollen and nectar from flowers in your garden. The life of a worker varies with the amount of work they do. During summer with the long working days they may only live five weeks, yet in winter, when they are confined to the hive, they will live up to six months.

Male drones are the product of unfertilized eggs, they do not work and are unable to feed themselves. Their job in life is to mate on the wing with new queens for other colonies, those that mate die in the act. Come September all drones are ejected from the hive and die. Drones are only required for mating in spring and summer, in winter they would be surplus mouths to feed.

Recent publicity of the decline in honeybees has prompted many new beekeepers. This is excellent for beekeeping, but the shortage of bees to increase stocks means that many may be frustrated in their attempts at the start.

Honeybees and queens have been imported into the UK for many years, to help beekeepers increase their stocks. There is an opinion that this is where our troubles started, but until firm facts are found it would be difficult to ban



these imports. It is also thought by some that insecticides may have been one of the causes of honeybee decline, and this does need to be investigated.

The National Bee Unit, which is part of the Food and Environment Research Agency, employ regional and seasonal bee inspectors. Their job is to check honeybee colonies within their area for disease and pests. Occasionally they take samples of bees for testing in the laboratory. There is a register of apiaries called 'Beebase' set up by the Unit on which beekeepers can register their apiaries. At present the law does not require beekeepers to register on Beebase or with any association or government agency. Unfortunately this means that there are many apiaries that are not inspected. Maybe the non-registered beekeepers are suspicious of the intention of inspections. But invariably the inspectors that I have had dealings with have been knowledgeable and helpful.

In May 2009 Rural Affairs Minister Elin Jones announced funding of £486,000 by the Welsh Government to protect honeybees in Wales. It will be working closely with Defra and beekeeping associations to draft the Healthy Honeybees in England and Wales plan that sets out the respective

roles and responsibilities of government and other stakeholders.

At a meeting with representatives of the Welsh Beekeepers Association the Minister said, "Honeybees and other pollinators are vital for food production, which is key to the environmentally sustainable farming we are promoting in Wales. Several initiatives are underway to tackle the decline in the bee population, and working together will be the key to achieving the objectives of these projects. I am keen to establish how we can complement the work of the Welsh Beekeepers Association and also how it can support us in our policy development of bee health in Wales".

The Welsh Beekeepers Association has funded a project in Anglesey to establish if it is possible to breed a honeybee that can either tolerate or attack the varroa mite. This project is at an early stage, and will take some time to complete. This is just one of the many problems that face the honeybee, and the UK Government fund of £10 million over five years should be directed to establishing an ongoing programme of research into saving the honeybee.

**David Culshaw is Chair of the Welsh Beekeepers Association.**

1 | Landscape  
Special

Sunset over the hills of Llyn, as seen from Llanfihangel-y-Traethau on the Dwyryd estuary, Gwynedd. Photo: John Briggs

Ruth Williams finds much to applaud in a new IWA report on the Welsh landscape

# Spiritual resource

Wales is blessed with so many stunning landscapes. This fact is superbly illustrated in the IWA's new report *Living with our Landscape*, a study initiated by the late Merfyn Williams of Croesor and supported by the Countryside Council for Wales.

While not the biggest in the world, it is their diversity and intimacy which makes Welsh landscapes so special. Most of us have an instinctive appreciation of a dramatic sunset over the hills of Llŷn, the sweep of Rhossili beach, or the legend-laden aura of Carreg Cennen castle. All are beautifully captured in this report. So we 'get' the aesthetic and emotional appeal of landscapes, but how often do we think beyond that to the 'goods and services' they provide to humankind?

This report advocates the 'ecosystem services' approach to our Welsh landscapes, showing how we are dependent on our land for public 'goods' from tourism to food, management of water, energy production, biodiversity, carbon sequestration and retention, soil conservation, access and amenity. However, these are services which the report says "the market alone cannot be expected to deliver". The

report rightly recognises that climate change is likely to alter the demand for, and supply of, all of them. In fact, as the report emphasises, "The whole of the landscape and environment of Wales is a strategic national resource that underpins the rest of our economic, social and cultural activity."

The report covers a wide spectrum of issues ranging from local environmental management in every part of Wales, to planning for climate change, to the very specific case of what services National Parks should provide in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Wales. Very sensibly it says, "In addressing these issues we should first focus on what we want from the

countryside, and then determine what policies and actions are required to achieve it. Necessarily this approach needs to take on board community involvement and engagement, including cultural and linguistic considerations, as well as the social and economic needs of people living within (and without) designated areas."

The concluding proposals in the report are:

- To use the Green Infrastructure approach as a foundation for achieving sustainable development.
- To support exemplar or flagship projects such as the Cambrian Mountains and Valleys Park initiatives to improve integrated planning and management of economic, social and environmental well-being.
- For the Welsh Government to promote legislation to provide National Parks and other protected landscape organisations in Wales with a wider socio-economic remit, as is the case in Scotland.

To come to fruition these proposals need to be seen as helping to deliver the Government's Scheme for Sustainable Development in its policy document One Wales: One Planet. Its vision is for Wales to live within its environmental limits, to become resilient to the impacts of climate change, to have healthy,



Cover of *Living with our Landscape* report: the photo (by John Briggs) shows the distinctive whaleback peak of Tryfan in the Snowdonia National Park, one of 15 mountains in north Wales over 3,000 feet



The exposed Llein landscape. Photo: John Briggs

biologically diverse and productive ecosystems that are managed sustainably, and communities which are safe, sustainable and attractive places for people to live, work and enjoy.

As a society we take for granted social and economic infrastructure such as our health service and transport systems. Now the many drivers including climate change, food security and peak oil make the green infrastructure approach an urgent necessity.

Rightly the report draws attention to the European Landscape Convention, adopted at Florence in 2000, which argues that all landscapes matter, whether they are protected or not. In this respect the report demonstrates there is much to be done in Wales, especially in terms of the democratisation of land management.

From my own perspective within the National Trust, there is too little mention in the report of the historic value of the Welsh landscape. All our landscapes are mosaics of our history. We are keen to work with the Welsh Government to find ways to support land management

systems which provide multiple benefits.

As the guardian of one sixth of the Welsh coast, the National Trust also feels attention needs to be given to coastal and marine elements of our landscapes. We want to emphasise the need to safeguard the remaining undeveloped coastline outside protected areas, whilst working with the inevitable coastal change arising from erosion and sea level rise.

There is a potential crisis of funding approaching for landscape designations outside the National Parks, in particular the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Many rely to a large extent on local authority core funding and administration. Yet, as a result of the looming central government financial cuts, local authorities are likely to be forced back to their statutory obligations. These do not include financial assistance with the management and staffing of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, just a duty to have regard to their purposes.

While the report presents a

dispassionate analysis of landscape policy, the subject can create passionate arguments, whether about wind turbines or the future of National Park Authorities. We take the landscapes of Wales for granted at our peril. After all they not only provide us with quality time, but spiritual enrichment. It's hard to put a monetary value on such qualities, although the National Trust has led studies to try to do exactly this.

We know for sure that our lives will be much poorer if any part of the Welsh landscape is irrevocably eroded or degraded. The main mind behind this report, that of the late Merfyn Williams, who died in early 2008, was acutely conscious that the growing wealth of the developed world has to a large extent been accompanied by a depletion of our natural capital. Merfyn would have seen this report as an important legacy for Wales.

**Dr Ruth Williams is Welsh Affairs Manager with the National Trust.**

2 | Landscape  
Special

David Llewellyn describes  
a project that is making a  
Regional Park out of the Valleys

# Grand Canyon of the industrial revolution

The breathtaking beauty of the Brecon Beacons and Gower's beaches have long been favourite haunts for discerning visitors, while the recent resurgence Cardiff has rightly established the capital as an increasingly popular destination. Sandwiched in-between, the Valleys of south Wales have not been viewed in the same desirable light. Yet for those prepared to stray from the beaten track, the Valleys have always had a wealth of things to offer. Cwmcarn and Afan Forest are already in the premier league of mountain bike destinations, game fishing on the Taff and its tributaries rivals the best in Britain, whilst the Valleys Walking Festival has grown in size and popularity year on year.

Despite this, perceptions of the area have often remained negative, dominated by images of blackened spoil heaps and waste tips. As Leighton Andrews, Deputy Minister for Regeneration, has said, "The Valleys have traditionally been undervalued in terms of their natural beauty, cultural heritage and tourism potential."

The terrible disaster at Aberfan precipitated much of the positive action to address the defilement of the area. More than 40 years later once despoiled hillsides are mostly green again and



Countryside overlooking Caerphilly Castle.

rivers run clean, such that visitors are often surprised by the beautiful countryside that intertwines with Valleys towns and villages. Together with the area's role as a cradle of the industrial revolution, displayed to such good effect at the Blaenafon World Heritage site, the Valleys' unique and fascinating blend of natural and cultural heritage can provide an economic stimulus to help transform their fortunes.

As First Minister Rhodri Morgan once put it, "The 25 miles of the Taff Valley from Merthyr to Cardiff is the Grand Canyon of the industrial

revolution, a vital part of Wales's and the world's heritage. You should walk it, bike it, and develop a tourism business out of it." These words have now been backed up with over £40 million of new funding to develop the largely untapped tourism potential based on the Valleys' environmental and cultural assets, primarily through a mix of Welsh Government and European convergence funding sources. Over thirty partners including local authorities across the Valleys area, government-sponsored agencies and third-sector organisations are now working as a



Valleys Partnership to deliver the *Valleys Regional Park* project based on a single action plan.

The new funding is expected to be the first in a series of environmental programmes designed to act as catalysts for regenerating the area. The emphasis for the current funding is focused on activities such as walking, cycling and horse riding as well as more extreme outdoor activities. Money is being invested to:

- Upgrade facilities in existing attractions such as country parks, woodlands and nature reserves.
- Develop emerging centres and cultural attractions.
- Improve the access and landscape around forests, rivers and lakes to showcase the Valleys' unique history and environment.
- Create an extensive off-road network of walking trails, cycle ways and horse riding routes that link these attractions, historic buildings and heritage centres.

At the heart of these activities are the Valleys communities themselves, providing additional opportunities for training, skills development and job

creation as well as instilling a renewed sense of local pride in the environment. Targeted programmes will enable local people to become ambassadors for their region, enhancing the welcome that visitors receive and supporting high-profile events and activities some of which will form part of a Valleys Homecoming year in 2010.

The Valleys Partnership is working with initiatives in other former coal-mining areas such as the Regionaal Landschap Kempen in Maasland in Belgium and Nord Pas de Calais in France, which also have post industrial landscapes and have already experienced some of the same opportunities and pitfalls. A key focus for collaboration is working successfully with disengaged communities so that they can benefit from the surrounding countryside. Special campaigns will tackle fly-tipping and antisocial behaviour including arson and illegal off-road motorcycling which are a bane to residents and deter visitors. These will augment initiatives such as Cleaner Greener Communities run by Keep Wales Tidy, BTCV, and the Groundwork Trusts.

One of the first projects to obtain

approval for Valleys Regional Park funding is the Ebbw Fach trail, where community groups, Communities First partnerships and Blaenau Gwent are collaborating to connect 13 local projects throughout the valley, so creating a cohesive environmental and heritage trail.

At the recent inaugural meeting of the Cardiff and Valleys branch of IWA, Professor Kevin Morgan of Cardiff University stated that through its role in the industrial revolution, the Valleys had helped “carbonise” the world. Indeed, in 1913, when the south Wales coalfield was at its peak in terms of both production and manpower, complete combustion of the coal unearthed from the Valleys would have produced more than 160 million tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup>.

The Valleys can now be at the forefront of helping to “decarbonise” the world. With car usage responsible for around 15 per cent of UK CO<sup>2</sup> emissions, some of the new tourism investment is aimed at sustainable travel. The aim is to create a new Valleys Cycle Network in conjunction with Sustrans, as well as generating a better integrated public transport plan for visitors, working with the South East Wales Transport Alliance and the South West Wales Transport Consortium.

Emergence of the Valleys Regional Park will contribute in other ways to the Heads of the Valleys initiative's ambition to create the largest Low Carbon Zone of its kind in Europe. For instance there are plans to install micro-generation and renewable technologies in more than 40,000 homes in the Heads of the Valleys area. More generally, the Valleys' landscapes and heritage provide valuable opportunities to tackle community cohesion, ill-health, education and economic inactivity.

Dr David Llewellyn is partnership co-ordinator with the Valleys Regional Park project  
[www.thevalleys.org.uk](http://www.thevalleys.org.uk)



The emphasis for current Valleys Regional Park funding is focused on activities such as walking, cycling and horse riding.

# Living with our ancestors

Paul Sambrook and Jenny Hall on a 25-year project to record the heritage of our uplands

The foundations of a medieval house high up in Cwm Cwareli, Brecon Beacons.

**The uplands of Wales above 600 feet cover more than 40 per cent of our landmass and are remarkable for the survival of archaeological remains. Since the late 1980s the Uplands Archaeology Initiative undertaken by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales is systematically surveying and recording this remarkable inheritance.**

Each Uplands Initiative survey is a revelation. Invariably, after several weeks' fieldwork, the archaeological record of an area will have increased dramatically, sometimes by over 5,000 per cent. Intensive ground survey, supported by the interpretation of aerial photographs by Commission staff, and the fieldworkers' documentary research, ensures that the history of our hills can be properly recorded.

For over 20 years detailed field surveys have been undertaken of successive upland areas. The surveys have been carried out by a variety of archaeological organisations, including many from the independent sector, with the Royal Commission's staff in Aberystwyth co-ordinating the survey

as it progresses. Grant aid is available through the Commission to undertake surveys in blocks, working towards eventual full coverage, which is expected to be achieved in the next five years. It is a huge piece of work by archaeological standards, and one which is producing excellent results.

One particularly rewarding aspect of the Uplands Initiative is that the data collected by fieldworkers, which includes accurate site records, descriptions and photographs, is incorporated into the National Monuments Record. This is the national database and archive of archaeological information for Wales. This data is made available online, via the Commission's own Coflein website. It is also added to the Historic Wales portal, which is managed by the Commission to bring together its information with that held by Cadw, the National Museum and the Regional Archaeological Trusts, creating a one-stop-shop to search for archaeological records.

During the past five years we have been involved in the Uplands Initiative surveys in some fascinating areas, including Pumlumon, Mynydd Epynt, Brecon Beacons and the Radnor Forest.

During 2008, our survey of the eastern Brecon Beacons increased the number of archaeological sites recorded in the National Monuments Record for the area from 14 to 630. The Brecon Beacons is an iconic and much-cherished landscape but that does not mean that it is properly understood. The results of the 2008 survey will take some years to digest, but this new body of data will mean that some reassessment is needed of the story of this mountain block.

This year we are surveying the heart of the Elenydd hills, a large tract of land which lies between the Elan Valley and Ceredigion. The study area covers 63 square kilometres of mountain pasture, mostly managed by the Elan Trust, much of which is a living and growing peat bog. Here we are trying to discover and record the evidence of human activity in a landscape which has been described as "the last great wilderness of Wales". Four farms account for the entire population of the area.

In such a landscape it is still possible to get lost. Even in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century the traveller John Leland noted that Elenydd, then in the possession of the

soon to be dissolved abbey of Strata Florida, was “*wilde pastures and breeding ground.*” Little has changed in nearly 500 years.

Nevertheless, it is misleading to talk about our great mountains as ‘wild’ or ‘natural’. One conviction which the field archaeologist will invariably come to hold is that the beautiful uplands of Wales are as much a human environment as the farmland which fills in the gaps between them.

There are few places you can go in the Welsh uplands where you won’t encounter the handiwork of long-forgotten people - not even in Elenydd. Prehistoric communities felled and burned the deciduous forests which once covered the hills. This allowed for the spread of blanket peat bog over much of our uplands, locked within which is a valuable pollen record of millennia of human interaction with the landscape. Prehistoric cairns and barrows, medieval hafods, post-medieval shepherding huts and peat-cutters’ cottages, deserted farmsteads, quarries, mines, or great expanses of old peat cuttings also combine to leave their stamp on the landscape.

It is evident that the impact of human activity has continued right up to the present day. Changes in land

management practices on the hills can have just as great an effect as in the lowlands. For example, changes in grazing regimes and stocking rates during the past century have allowed for the expansion of purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea*), a grass species which is causing the degradation of upland mires and peat bogs and can make hill-walking a thoroughly miserable experience. *Molinia* masks the landscape in a way that obscures and degrades archaeological earthworks. Other invasive plant species such as bracken and gorse have a similar impact. Future human intervention will be required to address problems created by earlier human interventions.

The reservoir builders of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries have made remarkable additions to our upland environment, sometimes highly contentious additions of course, but undeniably part of our nation’s story and worthy of study. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century has also seen military ranges make use of the wide open spaces. In Elenydd the shrapnel of pre-First World War artillery ranges can be picked out of the moorland grass. Forest plantations changed the uplands radically after the Second World War. Wind farms are making their mark as we turn our thoughts to climate change and a

sustainable future. Each of these waves of change will be the archaeology that future generations will puzzle over. Like the work of peat cutters of old, their time will pass.

Amongst the biggest threats to our upland heritage is modern recreation. Walkers, mountain bikers, horse-riders and 4x4 off-roaders all have their impact. The innocuous pursuit of leisure can lead to the disassembling of ancient cairns, disturbed to create modern marker cairns. Old stone huts can be turned into barbeque sites and old earthwork banks incorporated into ad hoc trails.

Ultimately, raising awareness of the rich heritage of the mountains can help prevent such damage. An important aspect of the Upland Initiative surveys is that the improved record of archaeological sites helps inform management strategies which can militate against avoidable damage to individual sites or even entire historic landscapes. By making its findings publicly accessible through the internet, the Commission also gives individuals the chance to find out for themselves what it is that makes our uplands such a precious heritage.

The endeavours of past generations have actually created the environment we see today and count as being so very fragile and special. The archaeology of the mountain lands provides the surest proof we have that our ancestors were resourceful and often thoroughly tenacious. They endeavoured to conquer the hills and take what they needed from them. Their efforts should not go unappreciated or be misrepresented. They should certainly not be left unrecorded.

Paul Sambrook and Jenny Hall are Directors of Trysor, a small independent heritage company based in Pembrokeshire and the Amman Valley. The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales is online at [www.rcahmw.gov.uk](http://www.rcahmw.gov.uk) Coflein is online at [www.coflein.gov.uk](http://www.coflein.gov.uk) and the Historic Wales portal is found at <http://jura.rcahms.gov.uk/NMW/start.jsp>



Carn Gwilym, Hyddgen: a Bronze Age cairn with a 19th century marker cairn built on it. Pumlumon is to the left in the background. Nant y Moch reservoir is to the south

# Stressed, burnt and dropping out

Dave Egan argues that we need a new approach to educating our 14-19 year olds

The recent publication of the Nuffield Review of 14-19 Education and Training in England and Wales provides a timely opportunity to take stock of developments in 14-19 education policy in Wales. It is rare these days, given the increasing distinctiveness of education policy in our country, to have a major report that looks at developments in both England and Wales. It is even rarer in a document that is largely dominated by developments in England to see Wales receiving such an extended amount of coverage as it does in this report. This can be attributed to the guidance of the lead Director of the Review, Professor Richard Pring of Oxford University, who is that very rare bird: an Englishman with a genuine interest and passion for policy developments in Wales.

The coverage of Wales in the report, produced by Professor Gareth Rees of Cardiff University - another member of the review directorate - is balanced and insightful. There is a recognition of the innovative way that Wales has set about promoting its Learning Pathways policy, the strong networking that has been undertaken at local level and in particular the visionary development of the Welsh Bac. However, given the energy and funding that has been expended in this activity the report raises quite properly the question of what has actually been achieved in discernible outcomes, particularly. And this is in a context where concerns remain about the levels of achievement

and participation in education of our 14-19 year olds in Wales.

Where do we go from here if the objectives of 14-19 reform in Wales, first set out in 2001 in *The Learning Country*, are to be fully realised? First, it is necessary to face up to the challenges that naturally arise in attempting to



achieve systemic change in 14-19 education and training. Secondly, we need a theory of action as to how such change can best be brought about. Finally, there needs to be a clear action plan on how we can scale up the policies that will be required.

The challenges are still significant. One of them can be expressed through an example based on a value added rather than deficit calculation. In 2006-07, 71 per cent of our 19 year olds in Wales achieved a level 2 qualification (the equivalent of 5 or more GCSEs at \*A-C or in vocational awards). Of these young people, 49 per cent achieved the level by the age of 16 and this was predominantly through the study of GCSE in schools. The 22 per cent who reached this level over the next 2/3 years would have done so largely through following vocational courses in further

education colleges.

These statistics tell us something very significant. The dominance of GCSE in schools and the lack of vocational opportunities for young people had led to over one-fifth of the cohort not attaining the outcomes of which they were capable. Quite simply, they were denied a curriculum that motivated them and helped them to reach their potential.

From September 2010, the new 14-19 Measure enacted by the Welsh Assembly will come into force. This will statutorily broaden the curriculum in schools and the range of courses available to young people. However, will it genuinely break the stranglehold of GCSE - a style of learning patently not suited to the needs and interest of a significant number of our young people? Or will it continue to dominate the educational landscape and be a direct cause of the under-achievement pointed to in the example above? The stakes are high. In my view it will not succeed unless the actions I point to below are also put into place.

A second challenge that is faced is equally as fundamental. Why is there a necessity at the age of 16 (mainly through GCSE), at 17 (largely via AS level) and 18 (predominantly through A level) to carry out national assessments of our 16-19 year olds? Suddenly all the formative approaches to assessment that are in place in Wales through the Foundation Phase, teacher assessment at ages 7, 11 and 14 and assessment for learning as a central part of learning and teaching pedagogy, fly out of the window.

The cost to schools in examination fees alone is around £30 million a year at a time when funding is at a premium. The amount of learning and teaching time lost to assessment is totally unjustifiable. Nothing gets fatter by constantly weighing it. Is it any wonder that many of our young people get stressed, burnt out and then drop out? Those who survive and proceed into higher education often have to be weaned away from the didactic approaches they have become inured to in the previous four years to one where independent learning and modular assessment are the core pedagogy. This is high stakes assessment gone mad and if 14-19 reform is to truly succeed it has to address it.

The third major challenge is collaboration, an objective that has long been the aim of 14-19 reform in Wales. Generally, the record here is not a good one. We need learning providers to offer a single menu from which young people can choose the courses they want to motivate and qualify them. Yet the vested interests of many of our institutions stand in the way of the collaboration that is needed to provide this.

There are exceptions. There has been a genuine re-configuration by Work Based Learning providers. And in a small number of areas of Wales there are genuinely innovative approaches to collaborative provision between schools and further education colleges. In general, however, the December 2007 Webb Report, which provided a blueprint for genuine collaboration and improved provision, has not received an appropriate strategic response.

What then of a theory of action that could respond to these challenges? Well it has to start with the recognition that, important though they are, the provision of an appropriate curriculum and a sane assessment system are not the really critical change agents. We know from an increasing body of evidence from around the world that the things that really make a difference in reforming

education policy and making education more accessible and successful, are the quality of our teachers and the leaders of our educational institutions. Get these things right and it becomes much easier for the curriculum to play its part in achieving improved student engagement and success. There has been far too little focus on these issues in 14-19 developments in Wales.

An action plan needs five strands. First, the Welsh Government should look again at the Webb Report and provide a strategic response on how to achieve greater collaboration. The proposals in Webb are probably too complex and the Transformation Agenda that has been brought forward is in essence driven more by

SATS or moving the assessment burden somewhere else, but the use of assessment as a formative and summative tool designed to open up opportunities to young people post 14 based on their readiness and their aptitudes.

Fourthly and perhaps most importantly, there needs to be a major focus on the quality of teaching in the 14-19 area. Initial teacher training, continuous professional development and the fostering of learning communities across schools, further and work-based education should all become part of this focus. The review that the Welsh Assembly Government is currently undertaking into teacher development and leadership provides a timely opportunity to address this.

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## And in a small number of areas of Wales there are genuinely innovative approaches to collaborative provision between schools and further education colleges.

organisational than educational and governance considerations. The way forward might be to require the four local authority consortia in Wales to work with the further education and work-based learning providers in their area to develop strategic plans for 14-19 provision based on genuine collaboration supported by a leadership and governance structure.

Secondly, we need a coherent offer that can be made to young people and that includes high quality traditional, applied and work-based learning modules through the regional collaborations of providers. All of this, thirdly, should be framed within the Welsh Bac which should also become the overarching assessment system for 14-19, replacing GCSE, AS and A level and their vocational equivalents in a modular based diploma system available at levels 1, 2 and 3. Serious consideration could then be given to the possibility of a matriculation qualification for young people at the age of 14. Not the return of the dreaded

Finally, all these developments should be encapsulated within the School Effectiveness Framework and the Quality Education Framework that are being currently developed by the Welsh Assembly Government. If the first decade of devolution in Wales has been characterised by policy development and innovation, then the second could wisely be focused on policy consolidation and integration. Education for our 14-19 year olds needs to become part of a wider holistic approach that links leadership and teaching to the curriculum. Perhaps when Wales' next First Minister retires it will be 14-19 reform and not the Foundation Phase that he or she will then point to as their proudest achievement.

Professor Dave Egan is the Director of Applied Education Research at UWIC and currently undertaking a Review of eight to 14 education for the Welsh Government.

# Combating the culture of numbers

Stevie Upton advocates a broader approach to knowledge exchange in our universities

In this year's Reith Lectures, Professor Michael Sandel of Harvard University argued that the current economic crisis signalled the end of an era of 'market triumphalism'. In its place he envisaged a newfound market scepticism that would recognise the moral limits of markets and question their unrelenting expansion into previously untouched spheres.

Recent press reports, however, suggest a rather different response, at least in relation to markets and higher education. UK Higher Education Minister David Lammy, for example, is quoted in the Times Higher Education as having told members of Universities UK that "we are working to help the sector further increase its economic contribution". Meanwhile, Lord Mandelson, writing during the creation of his new Department for Business, Innovation and Skills earlier this year, made it clear in the Education Guardian that further and higher education together constitute "an integral part of a sustained recovery".

These statements are telling. Far from regarding the economic crisis as an opportunity to question the reach of market forces, the UK Government sees it as necessitating the public sector's increased engagement with the market. Devolution notwithstanding, they are statements that should give us pause for thought in Wales. They will impact on higher education here because the Research Councils from where it receives a significant part of its

income still remain within the purview of Westminster.

Central to this debate is the fact that university research is increasingly being expected to demonstrate an economic return on investment. Yet, as Sandel suggests, there are good reasons why we should question the marriage of markets and academia. First, however, we should understand the terms of the debate on knowledge exchange in British universities.

**Far from regarding the economic crisis as an opportunity to question the reach of market forces, the UK Government sees it as necessitating the public sector's increased engagement with the market.**

Knowledge exchange should be considered as distinct from, albeit related to, research and teaching. Its purpose is the sharing of research outputs or teaching expertise for particular ends. Questioning the definition of those ends as predominantly economic is not the same as suggesting that 'pure' or 'blue skies' research cannot take place.

It is fair to suggest that the Government, in Cardiff Bay as well as in Westminster, is prioritising the economic benefits of university research over its social or cultural values. In reading the Assembly Government's policy on knowledge exchange, and in talking to civil servants with responsibility for implementing it, it is true that a range of spheres for the conduct of knowledge exchange –

including, in one's words, "community, society, culture" – is mentioned.

However, closer inspection of the 2004 Nexus Report on the role of higher education in Wales reveals that not one of the concluding recommendations for developing higher education refers to its cultural or social role. This comes at the end of a report in which the cultural development of universities' neighbouring communities is described as having "economic consequences", and sustainable development is valued as "an important part of any national innovation system". Thus, although there are multiple purposes of knowledge exchange, only one – the economy – is prioritised.

Interestingly, and importantly for any critique of such a prioritisation, it is not a position shared by academics engaged in knowledge exchange. From interviews conducted with British

academics engaged in a range of knowledge-sharing activities, two facts stand out. In the first place, three common motivating factors arise time and again: engaging in interesting and enjoyable activities, enhancing personal or institutional kudos, and making a difference to others. A second common refrain, expressed even by academics engaged in potentially lucrative activities, is that while money is important, it is as a facilitator of knowledge exchange rather than a motivating factor for it.

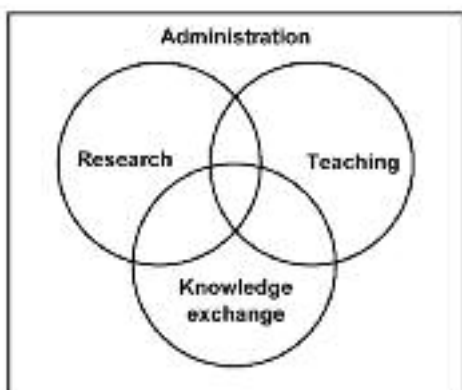
This mismatch between government and academic motivations matters in three key respects. Firstly it should matter to the Government. Secondly it matters to academia. And thirdly it should be of concern for society as a whole.

It should matter to the Assembly

Government because a lack of alignment between policy drivers for knowledge exchange and the motivations of academics makes it less likely that policy will achieve its desired ends, economic or otherwise. There is good reason to believe that economic ends can also be achieved by pursuing other, non-economic, goals. Indeed, some of these might tally better with academic motivations. In addition to encouraging academics to develop their non-economic impacts, there is therefore a strong argument to be made that refocusing policy on facilitating impact, regardless of type, would be likely to *increase* economic impact.

Universities should also be concerned about a bias in favour of income-generating knowledge exchange. Academic activity can be imagined as a series of overlapping activities (as seen in the diagram), which sit within a single bounded space. This space can be understood as the total resources – including time, money and other support – available to an academic. Given that these resources are limited, an increase in the amount of a resource such as time allocated to one task reduces the amount available for other tasks.

### Spaces of academic activity



Unless space is made for knowledge exchange, it is therefore liable to be squeezed out by the remaining activities. At present, resources for

knowledge exchange are allocated to universities based on metrics that largely favour income-generating activity. The result is that academics engaged in wealth-generating knowledge exchange tend to be provided with more space to engage than are those engaged in other forms of exchange. At best, this will mean that some academics will engage in knowledge exchange under constrained circumstances, potentially affecting its quality. At worst, academics will fail to see the incentive to engage.

All of this matters enormously to society. To understand why, we must turn to the work of Amartya Sen, winner of a Nobel Prize in Economics and proponent of the view that a well-functioning economy is an important but, crucially, not a sufficient condition for a developed society. Sen argues that development is about creating suitable conditions for the living of lives that we have reason to value. And what we value, he says, is not only economic prosperity. In total he acknowledges five 'instrumental freedoms', including political freedoms and social opportunities, each of which is important in its own right as a goal, and an indicator, of development. Together they are also mutually reinforcing, such that developing one freedom can lead to developments in another.

Academia has a contribution to make in all of these realms. To focus in isolation on the economic impact of universities is therefore not only to misunderstand the nature of development – viewing it as a trickle-down process of social benefits emanating from economic growth – but also to overlook the full richness of academia's potential contribution to society.

In commissioning the Jones Review of Higher Education in Wales, our Government has shown itself to be open to a new vision for our universities. Only time will tell whether it has the confidence and foresight to develop a radically different policy from that of the UK Government. Focusing

on the economic value of research is a red herring that will not only preclude pursuit of other goals but will also stifle the very income-generating activity that it aims to promote. If the Assembly commits to supporting engagement of every possible kind by academics, then the rest – economic contributions included – will surely follow. Only with this long-term commitment to valuing academic outputs, replacing a short-term focus on exploiting research for immediate gain, will Wales be fully able to capitalise on its talent.

For their part, universities hold a position of power that could also help to promote a broader knowledge exchange. In a time of budgetary constraints it is tempting to jump through the hoops that lead to new funding sources, but universities will need to resist the temptation to view knowledge exchange as a bean-counting exercise. Instead, Vice Chancellors should be using their institutional autonomy to encourage academics to seek the broadest possible range of impacts, whilst also lobbying Government and working with the Higher Education Funding Council to find an alternative to the existing narrow metrics.

Nevertheless a deeply ingrained 'culture of numbers', which holds that numerical measures are somehow more 'factual' than qualitative indicators of value, continues to militate against this. Our universities and our Government will therefore need to be bold in asserting alternative values. Now is the time for our universities to face the challenge of creating an environment that fosters these values of the academic community. Unless they do so, in an era of global competition we will face losing talented academics and students from the Welsh higher education system, and will fail to achieve the enhanced wellbeing of citizens that should be our ultimate goal.

Dr Stevie Upton is Research Officer with the IWA.

# Lifestyle epidemic

Dyfed Wyn Huws warns that public health could continue to lose out in the Welsh Government's newly reorganised NHS

Out of the ashes of the long-awaited bonfire of the internal market of the nine Welsh NHS Trusts and 22 Local Health Boards, this October the Minister created the phoenix of seven new Local Health Boards, including Powys which survives only by being combined with the local authority. But wait, still glowing in the embers with a failing, flashing blue flame, is the Welsh Ambulance NHS Trust, as is the anomalous Velindre NHS Trust. They are all that is left of a previous decade's attempt to instil market values into the NHS.

Statutory public health functions now lie with the seven Local Health Boards and 22 local authorities. However, these local bodies have almost no specialist public health resources for the job. Such as they are these lie with the new Public Health Wales NHS Trust. It has no statutory public health functions, while its inherited senior professionals are inadequate in number and thinly dispersed locally. Moreover, its relationship with the new Health Boards is uncertain.

This is a missed opportunity because our increasingly hi-tech hospital-based NHS groans ever louder under a growing epidemic of preventable public health problems. In Wales we continue to have one of the worst incidences of health problems relative to the rest of western Europe. This is despite us having our own National Public Health Service for the last six years.

So why is our public health so

abysmal? In any developed country there is a gradient of worsening health, higher mortality and lower life expectancy across socio-economic groups, moving from the most affluent to the worse-off. The effect is worse for *all*, but particularly the poor, the more uneven the spread of income and wealth in society (see figure 1). A combination of circumstances, including poor economic conditions, urban environments, smoking and alcohol intake greatly affect health, from before birth through to childhood and beyond into adulthood. This is especially the case with cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and some cancers.

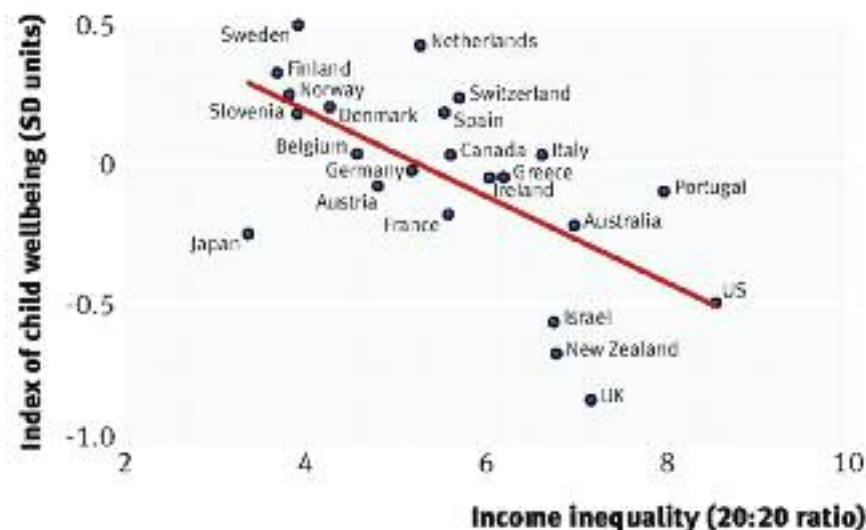
Wales has high levels of poverty compared with elsewhere in western Europe. Our GVA per head is declining relative to the UK average.

We live in a divided society where the difference between rich and poor is among the widest in Europe. This has not improved since 1999. Health has therefore worsened. For example, by 2005, the gap in male average life expectancy at birth for the two local authority areas in Wales with the highest and lowest had widened to 4.2 years. Measures of teenage health in Wales are amongst the worst in all of Europe - see Box 1 and Figure 2.

So, why has the National Public Health Service for Wales failed to effectively address our worsening national health?

Between 1974 and 1988 the clear line of responsibility for the health of the people was lost. The 1988 Acheson Report established the executive Director of Public Health on the board

Figure 1: Correlation between income inequality and the Unicef index of child wellbeing in 23 rich countries





**Box 1:**

## The health of adolescents in Wales

- Fewer eleven year-olds in Wales consume daily fruit than in 10 other EU states.
- A quarter of 11 year-olds in Wales drink sugary drinks daily – higher than Scotland and England. Less than 10 per cent do so in Iceland, Norway, Denmark and Sweden.
- By age 15 only 9 per cent of girls and 21 per cent of boys in Wales report one hour or more of daily moderate-to-vigorous physical activity.
- A quarter of 15 year-olds in Wales watch two or more hours of television each weekday – higher than other UK countries and most of wider Europe.
- Wales, like Scotland, shows a high level of 15 year-olds who start smoking at 13 years or younger. More girls smoke (34 per cent) than boys (26 per cent). Only central and eastern European countries tend to be worse. We're as bad for frequent smoking: 12 per cent of 13 year-old girls and 6 per cent of boys smoke at least weekly – the second highest in the EU.
- About 40 per cent of 15 year-olds in Wales drink weekly – unusually similar for both genders, the third highest percentage in wider Europe and North America, worse than other UK countries, and a problem across all socioeconomic groups.
- Over a quarter of 13 year-old boys and girls in Wales have been drunk at least twice – a higher proportion than almost all other European countries and North America. Wales has one of the highest levels of 15 year-olds who report first drunkenness at age 13 years.
- In Wales, 41 per cent of 15 year-old girls say they've had sexual intercourse, and 30 per cent of boys. For girls this is the highest percentage of all wider Europe and North America, apart from Greenland. Condom use is low compared to these countries, too.
- A higher proportion of 11 year-olds in Wales rate their health as only fair or poor compared to all EU countries.
- 13 year-olds in Wales have one of the lowest levels of self-rated life satisfaction in the developed world, especially for girls.
- Wales is second only to Malta in the European league table, with 18 per cent of 15 year-old girls and 21 per cent of boys overweight or obese – worse than Scotland and England.
- Pedestrian road traffic collisions in under 16 year-olds are considerably more common in deprived areas than in affluent areas in Wales. They are one of the main causes of death in this age group after infancy.

Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Survey 2005-6.

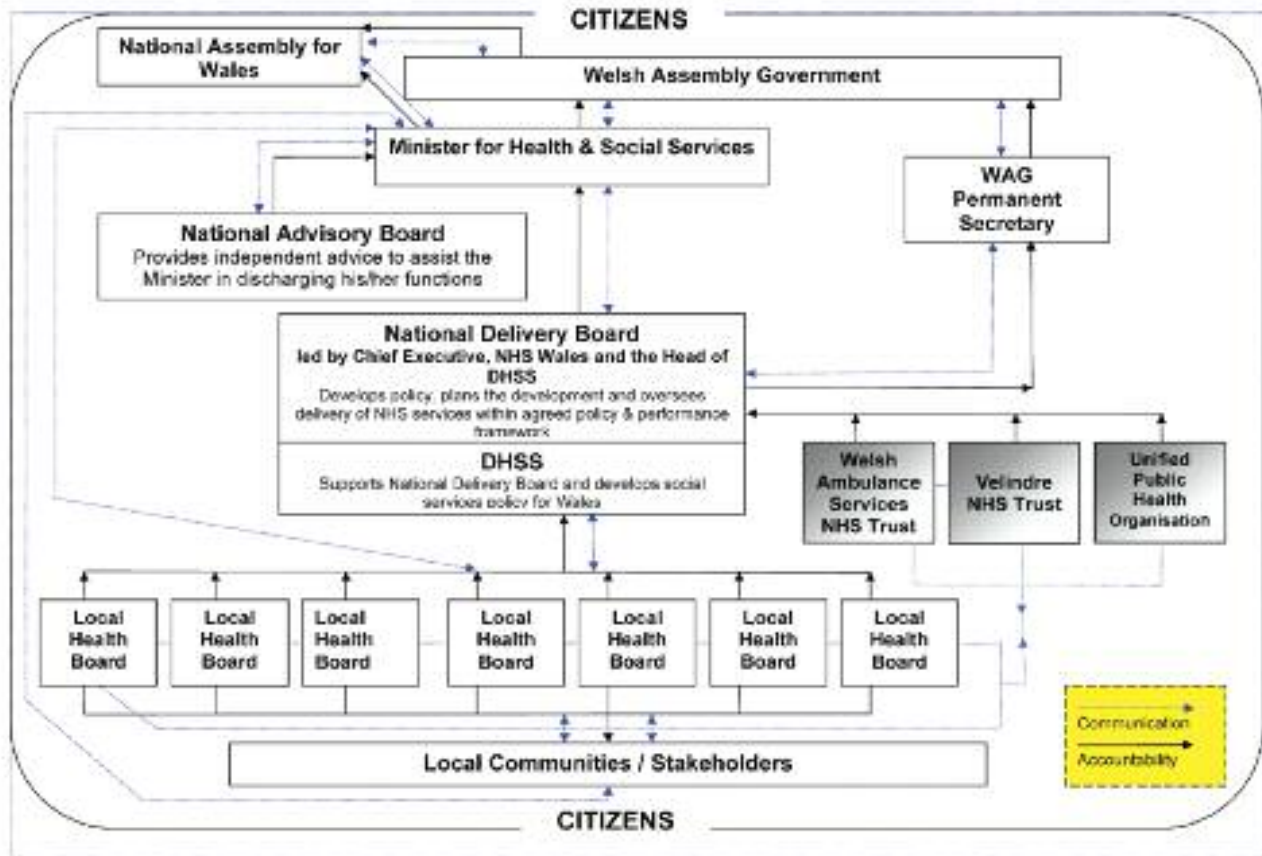
of health authorities, responsible for protecting and promoting the health of the people. However, with the dissolution of Welsh health authorities in 2003 this position was again lost, and with it the clear executive responsibility for the health of the people.

Instead, 22 small Local Health Boards and the National Public Health Service were established. The latter had no board. Even though the Welsh Government set it up to 'deliver local services', with the Local Health Boards and others, its own unpublished internal review later showed that its main stakeholders – local government, NHS Trusts and Local Health Boards – were dissatisfied with what its senior management had provided.

As now, it was *local* government and the 22 Local Health Boards that held the statutory public health duties and powers from 2003. None lay with NHS Trusts and almost none nationally. Almost all public health professionals, including Local Public Health Directors of the old Local Health Boards, were appointed, employed and managed by the non-statutory National Public Health Service. Its management failed to deliver properly qualified and properly recruited public health consultants to all the 22 Local Health Boards, even though their main function was to deliver local services.

Where there were consultants their part-time Local Health Board role was not supported centrally. Caught between a rock and a hard place, they had all the responsibility but no executive authority, no core funding, no senior staff, and mixed and unclear accountabilities. Considering the Local Health Boards' and local authorities' statutory public health duties this was a dangerous mix for them and for the public, in terms of preventing and tackling infectious disease outbreaks. As for improving health locally it was

The Welsh NHS - the new map.



# iwar new publications

## Will Britain Survive Beyond 2020?

David Melding     **£11.99**     ISBN 978 1 904773 43 6

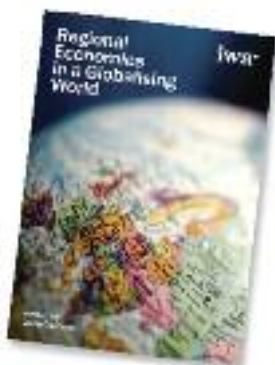
How should Unionists of all political stripes respond to devolution and its many challenges? Should Conservatives embrace and enhance nationalism in the Home Nations of Britain? David Melding, Conservative AM for South Wales Central, argues for a federal solution, a recognition of the sovereignties of each Home Nation, but also a continuing role for the wider British state. Confronting the question 'Have we been anti-Welsh?' he says Conservatives should be more confident in embracing their Welsh political identity.



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Edited by John Osmond     **£10.00**     ISBN 978 1 904773 45 0

In this book economists and economic geographers working in contrasting regional economies around the world reflect on their experience of analysing new approaches to economic development in the context of globalisation. What has worked in their context and what has disappointed? What policy exchange can be realistically attempted? How best can regional economies engage with the forces of globalisation? What lessons can Wales learn from the experiences of regional economies as far apart as Europe, the Middle East, the Far East and North America?



**Figure 2: Wales tops the European league for teenage drinking**



Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Survey 2005-6

completely non-functioning.

As a result of these structural problems, and due to an added ingrained culture of nepotism, there is little wonder that a significant number of our scarce senior public health professionals left the National Public Health Service, most of them leaving Wales altogether. Consequently, it came as a relief when last autumn's second

NHS consultation proposed that Directors of Public Health would be re-established, this time based within the seven new Local Health Boards.

Is there a chance, therefore, that we can now look forward to a world class national public health service together with strong, independent but accountable public health leadership and advocacy from the seven new Directors of Public Health? Certainly, our poor standards of public health, and often shocking lifestyles, especially among the young, demonstrate a crying need.

However, as the new Public Health Wales NHS Trust emerges into view, there seems to be a mystery spectre rather than a phoenix at work. Despite its failures, in October 2009 the old National Public Health Service simply became the *de facto* major component of the new Public Health Wales. The new organisation has a new chair, board and chief executive. However, its interim management team is mainly made up of the senior management of the old National Public Health Service. Failure to appoint a new team will result in a status quo in terms of better health for Wales.

Unless there is a clean sweep it is difficult to see how the much needed culture of excellence and professionalism can develop. A few decades ago Wales' public health service was world famous, but we have a poor reputation now. Recruitment needs to ensure that we get the best people possible for all the new posts. The balance between strong local public health and responsive central support also needs sorting out. More of the same won't do for Wales.

Public health was rightly trumpeted in the *One Wales* coalition agreement following the 2007 Assembly election. However, we are in danger of repeating the mistakes of the last six years. Indeed, the functions that are required locally are still to be properly

**The seven new Local Health Boards that came into being in October 2009**



considered. Surely the focus has to be on improving the public's health through partnership between the local NHS, local government, other sectors and communities, with local strong credible independent executive public health leadership and advocacy.

We must hope that sometime in the future these complex requirements may be better clarified and enshrined in Welsh primary public health legislation, via a Legislative Competence Order, a Wales-only Westminster Act, or better still by a fully-fledged Welsh Parliament. This would supercede current 19th Century public health law, and set out clearer principles for protecting and improving the Welsh public's health. The ambiguous organisation of public health duties still needs clarifying in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Wales.

**Dr Dyfed Wyn Huws** is an Honorary Research Fellow with the Department of Primary Care and Public Health at Cardiff University and a freelance consultant specialist in international public health.

# Beating the crunch

**Katija Dew** describes how a Welsh financial movement is benefiting from the credit crunch

**This year the Llandudno Credit Union, one of the largest in Wales, has become the first to launch a debit card, allowing members to pay for goods in shops and use cash machines. Supported by a £187,000 grant from the Assembly Government, the new service has been set up with the help of the Co-operative Bank which handles the technical side of issuing the debit cards and the electronic account management.**

Although the new service is aimed primarily at the eight per cent of the Welsh population over 16 who don't have a bank account, there has been a surge of interest in credit unions since the collapse of the Northern Rock building society. The Llandudno Credit Union, which covers the Conwy area, has seen its membership grow to 3,000 in the past year.

"We noticed after the collapse of Northern Rock that people were joining and depositing larger amounts of cash," said the Llandudno union's manager Barry Roberts. "Members felt we were one institution they could trust. The fact that all profit generated by the credit union is returned to members or reinvested to improve services makes a refreshing change in the current climate which awards huge bonuses to senior staff of banks and other financial institutions. We have been attracting new members from all walks of life. Obviously there are people who are on low incomes who tell us they have found it difficult to open a normal bank account. But there are also people who are just generally fed

up with the service they've been getting from the high street banks."

There are now 29 credit unions in Wales, owned and run by their 49,000 members, 7,200 of whom are children. They are mainly run by some 825 volunteers, but they also employ 75 full and part-time staff across Wales. Credit



Katija Dew is National Financial Inclusion Champion for Wales, based at the Wales Co-operative Centre in Cardiff

unions hold more than £16.5 million of individuals' savings and have £40.7 million out on loan to their membership. The trend has been one of steady growth since the first union, St Therese's in Swansea, was registered in 1980. The period 2001-2004 saw a threefold increase in membership which coincided with significant investment by the Welsh Government and the European Social Fund.

The Welsh Government has invested

£1.75 million since 2,000 and promised a further £1.75 million under the terms of the *One Wales* coalition agreement between Labour and Plaid Cymru. A defining moment for the movement was reached in October 2008 when all-Wales coverage was achieved when the Gateway Credit Union extended its common bond area to include Monmouthshire.

The benefit of a wide geographic remit has brought the commitment of other stakeholders with value added schemes that have been negotiated and delivered. For example, Powys County Council supports a Home Improvement Scheme, whereby a free building survey and energy savings advice are given alongside the credit and financial services of the Partnership. Co-operation extends beyond these three organisations to other credit unions in the area, advice services, the voluntary sector and social enterprises to name but a few.

Another innovation has been the Robert Owen Montgomeryshire Credit Union's partnership with a Community Development Finance Institution to serve the financial needs of both individuals and small businesses in Powys. The Partnership is able to deliver a range of services to the area in ways that would not be possible if the two organisations involved were working on their own. Credit Unions, limited by their common bond area and regulation around lending to only individuals can provide the facilities that Community Development Finance institutions cannot.

The main challenge facing the Credit Union movement is reaching those people on low incomes who often have limited knowledge, understanding



Barry Roberts, Llandudno Credit Union's manager, pictured with Social Justice Minister Brian Gibbons at the launch of the Union's new debit card earlier this year.

or confidence in how to manage their money. However, for such people credit unions offer a vital alternative to doorstep lenders, often referred to as 'loan sharks'. For instance, a typical 'doorstep' loan of £200 over 31 weeks would result in a £110 interest charge, compared with a £15 11p credit union interest charge (at just 2 per cent). A doorstep loan of £500 over 55 weeks would cost £325 in interest, compared with £67.25p credit union interest.

Moreover, borrowers from credit unions first have to be investors, however small the amounts, so they have become used to making regular payments and developing a savings habit. State benefits can be paid directly into members' share accounts, and can be withdrawn, saved, or used to repay a credit union loan.

The credit crunch is providing the backcloth for a new initiative to tackle debt and financial exclusion, 'Taking Everyone Into Account', which was launched for consultation in February 2009. The strategy sets out how the Assembly Government will work with other organisations to promote financial

inclusion and tackle over-indebtedness by actions in five key areas:

- Access to mainstream financial services;
- Affordable credit and savings;
- Access to money and debt advice;
- Helping people to improve their financial skills; and
- Helping people maximise their income.

The strategy outlines support for post offices and credit unions to develop new and sustainable services including affordable and accessible financial products. It also highlights how the Financial Inclusion Champions team for Wales, appointed in October 2008, is working to increase awareness and take-up of suitable bank accounts and third sector lenders as an alternative to loan sharks.

The strategy also aims to improve knowledge, skills and understanding of financial products and services through financial education in schools and more widely in partnership with the Financial Services Authority. Maximising income is a key feature of the strategy, for instance ensuring that people claim the

benefits and support to which they are entitled, especially housing and council tax benefits and the help available with fuel costs.

Making financial inclusion a reality is a strategic challenge and one that can only be achieved by engaging with the culture of mainstream organisations. Local Authorities are well placed to influence the plethora of organisations that have contact with those that need support, as do social landlords, Health Trusts and others in the public sector.

A good place to start is some critical thinking about what financial exclusion means to the organisation, how the issues affect service users and as a natural follow on how this impacts on their own objectives. Mainstreaming activity that tackles such exclusion with seamless progression to the services that partners provide should not be seen as an unattainable nirvana. It is achievable if all stakeholders can instil the culture, trust and innovative thinking that is required by all.

# The Kafka Brigade comes to Wales

Andrew Davies describes an innovative approach to improving public services

**In novels such as *The Castle* Franz Kafka brilliantly described the problems of modern bureaucracies. In their hierarchical structures, impenetrability and general lack of transparency they tend to create an experience of isolation for those within as well as outside their systems.**

By their very nature bureaucracies contribute to the gap between policy and practice which, as Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery, it is my overwhelming priority to close. Consequently, when in December 2007 I met with Jorrit de Jong, a Dutch academic, social entrepreneur, and senior member of the *Kafka Brigade*, I was struck by the similarity between the challenges we face in improving public services in Wales, and those in

the Netherlands and Belgium.

In the Netherlands the Kafka Brigade is called into action when citizens and public servants become tangled in a web of dysfunctional rules, regulations and procedures. It is an independent, non-profit action research team that assesses red tape from a citizen's perspective. The Brigade's unique research method allows it to quickly diagnose and remedy the key problems standing in the way of top quality service. To determine where and why a bureaucracy had broken down, the Kafka Brigade puts itself in the shoes of the people whom it serves.

Whilst public services can be highly effective at meeting most people's needs – as confirmed by our own Living in Wales survey where citizens' satisfaction averaged around 86 per

cent – service providers often find it more challenging to respond effectively to people with more complex needs.

People who require specific support from a range of different agencies, or who don't fit in with 'expected patterns', can often be frustrated by the very rules, regulations and targets intended to improve services. So when I discovered that the Kafka Brigade have been employed by numerous public bodies in the Netherlands and elsewhere to tackle red tape on behalf of their citizens, I was keen to see if this method would work for us in Wales.

Over the past year, I have therefore sponsored the Kafka Brigade to work in partnership with Local Service Boards in three areas. In Bridgend, the team is focused on the services provided for young people with disabilities. In Cardiff and Swansea, it is examining the services available for young people Not in Employment, Education, or Training (the so-called 'NEETs').

In addition to these pilot projects, Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Service Board has chosen to apply the Kafka method to assist in improving services for victims of domestic violence, funded by the Home Office and facilitated by the Assembly Government.

So what does a Kafka project look like? On the surface, the approach is deceptively simple, applying a common sense approach. The Brigade aims to tackle red tape and service complexity from the user or citizen's perspective – while treating public servants as part of the solution.

Firstly, there is the need to understand the failure points in the system. The people who usually know how the system works and the likely solutions are of course service users themselves, working together with front-line practitioners. The team uses extensive data to create a profile of the typical service user. It then gathers

Rhondda Cynon Taf's Kafka Brigade.



experiences based on their use of public services, providing a clear picture of a typical user's experience of local services.

The team will then interview front-line staff, to confirm the representativeness of emerging issues and to delve deeper into their underlying causes. In this way, a shared understanding of key problems begins to emerge. Thirdly, and I think uniquely, the Kafka Brigade brings together everyone in the public service system - including the service user - needed to fix the problems they have identified.

These include representatives from the service users, front-line staff, senior executives from relevant bodies (public, private or third sector), and political leaders. Together, they identify and acknowledge the shortcomings of current provision, and crucially commit to specific action to improve it. As the

sponsoring Minister, I have participated in a number of these meetings, and can testify to the power of this approach and the benefits that can accrue from this open and collaborative approach.

All of the Welsh Kafka projects are currently in the process of delivering improvements. I know that some are finding the work tough, as many of these improvements involve significant change to existing approaches. The Assembly Government is providing leadership and support through regular stocktake meetings, aimed at removing obstacles and freeing logjams.

It is hard work, but the complexity of multi-agency delivery is only matched by the opportunities it creates. I am confident that by really listening to service users and to staff in the way they have, these projects will make real changes to the lives of people in Wales.

The Kafka Method will be evaluated later this year. It is, of course, one tool of service improvement amongst many. It complements others such as the application of 'lean systems' thinking to service improvement and other forms of innovation, which are being used to great effect in other parts of the Welsh public service.

Wales is the first administration in the UK to apply the Kafka method and, through our pilots, we have contributed to its development. If it proves to be as powerful as its potential suggests, I for one will be happy to see the Kafka Method exported across the UK, with another 'Made in Wales' stamp attached.

**Andrew Davies** is Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery in the Welsh Assembly Government



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# Capturing the soul

Peter Finch sits for Wales's most successful portrait painter David Griffiths

Received wisdom puts Cardiff's creative focal point somewhere in mid-Pontcanna, where Chapter nudges up against Kings Road. It's either there or the Bay amid the creative hubs of Mount Stuart Square and the production rooms of the Millennium Centre. The east of the city rarely gets a mention. But not everything is on the surface.

You wouldn't know the house on Westville Road in Penylan was there unless you were looking. It's an unassuming terrace, built in 1909 on former Tredegar land. Hard red brick, bathstone bays, slate roof - all in generous Edwardian proportion. David Griffiths lives here. How many David Griffiths are there in Wales? But this is David Wyn Griffiths, portrait painter. He's a man I first met in 1971 when he turned up at the Duffryn Close home of John Idris Jones, my publisher.

John Jones Cardiff Ltd., a 1970s

manufacturer of dragon tote bags, publisher of translations, guides to Welsh teas and books of verse. I was the shaky young poet on the verge of his first real publication, *The End of the Vision*. John Idris stood relaxed in the lounge with a girl on his arm, one he later picked up and turned upside down, just to show he could do it, her skirt falling to her waist,



Peter Finch at the new Waterloo Teahouse in Penylan, Cardiff, standing beside his own portrait by David Wyn Griffiths.

revealing her knickers. David Griffiths arrived with a camera and took several moody shots of me sitting on the sofa

smoking a Woodbine. The book was a great success.

David's studio is out back. It was once a coach house and later a garage, full of oily cans, old sacks, and broken machinery. Amid the dusty detritus David established his creative space. Painters need light and constancy. Flickering change, the moving sun, the passing cloud, these makers of shadow are all enemies. David did what he could to minimise them. He put in heaters, knocked through walls, added unobtrusive roof lights. "People don't know this place is here and I like that," he told me.

He was brought up speaking ragged Welsh in Pwllheli. At school he had Latin crammed into him and didn't enjoy the experience. It made him feel that neither of these two great languages had a future. Smiles. Now he freely admits that he got that wrong. At fifteen, heading for a parent-driven and uninspiring career in law he did an about turn and went to the Slade. David is telling me this as I sit, him sketching, breaking off to take the occasional reference photograph, or for us to have tea. There's loads of tea. In his studio the subject sits before a carefully placed mirror and watches the artist as he works.

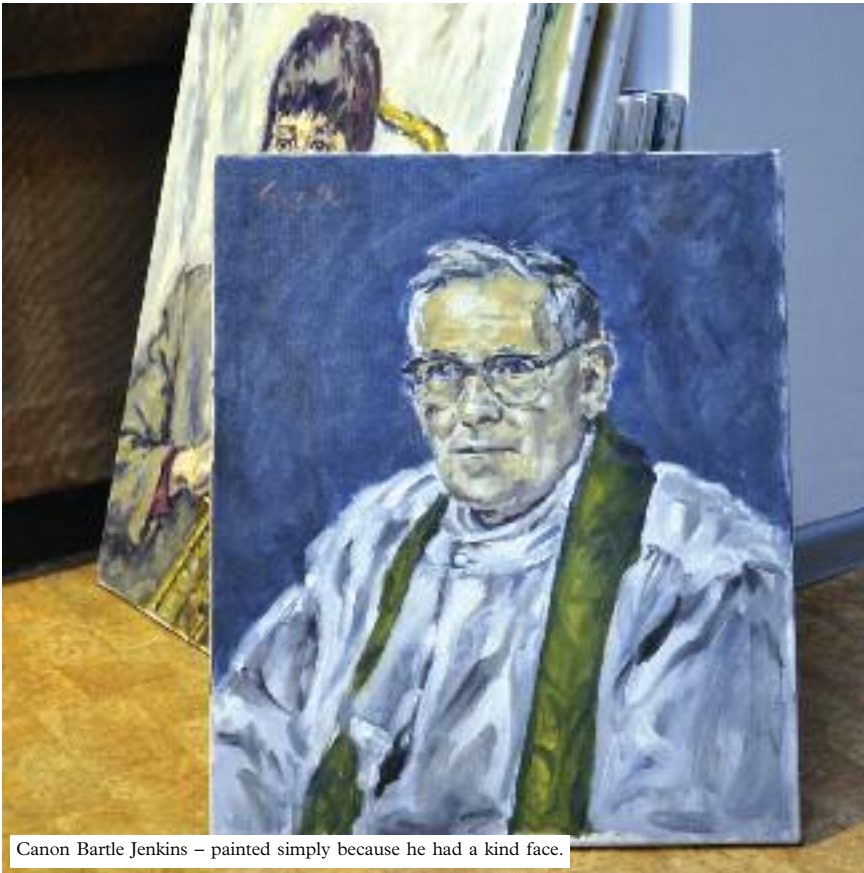
The face has always drawn me, says David. He'd decided to try making a living from his work while employed as a teacher in Birmingham. He'd placed an advert in the local press, *commissions undertaken*, and, amazingly, got one to do a portrait of the headmaster. What he produced was liked and, as a bonus, he was also paid. Everything fell into place after that.

Back in Pwllheli he'd visited the art gallery at Plas Glyn-y-Wedd, just



David Wyn Griffiths, pictured at home surrounded by his reject paintings: "They're all burnable."





Canon Bartle Jenkins – painted simply because he had a kind face.

down the coast at Llanbedrog. At the turn of the century this 1856 Dower house had been developed by Cardiff's Solomon Andrews as a sort of entertainment centre offering dancing, food and art. One of Andrews' horse-drawn trams ran along the sand dunes back to the town, much in the style of those that connected Splott with Grangetown in Cardiff. Andrews would visit Christies in London at the end of auction and buy up any unsold pseudo great masters that remained. These he'd use to cover the walls at Plas Glyn-y-Weddw. People buy anything when they are far from home. His investment provided a steady return.

In the early 1960s David met businesswoman and direct descendant of Solomon Andrews, Mary Yapp. In 1965 they opened the David Griffiths Gallery in Albany Road, Cardiff. Griffiths provided creative zip, and Yapp the business head. The Gallery became the Albany in 1967 when David decided to

spend more of his time painting and less in management.

Both enterprises thrived. The Albany Gallery showed many of the Welsh greats, including Kyffin Williams. Meanwhile, David painted what seems like half the great and the good of the western world. Back at the house on Westville and around the walls of the studio hang distinctive almost pointillist portraits of George Melly, Enoch Powell, Kyffin Williams, George Thomas, Bryn Terfel and James Callaghan.

The faces are meshed up from a net of colour. "These are largely rejects," David tells me. "I have many rejects. I stack them upstairs. They're all burnable". He makes five or six versions for each work, each sequentially correcting something - a misplacement of hands, a failure of detail around the eyes. The final finished piece goes to the buyer. The earlier preliminaries stay here. I turn my head to gaze at Joe Calzaghe, Beryl Rubens, the sister of the

author Bernice, with her violin, Rowan Williams, Charles. "They've all been here," says David. "Trekking up to Westville - Sir Geraint Evans, Peter Prendergast, Archbishop Barry Morgan, Sir Kyffin Williams. But not Charles. I went to him".

In terms of portraiture David is Wales's most successful painter. Painting Charles, the Prince, first at the time of the Investiture and then again thirty-three years later, made him. As artists go David is no bohemian. He plays piano. Bach and Mozart. Works from eleven until the light goes. Does Landscapes as an escape. He painted the 80-year old Rev Canon Bartle Jenkins, late of the home for retired clergy at the end of Church Terrace, simply because he had a kind face. The home was built in the 1870s as a home for fallen girls; next door was a home for fallen women.

The Canon's portrait sits at my feet, white surpliced, green stole, and glasses. I'd see him in the Gardens that occupy one side of Westville Road. I'd nod a good morning as he crossed the end of my street. There is something extremely satisfying about art recognising where you are, the wellspring of place. In David's portraits an image of the soul is captured. The faces watch you, half smiling, and staring into an ever-present present. The painter Will Roberts is shown sketching the face of David Griffiths as Griffiths himself paints Roberts. The images circle.

At the new Waterloo Tea House in Penylan chief brewer Kasim Ali makes steam. The portrait David has painted of me hangs on the wall, as though east Cardiffians are sticking together. I take Darjeeling, with milk. It's not all yours, Pontcanna.

*Peter Finch is Chief Executive of the Academi. An earlier version of this essay, David Griffiths and the Creative East, appears in his new psycho-geography of the capital, Real Cardiff – The Changing City, now available from Seren at £9.99.*

The Galeri in Caernarfon: “Everyone walking through the building can see the arts creating wealth and work within the community.”

Meic Llewellyn profiles  
a Welsh cultural entrepreneur

# A new presence in the creative landscape

**“It’s the process of creative collaboration, watching people gain confidence in their own ideas, and sharing them with others, that I really enjoy,” says Elen ap Robert, Director of the Galeri in Caernarfon and an opera singer and music therapist. “That sense of new possibilities being explored, visions coming into clear focus and suddenly emerging as practical possibilities.”**

Completing a music degree at Sheffield University, Elen had already come to realise that she just wasn’t interested in describing and analysing culture, she wanted to live it. Already a singer, and someone who since her childhood in south Wales had performed with the Urdd Theatre Company and dreamed of becoming a professional singer, she

moved on to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama for three years, and then embarked on a career in opera. A high point was performing Juliet in a new production of *The Little Sweep* by Benjamin Britten as a part of the Alderburgh Festival. Subsequently, she joined the chorus at Glyndebourne, preparing for and understudying major roles, in particular in Mozart’s operas. In between Elen made time not only to begin a family but also to join Yehudi Menuhin’s prestigious scheme for young musicians, ‘Live Music Now!’

There, another thread began to be woven into her professional life. Working with children with special needs, and seeing how the most disturbed and autistic children benefitted from exposure to music, Elen began to take an interest in music therapy. Back home in Cardiff, she took part in the

first-ever post graduate course in Music Therapy to be held in Wales, and then for five years combined therapeutic work with her continuing career as a professional singer, and her role as mother of three children.

In those days the dominant impression of music therapy as ‘an add-on’, combined with the politics surrounding its provision, was frustrating. However, the thrill of making a connection with isolated individuals through music, along with a contribution to the well-being of others, was deeply satisfying.

As voice tutor at the newly established Williams Mathias Music Centre in Caernarfon, Elen became aware of the intention of Cwmni Tref Caernarfon, a community enterprise in that town, to develop a new creative enterprise centre in Victoria Dock,

Caernarfon. Cwmni Tref had built up capital as well as credibility developing buildings in the town, and were planning an entirely new type of cultural centre in Victoria Dock on the old town's waterfront. The idea was to create a venue that could offer resources to small creative-industries organisations as well as being a magnet for local talent and visiting companies. As 85 per cent of the region's population is Welsh-speaking, it was entirely natural to work entirely through that language.

“Language balance is inevitably an issue in Newtown or Cardiff,” commented Elen. “But here life is lived through Welsh, and our work and the

Galeri's atmosphere reflects that. We do have events in English, but the emphasis is on Welsh medium cultural activity”.

There is particular emphasis, too, on being relevant to the local community. Elen joined the staff in May 2004 while Galeri was still a building site. Well before it opened to the public in March 2005, she and her colleagues were working closely with organisations in the area to ensure it was, from day one, the shared property of everyone in the community.

Caernarfon is an economically disadvantaged town, with Peblig ward one of the Welsh Government's designated 'Communities First' areas. Galeri's relationship with its neediest

citizens has always been close. Children from local primary schools and schools for children with special needs helped not only with decoration but with design, and the processes of creating a programme and developing an audience have always been collaborative.

The upper floors are largely given over to state-of-the-art offices for between twelve and fifteen creative-industries companies, all of which work through the medium of Welsh. Music, dance and television are particularly well represented. As Elen says, “Everyone walking through the building can see the arts creating wealth and work within the community.” The cafe and bar have become popular meeting places, whether for professionals holding informal meetings, or mothers and babies, families and friends, simply chatting and staring out over the water.

Since the initiative grew out of the work of their own development trust, and residents have contributed to its development over the past five years, Galeri's continuing success has added to the community's positive self-image, and its confidence in culture as an engine for development. Nowadays Caernarfon is the communications capital of north Wales, the Cardiff of the north. “It's like a tapestry or a web,” Elen suggests. “It's community-based inside and out, it's highly professional and in some ways slick and quite glitzy. It's technically well resourced and at the same time human and very touchy-feely.”

The companies Galeri hosts meet formally with the Galeri team once every four months, but collaborations take place on a day-to-day and hour-to-hour level too. “Not every company is highly interactive,” Elen says, “but in their different ways they all find opportunities to co-operate, and there are certainly enormous benefits from working together.”

As Artistic Director, Elen's work rarely moves out of sight of demanding, often daunting, financial imperatives, but she feels that material considerations are always in a creative



Elen ap Robert: “It's the process of creative collaboration, watching people gain confidence in their own ideas, and sharing them with others, that I really enjoy.”

dialectic with the human. “We very rarely just buy shows in,” she said. “Building a relationship with companies and likeminded creative people is always the crucial thing.”

It's rare for companies to perform without being drawn into workshops and discussions. Galeri's close relations with schools, the Communities First partnership and other groups in the neighbourhood ensure that there is rarely a shortage of participants. “Children can often be your most perceptive critics,” she comments, “especially as we've tried from the beginning to ensure that activities always challenge as well as respect them.”

At the same time as providing a space in which much local talent is developed and refined, Elen feels that by insisting on excellence the centre is able to play a more creative role than if their approach was less critical and incisive. While agreeing that too often the native culture of Wales has been allowed to remain invisible and unrewarded, she is an advocate of 'hard love'. Refusing to compromise on quality, she believes that Galeri can help native performers raise their ambitions and widen their horizons.

Elen rarely performs these days, but finds rewards instead in the adrenalin buzz from pushing productions and collaborations forward. Balancing the demands of work and family means the unexpected is lying in wait around every corner. Trying to secure her programmes' financial sustainability - balancing earned income and grant support with high overheads - is an ever-present headache. To some extent this challenge is helped by the organisation's open-ended commitment to core funding Galeri's art programmes by cross subsidies from property rental income.

Galeri's relationship with Gwynedd Council has not always been easy. The council did not always see the centre's emergence as part of its strategic plans, and at times found it hard to react positively to a powerful neighbour that might make costly demands. In recent times, however, Elen has been able to see the growth of collaborations and the gradual development, at all levels, of better mutual understanding. “Dialogue and creativity are our most powerful tools” she insists. “Some of our biggest problems can be transcended through creativity, if people are prepared to talk.”

Galeri's location has made sure that it is the natural focus for audiences and creative organisations throughout western Gwynedd, Anglesey and Pen Llyn. It also sees itself as a national creative centre. There have been new partnerships with Wales-based companies of late, wishing to make Galeri their performance space in the north of Wales. Moreover, its new five-year strategic partnership with the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff exemplifies the centre's growing influence, and its presence in the emergent creative landscape in Wales.

**Meic Llewellyn** is Strategic Development Officer for North Wales, Voluntary Arts Wales. This article is drawn from the recent volume he edited *Bwrkwym / Fíuchadh Foinn / Beirm / Ferment*, a quadri-lingual publication highlighting the work of Celtic Neighbours, a partnership between agencies in the Irish Gaeltacht, the Scottish Hebrides and Y Fro Gymraeg. It seeks to strengthen cultural activities in the three native languages through shared productions, cross-border touring and skill-sharing. See [www.vaw.org.uk](http://www.vaw.org.uk)

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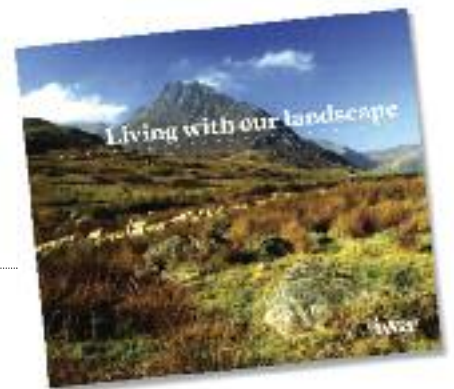
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# Underpinning the national psyche

Michael Houlihan outlines how National Museum Wales is responding to the recession

**In the modern world the spread of economic and technological globalisation has been matched by a fragmentation and re-focusing of the nation state. A major impetus has been the socio-cultural 'nation' centred on the free expression of local or ethnic identity. Culture is the connective fibre that gives life to such societies. It interprets the kinships, common origins, collective myths and shared memories that are essential to a vigorous community. It commemorates the individuals and the moments that have shaped our past. It communicates the beliefs, values and habits which will define the future.**

So, in the face of a global recession what is the role of culture in our society, as exemplified by the work of Amgueddfa Cymru? Over a year ago, we set out to research and understand how previous recessions have affected societies and we found that Amgueddfa Cymru has a key role to play in supporting the economy and reaching to the core of a society that values the preservation of its unique identity.

Culture is an integral part of Wales's national psyche and, as such, it makes a significant contribution to the Welsh economy. Amgueddfa Cymru is a part of this, providing high quality destinations which support tourism and the economy. Indeed, using economic models, it is estimated that the total contribution of Amgueddfa Cymru to the Welsh economy is £83m of output

and £53m of gross value added. This is associated with 2,021 jobs, in addition to our own staff members which total over 670 across all sites. During a recession these are significant figures. However, the cultural impacts of Wales' National Museum are much deeper and more far ranging than the economics alone.

Through its seven national museums, Amgueddfa Cymru provides visitors with affordable, inspiring, and uplifting experiences. In turn these support family and social cohesion which is put under enormous stress during recession, whether it be due to financial problems, redundancies, or mental health issues. Since its introduction in 2001, free entry for all to Wales's national museums has proved to be one of the greatest

successes of devolution. Visitor figures have dramatically increased with more than 12 million visits to our sites over the last eight years.

Free entry is now more important than ever as entry charges discriminate against those who are most badly affected by reduced income during a recession. We're promoting the free entry message strongly, as there are many individuals and families in Wales (often from the most disadvantaged areas) who remain unaware that they can enjoy the nation's collections free of charge. Through a visit to our National Museums, visitors can find purpose and meaning in a world of increasing uncertainty.

Of course, Amgueddfa Cymru, is more than just a series of national museums. Our curators work with museums and venues across Wales to enhance local resources and enable local audiences to engage with the national collections. Through these partnerships, Amgueddfa Cymru is cementing and supporting community and social cohesion at a time when it is most needed. For example, working with the Welsh museums and libraries association CyMAL and other partner museums we enhance local resources



Visitors at St Fagans National History Museum pass St Teilo's Church. Originally situated outside Pontarddulais, near Swansea, and built in stages between 1100 and 1520, it was opened at St Fagans in 2007. Heritage experts moved it stone by stone to the museum in a project that took 20 years to accomplish.

and generate additional involvement and participation for local audiences.

In another initiative we are working alongside 14 museums, libraries and archives from throughout the UK in the 2012 *Stories of The World Cultural Olympiad* project. This will enable young people to engage with our collections in a highly participative way. The project will create a national strategy for engaging young people in the decision-making processes of the Museum, part of our broader public engagement and ownership programme. These citizen-centred initiatives are known to make positive contributions to the development of a civic society.

Amgueddfa Cymru provides a broad range of routes into education and training which is critical during a recession. In addition to being the biggest supplier of formal education outside the classroom in Wales, we focus on specific projects. We have developed our very own apprenticeship scheme at the St Fagans National History Museum, providing valuable opportunities for new trainees while ensuring that the traditional crafts and skills used to construct and preserve the historic buildings are preserved. We are actively seeking funding in order to be able to extend this scheme to our other sites, in particular the National Slate Museum and Big Pit where traditional skills are an integral part of the visitor experience.

We have also been actively encouraging people to not just visit our sites, but also to get involved. There are a number of volunteering strands available throughout the organisation, creating valuable opportunities for people who might find themselves unexpectedly unemployed to learn new skills and meet new people. Our research suggested that during recession, it is easy to lose sight of sustainability issues. In Wales, this is now a statutory requirement of the Welsh Government and we are



A theatre performance at the National Slate Museum, Gwynedd, in front of a terrace of houses moved from Fron Haul in Tanygrisiau near Blaenau Ffestiniog. The four houses had been condemned by Gwynedd County Council because of their poor condition

continuing to make a serious commitment to sustainability through our biodiversity research programme.

We also have a responsibility to promote Wales beyond its borders. Our rich history and abundance of traditions are of interest to the world, and we want to help attract more visitors to come to Wales and witness for themselves all we have to offer. By participating in projects such as the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, developing links with China and taking our Impressionist art collection on an eighteen-month tour of the United States, we will help put Wales firmly on the international map.

Despite the current financial climate our vision is to become a world class museum of learning. Innovative plans are underway to transform St Fagans into Wales's national history museum. Building on existing strengths, we will be able to tell the story of the people and places of Wales from the earliest times to the present day. This will entail moving the archaeological collections from their current location in Cathays in Cardiff to join the social history collections at St Fagans. We

envisage that as well as being a centre for knowledge and traditional skills within the wider network of heritage sites across Wales, St Fagans will be a gateway that directs visitors to other cultural attractions. Ultimately, it will show visitors from across the world that Wales is a confident, diverse and forward-looking nation.

Although times are going to be tough for culture in Wales we must not lose sight of its importance in underpinning Welsh society. The recession presents challenges, but it is also providing opportunities by forcing institutions to think more creatively about the way they contribute. For example, cultural tourism is of huge importance to the Welsh economy, but more can be done to develop this sector at all levels. As a cultural expression of Wales, Amgueddfa Cymru is planning for the future that the people of Wales want to create.

**Michael Houlihan** is Director General Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales.



# Amlwch and Mynydd Parys

Bryan Hope explores the history and development of Wales's copper kingdom

**Amlwch, an insignificant hamlet on the wild, craggy northern coastline of the Isle of Anglesey came to prominence in 1768 when vast reserves of copper ore were discovered in nearby Parys Mountain (Mynydd Parys), some two miles inland from the coast. Although lead and copper ores had been mined there before that time, flooding problems meant that the amounts raised to the surface were comparatively small.**

Recent carbon dating of material discovered above and below ground reveals that the mines were worked at Mynydd Parys during the early Bronze Age, some 4,000 years BP. Similarly, the discovery of copper bun ingots on the mountain's slopes and elsewhere on the island, some of which bear Roman inscriptions, is a good indication that the mines were worked during their occupation of Britain in the first century AD, although concrete evidence of this has yet to be discovered.

A time ravaged map dating to the reign of Queen Elizabeth I found amongst State papers depicts the havens of Amlwch and nearby Dulas, at the same time recording the fact that work associated with the mines had been completed at both. There can be little doubt that whatever work was undertaken was brought about by the need to facilitate the exportation of copper ore to the Crown smelters in Neath. This was a trade which was very much overtaken in scale by the transshipment in later years of vast quantities to the Swansea copper smelters.

Under the inspired direction of Thomas Williams, an Anglesey lawyer known as 'Twm Chwareu Teg' (Tom Fair Play) to the local miners, and 'The Copper King' to his business contemporaries, the output from the mines grew to such an extent as to allow it to briefly dictate the world price of copper.

Drawn to Amlwch at that time by the abundance of sulphur recovered from an ore improvement process known as calcination, Charles Henry Hills, a prominent member of a renowned family of London chemical engineers, established a chemical works

at Llam Carw, close to Porth Amlwch, which is believed to be one of the earliest, if not the very first of its kind in Wales. Other industries associated with mining at Mynydd Parys included a chemical process which, by dissolving scrap iron in the acidic copper sulphate rich water flowing from the mine, resulted in the precipitation of metallic copper. This highly profitable operation continued to extract the mountain's mineral wealth well into the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century after conventional mining had long since ceased. The resulting copper depleted water was then allowed to oxidise naturally in large shallow ponds in order to produce high grade iron ochre, used as a pigment in paint making and other industries.

Mining activities have bequeathed remarkable assets both above and below ground which result from the way in which the mineral rich mountain was formed some 440 million years ago, and which now provide vital clues to the fuller understanding of the complex geological processes involved.

In 1793 an Act of Parliament allowed the widening and deepening of Porth Amlwch and its regulation by Harbour Trustees. As a result, the commerce formerly associated with its

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# 10



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The lunar landscape of Parys Mountain copper mine has featured in many movies and, on television, in Dr Who

western side transferred to the newly built facilities on the eastern side, thereby freeing up land which had previously been unavailable for alternative development. This allowed the establishment of a ship building yard by Nicholas Treweek, whose father James had been brought to Amlwch by the powerful Vivian family to take overall control of mining operations at Mynydd Parys. This small pioneering shipyard was later eclipsed by a larger one owned by Captain William Thomas. He was a local man who ran away to sea aged eleven and returned eight years later, fully qualified to command a vessel of his own, after his parents had abandoned all hope of ever seeing him again. He and two of his sons went on to build no fewer than 41 vessels in Amlwch ranging from schooners to steamships, and a further six vessels in their yard in Cumberland. Basil Greenhill, a curator at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich described these later vessels as being among the finest of their kind ever built.

The evident need to record and protect this heritage inspired the creation of the Amlwch Industrial Heritage Trust, a non-profit-making

company committed to historical and scientific research, education, and conservation as well as the economic regeneration of the surrounding area through heritage tourism.

The Trust has taken a long term surface lease on Mynydd Parys where, with grants from the former Welsh Development Agency it has built a car park and a viewing platform, and created a safe signposted trail around the workings. In Porth Amlwch it has created a heritage walk and taken leases from the Isle of Anglesey County Council on the old sail loft, a roofed copper bin, and the old watch house. Over the past five years a heritage centre in the sail loft has attracted an average of 13,000 visitors year. Many of these are local people demonstrating in a practical way their support for the Trust's activities, which include the publication of booklets relating to Amlwch's early industrial history, and the organisation of several Day Schools.

Mynydd Parys, which was fast becoming an unofficial refuse tip, has since been protected from further despoliation by the Trust's installation of gates at its several entrances. While preventing unauthorised vehicular

access, these allow pedestrians to visit the historic site. Similarly, by raising the historic profile of Porth Amlwch, the unsympathetic development of what has recently been described by a pleasantly surprised visitor as one of Anglesey's best kept secrets has hopefully been avoided.

The Trust has been successful in raising the national profile of Amlwch. For instance, it has featured in television programmes such as 'Restoration', 'Fred Dibnah', 'Extreme Archaeology' and, more recently, the 'Coast' series of BBC programmes. Mynydd Parys has also been used as a location for an episode of 'Doctor Who', as well as the internationally successful film 'Mortal Kombat 2'.

In association with national organisations, including National Museum Wales, CADW, and Bangor University, as well as Menter Môn, the Trust is now seeking major funding to take the Mynydd Parys experience to a new level.

**Bryan Hope** is an Anglesey historian. This article is based on a Mynydd Parys day school organised by the IWA's North Wales Branch in June.

# Our tribal prejudices

Peter Stead



**I count myself free of any racial prejudice and indeed I have spent considerable portions of my life wishing that I was a New York Jewish intellectual, a Pakistani batsman, or a West Indian fast bowler. Similarly I have no problem with the English, a people who have given me one eighth of my genes as well as my name. I enjoy belonging to a UK minority and appreciate the tensions and rivalries that determine the politics and culture of these islands.**

Inside Wales, however, it is another matter and domestically I concede that my halo slips. We are a tribal people and since childhood I readily wallowed in my prejudices. For example, I instinctively judged Welsh people by where they come from. My parents were both from the Valleys, an area that they took to be the defining heart of Wales. People from other parts were also-rans.

There were further refinements. My father regarded Merthyr as 'the centre of civilisation' and even neighbouring towns were thought of as being less favoured. Throughout my life I have met many talented and charming people from Aberdare but initially they have to overcome the fact of their being 'snakes'. Similarly talent has poured out of Llanelli, dear old 'Sospan', but a 'Turk' is a Turk, the infidel.

With attitudes as extreme as this, one is necessarily forced to make adjustments.

I was initially disappointed to learn that so many Welsh soccer stars were from the north. I was able to live with this and even adopt heroes from those parts when I realised that they came from coal mining communities which, of course, made them honorary southerners. Similarly my admiration for Lloyd George could develop unabated when I realised that not only was he born near the Man City ground but, in any case, his family's roots lay in the wholly acceptable and lovely county of Pembrokeshire. But Nye remained my real hero. He was born just five miles from my Gran's house. Bryn Terfel is the best in the world, but just imagine how much better he could have been if he had been born in Pontypridd.

It is with this cast of mind that I approach the current leadership (presidential?) contest in Wales. Many of those registered to vote (and surely we should all have a vote?) will doubtless be looking out for ideological nuances. Others will be counting the percentage of Welsh words on the competing web sites. Locked into my decades-old tribal prejudices, I approach the contest with attitude.

Personally I'm thrilled that there is a Merthyr man in the running, albeit one born a bit to the south of the old borough. Nonetheless, I have certain reservations about Huw. He studied in Edinburgh! No wonder there have been times when he looks and behaves like a member of the Scottish Labour Party, a group that could have been cast in the Sopranos. I admire what Huw is trying to do for the grassroots of his Party, ignored as they have been by London leaders, but he must remember that his hero Keir Hardie was an ardent devolutionist. Merthyr once led the world. Today it should cherish its history but also adjust to new realities. Yes, 'Labour has to be Labour', but Wales has to be Wales too.

Edwina comes to us from Gowerton, once a village now a suburb and a place I remember with enormous affection. My

years at the Grammar School were amongst the happiest of my life. I took my first political steps in Gowerton with speeches in the Rechabites' Hall. Nevertheless, the Gower Party let us all down by opposing Devolution in 1979. Edwina has deep roots in the Party and Unions and is a terrific minister but her style threatens Wales with a new experience. Doubtless we have become too casual and we need to be knocked into shape. A headteacher like Edwina in every Welsh school and all our problems would be solved. Perhaps we need the smack of firm government, but are we ready to be taken in hand by a shop steward of the old school?

Then there is the man from Bridgend, a man perhaps from the new Wales? Just a few years ago it seemed as if everyone came from Bridgend. This was Scott Gibbsville. I thought of it as the Reading of Wales: adjacent to power but suitably detached and nearer the best pubs and eating places. Of course, I have a soft spot for Bridgend. It was where my parents both worked and fell in love and it was where, as a visiting supporter of Maesteg, I first encountered the passions of Welsh club rugby. I sense from the Bridgend of today that a balanced open-minded perspective is possible. It is aware of the Valleys hinterland, at ease with the delights of the Vale and well-placed to influence decisions at Cardiff.

The other day I happened to visit north Wales and realised how much both Wales and I had changed. I can officially report that I am a 'New Welshman'. I have learnt that we are all the same. Everywhere I went in the north I met people eager to hear my reports on the Ospreys and assuring me that they were coming down to see the All Blacks. Suddenly it seemed less absurd that the leadership battle was an all Glamorgan affair. We are all moving in the right direction and we must move forward together.

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