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Wales puts her hand to the wheel

First Minister Carwyn Jones' announcement on 12 July of his legislative programme for the fourth Assembly was another milestone in Wales' devolution journey. Without the resounding Yes vote in the March referendum this occasion could not have happened. For the first time in our history we can see the outlines of a parliamentary nation beginning to take the measure of its legislative aspirations. In *Putting Wales in the Driving Seat*, a report the IWA prepared for the all-Wales Convention in April 2009, we looked forward to this day. We argued that the great virtue of the National Assembly being able to enact primary legislation without first seeking permission from Westminster via Legislative Competence Orders, would be to allow it to develop a strategic vision. It would enable the Welsh Government to adopt a holistic approach, dealing with policy in such fields as health, education, and the environment in a wide-ranging and connected way.

How does the Welsh Government's inaugural legislative programme measure up on this score? The opportunity certainly appears to have been taken in education. The Schools and Standards (Wales) Bill will enshrine the 20 action points that have been set out by Education Minister Leighton Andrews in a series of speeches over the past six months and hopefully will succeed in improving performance in our schools. In higher and further education, too, legislation may also result in significant institutional change as a result of far-reaching recent reviews.

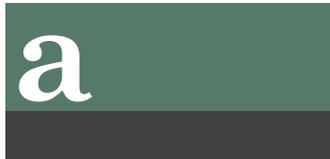
The social policy agenda is also pretty substantial. The Social Service (Wales) Bill will provide, for the first time, a coherent Welsh legal framework for social services based on social democratic principles, though as ever the devil will be in the financial detail. The proposed Housing Bill will do the same, as well as tackling homelessness which is bound to increase in the coming years as a result of the Westminster Government's assault on benefits. There are also related Domestic Abuse, Youth Offending, and Children and Young Persons Bills.

The environment is another area where

the Welsh Government has commendable aspirations. Who could quarrel with the First Minister's aim "to ensure that Wales has increasingly resilient and diverse ecosystems that deliver economic, environmental and social benefits"? There was a widespread welcome, too, for the proposed Heritage Bill. The First Minister agreed in debate that the proposed Highways and Transport (Wales) Bill could be widened to embrace the need for an integrated public transport system rather than being just limited to placing a duty on local authorities to provide and maintain cycle paths, laudable though that is.

It was in this last policy area that the First Minister came closest to describing an over-arching theme for his programme. As he put it, "We will legislate to embed sustainable development as the central organising principle in all of our actions across Government." Again, few would quarrel with that. But like much of what successive Welsh Governments have sought to achieve in the first decade of devolution, the objective is general and declaratory and provides little comfort that concrete gains will be made in practice. Institutional change may be important in this area, but it is by outcomes that the Welsh Government has asked to be judged.

This first legislative programme is a welcome beginning and marks a significant moment in the maturing of Wales as a political nation. Much responsibility will now fall on the shoulders of the Opposition parties to scrutinise and improve what is being proposed. Their collective performance in the wake of the First Minister's statement was unimpressive. But overall, we still lack a convincing narrative as to how the proposed 21 Bills across such a wide range of subject matters hang together as a programme for a full term. There is a striking contrast with the *One Wales* agreement that was put together, in the wake of the 2007 election, in about the same time period. There are more benefits to coalitions than maximising votes. It was Aneurin Bevan who once said that it is the politician's job to find the words.



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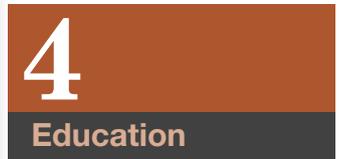
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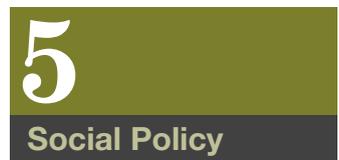
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Coming Up

- **Darlith yr Eisteddfod Lecture** | Wrecsam / Wrexham
2 Awst/August 2011, 11 to 12 y.b. /noon –Pabell y Cymdeithasau

Aled R. Roberts, AS Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru, Gogledd Cymru a Cyn Arweinydd Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Wrecsam / Welsh Liberal Democrat AM for North Wales and former Leader, Wrexham County Borough Council

**Gwleidyddiaeth y Gororau yng Ngogledd Ddwyrain Cymru
Border Politics in North East Wales**

Darperir cyfieithu ar yr pryd / Simultaneous translation provided

- **Trafodaeth IWA Debate yn yr Eisteddfod**

Wrecsam / Wrexham

4 Awst/August 2011, 11 to 12 y.b. /noon –Pabell y Cymdeithasau
Argyfwng darlledu yng Nghymru /

The crisis in Welsh broadcasting

Huw Jones, Cadeirydd/Chair S4C; Geraint Talfan Davies, Cadeirydd/Chair IWA

- **Coffee Shop Debate**

**Unsolved Mysteries of Wales with Rev. Lionel Fanthorpe,
author, teacher, television personality and martial arts instructor**

Tuesday 6 Sept 2011 6.30pm-7.30pm,
Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff (*Entry free*)

- **Rethinking environmental management in Wales**

Monday 26 Sept 2011 9.30am – 5.00pm,
Park Plaza Hotel, Cardiff

Conference on the projected merger between the Environment Agency Wales, the Countryside Council for Wales and the Forestry Commission Wales

Keynote speakers: John Griffiths, Minister for Environment and Sustainability, Welsh Government; Terry A'Hearn, former Chief Executive, Victoria Environmental Protection Authority, Australia; Chris Mills, chief executive, Environment Agency Wales; Jon Owen Jones, Chair, Forestry Commission Wales; and Morgan Parry, Chair Countryside Council for Wales.

£65 (£52 IWA members)

- **Getting Ahead Together: Connecting Cardiff and the Valleys**

Friday 4 Nov 2011 9.30am – 5.00pm, City Hall, Cardiff

Conference on the prospects for creating a city region in south east Wales

In association with the Cardiff and Co and Cardiff University

Keynote speakers: professor Kevin Morgan, Cardiff University, Professor Alan Harding, Manchester University, Thomas Kiwiit, Stuttgart Business Partnership, David Stevens, Cardiff Business Partnership

£65 (£52 IWA members)

- **IWA / Western Mail Business Awards**

In association with PwC

Friday 25 November 2011: 7.00pm Coal Exchange, Cardiff Bay

£65 (£60 IWA members)

Table of 10 - £600 (£550 IWA members)

Just Published

**Accelerating History –
the 1979, 1997 and 2011 referendums in Wales**

By John Osmond

£5.00

Welsh Perspectives on Ageing

£7.50 (£5.00 IWA members)

More information: www.iwa.org.uk

—Essay

Growing up in Ardudwy

Philip Pullman looks back with nostalgia on one corner of Wales in the 1950s and 1960s

My family moved to north Wales when I was ten or eleven in the mid 1950s. My stepfather was a pilot in the RAF, and he was posted to a little airfield in Llanbedr, near Harlech. He'd been trained in Woomera, the RAF establishment in Australia, to fly pilotless drones called Jindiviks. What they did with the Jindivik at Llanbedr was to pull a target for the fighters from Valley, in Anglesey, to shoot at. As a Jindivik expert, he came to Llanbedr and the family naturally followed.

When we first moved there my parents hadn't found a house to live in, so we camped in a couple of caravans on parts of the RAF establishment that weren't within the main airfield but scattered around the village. I think the place had been quite busy during the war, because there were a lot of decaying buildings lying empty. The hit song at the time was a skiffle tune by Johnny Duncan and the Bluegrass Boys, called 'Last Train to San Fernando':

*Last traaiiin to San Fernando
Last traaiiin to San Fernando-o-o
And if you miss
This one
You'll never get another one
Beedy beedy bum bum
To San Fernando.*

That is a chorus of genius. Once heard, never forgotten. So my first genuine 24-carat memory of being in Wales is singing that song at the top of my voice in one of the old empty RAF buildings, beside the road from Barmouth into Llanbedr, because the echo was perfect.

Pretty soon my parents found a house for us to rent about a mile above Llanbedr, right where the two rivers, the Artro and the Nantcol, joined together.

What I remember best was the road up from the village, which led through woods and along the river and through a little hamlet called Gwynfryn, where there was a tiny shop that sold those Curiously Strong Peppermints among many other things such as leather bootlaces to string your conkers on. There was also a chapel in Gwynfryn. I can't remember the denomination, but it had a handsomely varnished door that used to shine exactly like toffee in the evening sunlight.

Going home on winter nights, on that road under the trees towards Gwynfryn, I used to gaze across the river at the light on a farmyard wall down below and across the river. For some reason I thought it was intensely romantic. It was on that road, one winter afternoon coming back from school, that I saw a dead body. I was about eleven or twelve. I was walking home on my own, looking forward to the farmyard light so I could pretend again that there was a beautiful girl there who'd been kidnapped and was waiting for me to rescue her, and I was about to go into gathering darkness under the trees where the road sloped up a bit. A man on a motorbike went past me, and a couple of minutes later he came back down again and stopped.

"Listen," he said, "I don't want you to be scared, but there's a dead man on the road up there. I'm going down to call the police. But if you don't want to see him, right, you better wait or find another way."

It was good of him to stop and tell me. And as it happened there was another way I could have taken, because a path led away from the road and up through

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Anne Meikle



Philip Pullman in February 2011 in Cardiff at the 50th anniversary dinner of Yr Academi Gymreig/The Welsh Academy - now Llenyddiaeth Cymru/Literature Wales –at which an Honorary Fellowship was bestowed on him. This article is based on what he had to say on that occasion.

the trees and behind the grand house called Plas Gwynfryn, where lived a rich man with a Sir in front of his name.

So I could have taken that way and avoided the dead man. But I thought, well, the light's going, it's getting darker, and I've never seen a dead body, and it would be a pity to miss it; so I went up the road and walked past. The poor chap had just been walking along and had a heart attack and died on the spot. When I got home and told my mother she was so shocked she had to have a glass of brandy, and she thought I was cold-blooded for not being in a state of shock as well.

That road up from Llanbedr saw a lot of mischief. You might remember those little fireworks called bangers you could buy for a penny. All they did was go bang. Well, one year, Derek Dobney and I bought a dozen bangers and hid in the trees beside the pub car park, where there was a public lavatory. We waited till we saw someone go in, and then we'd light a banger and chuck it on the

roof and watch them come running out. That was immensely enjoyable.

Derek was an enterprising boy. Before his family moved to Llanbedr they lived in Barmouth, and one winter evening he and I and a couple of others went down to the shelters along the sea front, where the loving couples went to snog privately. We crept along till we found a couple at it, and then we'd just go and stand in front and watch them till they chased us away.

When I was about fifteen, I started learning to draw. I didn't do art at school because it was timetabled against Latin, and I had to do Latin because ... well, the clever kids got directed towards Latin and art was left to the others, which was a bad thing in very many ways.

So I did Latin, which was taught by Miss Lewis. She was very small, very small indeed. She was known as Ma Lew, though never to her face. She was intensely fierce and highly dangerous. There was a story, in which

I fully believe, about a bad boy in one of her classes who was being cheeky or fooling about or something. She told him to come out to the front and bring his chair. He thought he was going to be made to sit on it, and came out with a swagger and put his chair down. "Now help me up," she said, and he helped her up to stand on the chair. Then she hit him.

I liked Latin, but I do regret not doing art. With the aid of a book about the history of painting that I bought with a book token I got for my fifteenth birthday, I was falling in love with the visual arts, and becoming obsessed with the difficulty and the delight of making marks on paper with pencil or charcoal that sort of corresponded with what you could see out there. There was a field opposite our house with a ragged and untended fence going up the hill. I tried that field over and over with pencil and with charcoal, and still I couldn't get it right. A little later, when we moved to Llandanwg, where we could see the sea, I found myself in a landscape of utter delight which I wrote about many years later in a book called *The Broken Bridge*. I gave my passion for drawing to the heroine, Ginny. In this passage I describe exactly the place we lived in:

"Inland, on the far side of the main road, a range of great grass-covered hills, not quite mountains but as high as hills could get, rolled endlessly away out of sight; but on this side, the seaward side, there was a space of magic and beauty, Ginny's realm.

It was a mile wide: all the land between the main road and the sea. There was a grassy field below the road, then the lane with her house in, then more fields, then a railway line, then another field and the sand dunes and the beach. To the left was an estuary where a little river, which only a few miles back in the hills had been tumbling swiftly among rocks, spread itself out wide

and slow through a tidal lagoon. Beyond that there were more dunes and, at the very edge of the horizon, an airfield from which tiny silver planes occasionally took off to skim over the sea and vanish. Everything from the main road to the sea was Ginny's.

She owned it because she'd drawn it, from the insects on the dry-stone walls to the crumbling church half-buried in the sand-dunes, to the little bridge that carried the railway line over the estuary ..."

My sentimental education took place when I was least expecting it. One autumn afternoon when I was in the first or second year at Ysgol Ardudwy my class had to skip our normal lesson because the teacher was away and there wasn't a supply. We had to go to the hall with a book and sit quietly while the music teacher dealt with another class. So we all trooped in, and I imagine we were pretty languid because it was one of those warm afternoons when the autumn sun seems to hang in the sky for ever. Certainly the sunlight was coming through the big windows and warming us all.

And because of that sort of warm languid golden light, and because I was in that sort of mood, and because the sunlight caught the hair of a girl from the other class called Carol Powell, and because she was pretty, and because my romantic mind was always running that way, and because the music teacher was playing one particular tune, which I'd never heard before and which struck me suddenly as the most beautiful melody I'd ever heard, almost as if it had been written especially for me, especially for this mood and for this occasion... Anyway, this is the music that I heard for the very first time, not knowing what on earth it could be:

*Voi che sapete
Che cosa è amor,
Donne vedete
S'io l'ho nel cor ...*

And the result of hearing that astonishing, lovely, heartbreaking melody for the first time, in adolescence, when you're not expecting it and you're just sitting around and the sun is warm and glowing on the hair of Carol Powell – well, it hit me like a thunderbolt of golden perfume. I fell in love. There and then. At once. In love with that beautiful tune, and in love with Carol Powell.

I didn't understand the words, and it didn't matter. The melody did it all by itself. But when much later I discovered what the singer is singing about, I was even more astonished at the utter genius of Mozart, in giving such a melody to words in the voice of an adolescent singing about love:

*You ladies, who know what love is, see if that's what I have
in my heart; I'll tell you about the feeling I experience, for it's*

*new to me, I don't understand it. I feel a longing that's full of
desire, but now it's a delight, and now it's death! I freeze, and
then I feel my soul burst into flame, and in a moment I go
back to freezing again; I search for a blessing outside of me,
but I don't know who holds it, I don't know what it is ...*

And so on. Every word is true.

Rhyddid Williams, the music teacher, had no idea that that would happen to me. Why would he? It was private and secret, and I would never have confessed it to a soul. Nevertheless, that unplanned lesson in how to fall in love was one of the three or four most important things that ever happened to me in my youth. And that in turn taught me that we must give our children, our pupils, our students, the chance to encounter all kinds of things unexpectedly, and we must never ask them what they think it means.

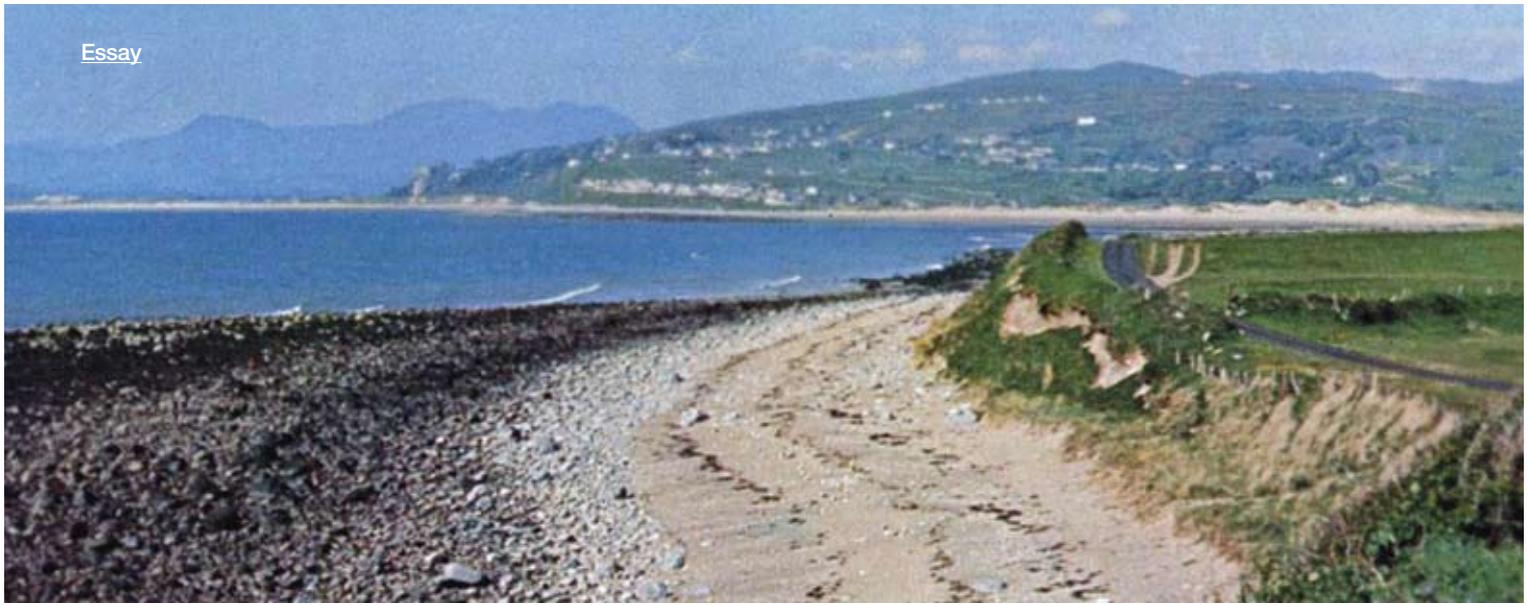
I've written and spoken before about my English teacher, my dear friend Miss Enid Jones. One of the great things she did was to produce the school play every year, and that was always something I was set on being part of. I realized something then that I have never seen contradicted: for every play that is produced, love will be fallen in by someone. The intensity of feelings that are evoked all round, the glamour of the costumes, the power of the language – it all stirs the soul. And the heart. And the body.

The most soul-stirring thing for many an adolescent in the years when I was one was the existence of Bob Dylan. He called himself after the Welsh poet, and of course the Welsh pronunciation of that name does not rhyme the first syllable with Jill. Dylan Thomas himself said that the name rhymed with *chillen*, as in all God's chillen got wings. He was probably trying to prevent Americans from calling him Dai-lan.

Anyway, Bob Dylan or Dillen came upon us like a revelation. I took off the nylon strings from my old guitar and fitted it with steel strings instead. I sat in our garden bashing away at chord after chord, and I still remember where I was sitting when I realized *why* there was such a thing as a seventh chord, and what it does in relation to the tonic. When you discover it for yourself, it's amazing.

My great friend Merfyn Jones, who later became a distinguished historian and academic, was going through a highly political phase then, and that aspect of Bob Dylan's music appealed to him greatly. Merfyn had about as much musical ability as ... well, he had none. But that didn't stop us. One summer – it must have been 1965 – he and I decided to give the world the benefit of our genius, and we set off to Pwllheli. You have to start somewhere. I had my guitar, and I also had my harmonica holder. Now the big difference between Bob Dylan and me – the only difference, really, the reason for his greater musical success – is that his harmonica holder was better than mine. I'd made mine out of a wire coat hanger, and tied my slippery chrome-covered harmonica on with string.

Well, Merfyn and I decided on the Seashell Café as the



"I'll never forget the evening light – those long calm summer evenings that you thought would never end, when you've had your tea and done your homework and there's nothing to do but play or wander along the beach with the sea quietly folding its neat little waves over on the sand one after the other. That light that fills the world, from the far horizon of the still sea to the estuary and the dunes of Llandanwg, of Mochras, of Morfa Dyffryn, all the way to the slopes of Moelfre, that perfect round green dome of a hill, and all the great hills beyond."

stage for our first performance, and we went in and asked the lady behind the counter if we could sing. "Well, all right," she said dubiously. So I struck up with *When the ship comes in*:

*Oh the time will come up
When the wind will stop
And the breeze will cease to be breathin'
Like the stillness in the wind
'Fore the hurricane begins
The hour that the ship comes in.
And the seas will split
And the ship will hit
And the sands on the shoreline will be shaking
Then the tide will sound
And the wind will pound
And the morning will be breaking ...*

I was going great guns, bellowing away at the words, and Merfyn was clapping somewhere approximately close to the beat. Then came the harmonica bit. I blew and sucked like crazy, and then I realised to my horror that the harmonica was becoming detached. Out of the corner of my eye I saw it slipping out of the right-hand piece of string. So I tried to grip it with my teeth, and it shot out and dangled contemptuously just out of reach. There was a certain element of ignominy in the way I finished the song.

Then it was Merfyn's turn. He was going to make a speech. He began in fine style.

"You people, you holiday makers, with your cups of tea and your buckets and spades – it's all very well for you. Enjoy your holidays, go on. But in the jungles of South-East Asia the poor people of Vietnam are fighting for their lives against the US imperialists. *They* haven't got cups of tea. *They* haven't got buckets and spades ..."

But that was too much for the owner. "Go on, get out," she said, "the pair of you, go on, clear off."

So we cleared off and had an ice cream. It felt like a victory. We'd been suppressed by the tyrannical forces of reaction. That was something to be proud of.

There is so much I could say about the debt my soul owes to that part of north Wales, and the chance that brought me there, and gave me these experiences and many, many more. I'll write about them at greater length one day. But as long as I live, I'll never forget the evening light – those long calm summer evenings that you thought would never end, when you've had your tea and done your homework and there's nothing to do but play or wander along the beach with the sea quietly folding its neat little waves over on the sand one after the other. That light that fills the world, from the far horizon of the still sea to the estuary and the dunes of Llandanwg, of Mochras, of Morfa Dyffryn, all the way to the slopes of Moelfre, that perfect round green dome of a hill, and all the great hills beyond. I remember it with a warm benevolent clarity in which every detail is precise and calm and perfectly placed, as if it had been destined to be there from the beginning of time.

I owe that to Wales. I owe the education of my feelings to that landscape, and to every kind of music I listened to, and to all my friends, and to those teachers who taught me whether they knew they were teaching me or not.

Philip Pullman is a best-selling author, most notably a trilogy of fantasy novels *His Dark Materials* (1995-2000), the first book of which was turned into the film *The Golden Compass*. More recently and controversially he has written a fictionalised biography of Jesus, *The Good Man Jesus and the Scoundrel Christ* (2010). Born in Norwich in 1946, he was educated from 1957 at Ysgol Ardudwy, Harlech. In 2007 he was made an Honorary Professor of Creative Writing at Bangor University.

LIFE STORIES THAT INSPIRE WALES

A fascinating range of life stories and inspiring achievements were revealed in June when the IWA's Inspire Wales awards were unveiled at a glittering ceremony in Cardiff's City Hall. This was the second year of the awards, organised by the Institute in association with the Western Mail. This year's achievers demonstrated yet

again a remarkable set of contributions that are being made to Welsh civic life.

The awards categories are business, education, science, arts and media, the environment and sport, as well as seeking champions in citizenship and young achievers. The winners, in each of the categories were:



TEGAN MORGAN

Young Achiever

Sponsored by Wales and West Utilities

Eighteen-year-old volunteer Tegan Morgan, from Cwmbran, has been working tirelessly in youth centres for the past two years. She cites the mantra "would you like the same lifestyle for your children?" as the motivation driving her work. Her inspirational initiatives this year includes encouraging young people in Torfaen to practise safe sex in a bid to tackle the county's STI and teenage pregnancy rates.



CONSTANCE NZENEU

Citizen's Voice

Sponsored by Working Links Wales

Having faced numerous challenges when she arrived in the UK from Cameroon in 2005, Constance Nzeneu was determined to provide support to vulnerable women in similar situations. A single mother-of-two, she founded Women Seeking Sanctuary Advocacy Group Wales in Cardiff two years ago to support women fleeing human rights abuses, persecutions, isolation, destitution, threats of deportation and other dangers. She has worked almost single-handedly to lobby decision makers, secure funding and arrange counselling and support for the women who come to her – all balanced with her family life.



DAVID WILLIAMS

Environmentalist

Sponsored by Viridor

A serial energy entrepreneur, David Williams has dedicated 34 years of his working life to developing renewable energy technologies from their infancy. As founder and chief executive of Cardiff-based Eco2 and through his work as Generation Projects Manager for Renewables at Swalec and at Energy Power Resources, he has been at the forefront of commercialising new technologies. Projects he has helped bring to fruition have saved 3 million tonnes of CO2 – which was 10 per cent of the Welsh Government's 2010 emissions target.



KELLY DAVIES

Sport

Sponsored by Sport Wales

Kelly Davies is a prime example of how hard work can translate into tangible results. A former Arsenal and Liverpool Ladies player, Kelly gave up the professional game to establish Abergele-based social enterprise VI-Ability, which offers footballing work apprenticeships for economically-inactive people and training for those looking to work in the industry. The programme has grown in turnover to more than £1 million, and has secured contracts to deliver programmes to a further 180 economically-inactive people in the Conwy area.



ARAN JONES AND IESTYN AP DAFYDD

Global Wales

Sponsored by the University of Wales

In a joint result, Aran Jones and Iestyn ap Dafydd picked up the Global Wales award for their online resource for learning Welsh. Former English teacher Aran Jones and former civil engineer Iestyn ap Dafydd wanted to increase the number of Welsh-



GAIL GRIFFITHS

Educator

Sponsored by the University of Wales
 In a context of high unemployment among young people in the south Wales Valleys, eight years ago Gail launched a music magazine run entirely by volunteers, using her experience of more than 20 years in the media industry. As managing editor of Pontypridd-based social enterprise *Plugged In*, she runs free workshops to tutor disadvantaged young people in the Valleys and give young people a rare chance to create a portfolio of music-related work to help land employment.



KEVIN CROFTON

Business Leader

Sponsored by Leadership & Management Wales
 A former military man, Kevin Crofton has used his keen organisational discipline to help transform Newport-based global semiconductor firm SPP Process Technology Systems into an even more profitable company. With 400 employees, operating across 11 countries, his collaborative approach has helped foster team spirit, and change a previously-demotivated workforce into a united one.



PHIL GEORGE

Arts, Media & Creative Industries

Sponsored by Orchard
 In a career spanning nearly 30 years, Rhondda-born Phil George has left a significant and lasting imprint on Welsh broadcasting. As a former producer and head of arts, music and features at BBC Wales and founder of his own TV production company Green Bay Media, Phil has helped create scores of Bafta-award winning shows. He has combined this with his work as the founding chair of National Theatre Wales, which in its first year has garnered unprecedented national and international attention.



JULIE OWENS - FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Welsh at Work (large businesses)

Sponsored by Cad Centre Mid and West Mid and West Fire and Rescue Service
 Welsh at Work has made Welsh a core of its approach to engaging with its staff and with the local communities it serves. As well as appointing a Welsh Language Officer, it has cultivated a supportive institutional culture for Welsh speaking employees, including Welsh-language training, 'Working Welsh' badges to identify Welsh-speaking employees and the issuing of a bilingual staff magazine, Calon Tan.



PROFESSOR ANTHONY CAMPBELL

Science & Technology

Sponsored by the University of Wales
 In a career spanning more than 40 years, Anthony Campbell has contributed a huge amount to the bioluminescence research field of animals and microbes that make their own light. His work has led to three major inventions, with one – the discovery of the effectiveness of flashes of light, rather than glows – leading to a method that is used in hundreds of millions of clinical tests worldwide. This invention has brought in £20 million to Wales from patent royalties, spin-out sales and grant income, and has won a slew of awards.



DAFYDD HARDY - DAFYDD HARDY ESTATE AGENTS

Welsh at Work (small businesses)

Sponsored by CAD Centre
 From its inception in 1992, Caernarfon-based estate agent Dafydd Hardy has worked to incorporate Welsh into the heart of what it does. The company introduced a bilingual policy for communication with customers, tracking the policies of the Welsh Language Scheme, which allows a choice of either Welsh and English for customers, and encouraging its staff to learn or improve their Welsh language skills.

Priorities for the fourth term

Policies exist to close productivity gap

Brian Morgan



Despite the recent global recession, the economic priorities for the new Welsh Government's fourth term remain remarkably similar to the ones that were highlighted in the IWA's 2006 publication *Time to Deliver* prior to the Assembly's Third Term - or indeed, to many of the economic recommendations made in 1999 at the start of the Welsh Assembly.

In 2006 it was emphasised that the main economic priorities were: (i) investment in infrastructure; and (ii) investment in skills development. To ensure these investments actually stimulated higher economic growth in Wales, they needed to be supplemented by a third element, mobilising business investment in the private sector.

In 2010 the Economic Renewal debate extended this list to include the abandonment of the overly bureaucratic business support model, Funding Support for Business (FS4B), in favour of an arms-length, private sector-led, delivery model. It also called for improvements in delivery mechanisms across the public sector and for progress on local procurement.

Unfortunately, these calls for a major re-focus on key economic development priorities in 2006 and 2010 fell on deaf ears. Instead, the Welsh Government proceeded along the path of 'business as usual'. That is disappointing because the funding package available in 2006 was much more favourable to raising

investment levels in these key areas than it is now. Similarly, although FS4B was abandoned, there have been no moves to create an arms length delivery model.

So in 2011 the economic priorities for Wales remain roughly the same – increase investment in infrastructure and skills, coupled with a focus on raising business investment in the private sector and increasing productivity in both the private and public sectors.

Potentially the biggest economic driver is increased capital investment in transport and the built environment. But transport has now been taken out of the portfolio of the Department of Business. Indeed, transport does not appear in any ministerial title. With a projected shortfall of 41 per cent in capital spend over the next few years, an important policy option would be to increase the amount of investment raised through public private partnerships (PPPs).

The Business Department could encourage investment in areas which would add specific value to Welsh infrastructure, especially where there is an immediate investment need. Examples include social housing, energy, integrated transport networks and broadband. In addition, the Severn Barrage and other renewable energy investments offer unique opportunities for PPP schemes in Wales - schemes that would support the move to a low carbon economy.

With limited resources the Business Department could immediately identify areas for new investment to be targeted. These would include enterprise zones and city regions. The government will need to be quick off the mark on enterprise zones. Bristol and areas near the Welsh Borders are already investing in these new opportunities to stimulate regional growth. Zones are not a panacea for the Welsh economy but Wales will be at a disadvantage if we ignore this option. Enterprise zones will need to be implemented across a fairly wide geographic area to avoid

displacement, that is the problem of firms closing in one part of a city and reinvesting in another part.

To avert this problem the zones could be linked to the development of city-regions. The Department could use enterprise zones to build up the institutional capacity of areas surrounding Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Wrexham. The Heads of the Valleys region would be a good start. The aim would be to enable these regions to implement wider regional economic strategies in sectors that offer the most opportunities for harnessing economies of scale, such as waste management, integrated transport facilities and housing policy. There could be an important role here for the social enterprise sector in supporting this policy.

The main driver for skills development is the public education system, but again, this is largely outside the remit of the Department for Business. However, the Department could seek to highlight the fact that business issues are not being effectively addressed by schools and colleges. And, outside the traditional education system, the Business Minister should be seeking to raise investment in work-based learning. Firms that invest in upskilling their workforce should be given priority in accessing other areas of business support, such as soft loans and consultancy support.

A related area would be the development of a pool of business mentors. As Sir Terry Matthews stated recently, "Seasoned business people need to get involved in young companies and help them be successful". The new Department for Business should be building links with Welsh entrepreneurial talent aged 30 and over, and involving them in business support networks. The focus should be on mobilising entrepreneurship and supporting our young companies.

A crucial business skill that really needs honing is finance. New and

existing businesses in Wales should be supported to become 'investor ready' through being in a position to successfully apply for loans and equity finance to assist business growth. The demand and supply of finance is critical and this brings us to the final pillar of any growth programme - private sector investment.

Although there are few policy levers available in this area there are some important things the Department of Business needs to do. The first is to stick to a broad sectoral strategy. Certain technology areas, such as IT, biotechnology, and environmental services, are likely to experience higher growth rates than the mainstream economy. Tourism is also an important sector in Wales and, along with the strong creative sector, has a major role to play in the design, marketing and branding of successful products. The Business Department could be radical here and support business clusters by promoting the privatisation of Finance Wales and tasking it with improving the supply of seed capital in these targeted sectors.

A dynamic and expanded role for Finance Wales will be a critical driver for business growth. Finance Wales has become one of the success stories of government intervention. But first it needs to become more proactive in developing a Venture Capital Trust and better at matching fledgling companies to specialist funding houses. It should be tasked with coordinating regular investor road-shows of Welsh companies in the major financial centres. The benefits of a spin-out for Finance Wales would be to reduce the chances of political interference. It would also incentivise the partners to produce sustainable returns on investment.

One very important low-cost action to raise business growth would be for the Business Minister Edwina Hart to reduce red tape by introducing a more flexible, risk-based approach to regulation. That is, well-behaved firms should be inspected less often than those which have a record of breaking the rules. She could also announce that, where the issue is devolved, she will not

introduce any new regulation – whether from Cardiff, Whitehall or Brussels - until her Department has identified and abolished an existing directive. There is scope for this approach to be fast-tracked in any new Enterprise Zones. Successful businesses in Wales can then invest more time and resource into finding, winning and keeping customers - which should be the main objective of the new Department for Business.

In addition to business investment, infrastructure and skills, the other important ingredient of productivity

averse nature of the civil servants in her Department and placing an emphasis on timely decision making would help raise productivity across the public sector. These changes would also help the Department to become better at using procurement to foster sustainable growth and increase investment in the private sector, especially in terms of green public procurement.

Despite some successful policies like ProAct, the experience of the first three terms of devolved government highlights how difficult it is to raise GVA

A dynamic and expanded role for Finance Wales will be a critical driver for business growth.

growth is innovation. This requires investment in skills or new processes that streamline and simplify production systems and encourage the adoption of new techniques. Greater use of innovation vouchers would be a useful start for raising productivity in the private sector and improving competitiveness. In addition, the positive spillovers from inward investment can be an important source of competitive advantage and increased productivity in the host country. So a successful strategy to attract global investors to Wales will be a necessary component for raising the growth rate. Poor performance in this area since 2004 suggests that an arms length delivery model will be needed to implement this strategy successfully. The Business Department could focus on working closely with this institution to maximise the economic impact of inward investment by promoting local sourcing and embedding the inward investor into the local economy.

Finally, public service reform will be a vital ingredient to ensure that economic priorities are delivered during the fourth term. To this end, reducing the risk

per head in Wales relative to the UK average. The productivity gap is a key component of the shortfall in prosperity, but imaginative policies exist to address it. During the fourth term, economic policy should focus on providing the skills and financial resources that businesses need to become more competitive and expand. It should further support business growth by targeting investment in hard and soft infrastructure through enterprise zones and city regions.

However, many of the economic challenges facing Wales will continue far beyond the next term and initiatives to improve infrastructure, raise skills and boost business investment will take time to impact on the economy. Therefore it is important that the Minister takes a long term view and invests for the future – and not simply focuses on issues that will influence the next election.

Professor Brian Morgan is Director of the Creative Leadership And Enterprise Centre at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff.

Prioritise electrification to Swansea and the Valleys

Stuart Cole



The most challenging transport priorities confronting the new Welsh Government is to ensure that electrification of the South Wales Main Line extends to Swansea. Following that it should be aiming to electrify the *Valleys Metro* network. This means the lines from Ebbw Vale to Maesteg via Bridgend, Cardiff and Newport, creating a south east Wales high frequency train service - the *south Wales Metro*. The estimated total track cost will be £500 million plus reasonably priced refurbished cascaded trains.

For the UK Government to be persuaded to fund this high level of investment the Welsh Government has to provide a robust business case. This analysis has to be completed by October if it is to be included in the Office of Rail Regulation investment plan for the 2014 – 2019 Network Rail financial period and funded by the UK Department for Transport. The business case for Swansea is just as urgent to justify a cost of £64 million, though European convergence funding would reduce the capital cost and give a better rate of return.

The current Welsh rail franchise that was agreed in 2003 was for a no growth, low investment railway operating over a fifteen year period. That would not have satisfied a growth of demand over 8 per cent per annum without considerable additional financial input from the Welsh Government. Now preparation of the specification for a new franchise (or not-for-dividend company) has to begin soon to be on time for a 2018 start. But this time we need to ensure that the planned track and rolling stock investment matches the anticipated growth in demand.

In other parts of Wales, the Cambrian coast line now has capacity for an hourly

train service – rolling stock is therefore awaited. Doubling the tracks between Llanelli and Gowerton and Wrexham and Chester (the latter reduces north-south journey times by 20 minutes) has been agreed by the Welsh Government and Network Rail. Rail electrification from Wrexham to Bidston linking into the Merseyrail service would attract more commuters into Liverpool and thus reduce the road capacity increases once planned for the A55 / A494 near Ewloe.

The new Network Rail-Cymru Wales operating region will be an attractive proposition but it must be adequately funded

The Government's national roads forward programme has more, but lower cost, schemes along the A470 north-west to south-east trunk road. Thought also should be given to the other A483 national trunk north-south road link from Wrexham to Newtown. These two roads provide a key link into central Wales from the A55 in the north, and the M4 in the south.

However, spending has to be prioritised on the east-west strategic road connections between Wales and our manufacturing and tourism customers which are keys to economic regeneration. Improvements to the A 465 Heads of the Valleys road at Hirwaun and Clydach George will be expensive but necessary. The A55 Expressway at Ewloe and an imaginative development of the existing A48 south of Newport to double the capacity of the M4 are also key route improvements. But, of course, these have to be prioritised in the context of the need for significant expenditure to resurface roads badly damaged by two periods of freezing conditions in 2010.

This emphasises the importance of following an integrated transport plan where it may not be road solutions that are required to reduce road congestion. The development of rail or bus (with traffic priority) Park and Ride around Cardiff, Swansea, Newport and Wrexham will have a significant impact and the integrated public transport hub will help facilitate the Cardiff Sustainability City plan.

On the buses, Ceredigion and north Carmarthenshire have benefited from the

introduction of *Bwcbus*, a radical method of rural bus service improvement which has transformed travel opportunities and service quality. These will be further improved by integrating the new Traws Cymru coach service into the national rail network later in 2011.

Cerdyn Cymru, the All Wales Public Transport Entitlement Card referred to in the 2009 National Transport Plan will provide multi ride travel for all. Some cards will be free (for those over 60) and some will be paid for; they can be local regional or national and will be smart cards similar to the London Oyster and Cardiff *Iff* cards.

A new direct rail link to Cardiff Airport will give it a more attractive land side connection than Bristol. However, this investment has to be included in the Network Rail 2014–19 investment plan alongside a considerable increase in destinations and point of origin for inward travellers, especially tourists and those attending major sport and conference events.

Wales' ports have also a considerable potential. The development at Blackbridge pier, Milford Haven will result in containers loaded with biofuel being moved by eight trains per day. Although not obvious at first, this requires integrated transport planning for train paths at Cardiff.

The potential to transfer cruise business away from the Baltic Sea to the Celtic Sea is not moving anything like fast enough. As we have two deep water ports for big cruise ships and tidal ports for the smaller, often more exclusive (that is, more expensive) ships, the development of piers at Milford haven and Holyhead should be seen as vital tools for economic regeneration. The economic benefits to north west Wales and to Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire would be significant. As cruise lines have a four year lead time in planning their destinations these should have already been built and no further delay should occur.

Stuart Cole is Professor Emeritus in Transport at the Wales Transport Research Centre, University of Glamorgan Business School.

An education mountain to climb

David Reynolds



It would be difficult to imagine a more Herculean task than that confronting Education Minister Leighton Andrews in attempting to improve on Wales' disastrous performance in last year's PISA tests. The facts are well known. Wales' performance is well below that of the other 'home nations' and on a par with educationally lightweight countries such as Greece and Croatia.

His reaction to these facts is also well known. They were presented in his landmark speech in February with its spine chilling phrase of 'systemic failure', followed by his speech to the IWA in June, both outlining a 20 point programme of what can only be called national renewal.

Virtually everything that can be done is being done. Welsh policy amounts to the agreed international recipe for systemic educational change. Can we truly improve on the disastrous 2010 showing when PISA 2013 reports, and reach the top 20 of countries internationally by 2016? It is a big ask of our schools. Will it work?

Firstly, we need to recognise that many of the initiatives are only likely to have effects in the medium term, of say two to three years. Welsh children sitting the PISA tests in November 2012 have already had two of their three years of school experience that will be reflected in their 2012 performance, which predisposes us to do poorly. Direct action about PISA is essential. We need to make sure schools know and teach the new 'skills based' approach that PISA tests measure. 'Playing' the tests to exclude potentially low scoring children (around 15 per

cent) is axiomatic.

It may be said that this is 'fiddling the results'. However, most other countries of the world are already 'fiddling'. And if schools were to turn their noses up at such blatant 'gaming' then they need reminding that they themselves have been 'gaming' their predicted GCSE Grade 'D' children to achieve 'C' grades for a decade.

Secondly, somehow in Wales we also need to rid ourselves of our historical Welsh curses. There is the curse that teachers produce their own teaching practices – whereas virtually every other country on the planet brings to their teachers the evidence on 'what works'.

And there is the curse that somehow the

Paradoxically, it is within Wales itself that the solution to our massive educational problems may lie. That is, in the programmes and national policies used to help the Welsh language.

educational system needs to retain its historic focus upon what can loosely be called a 'progressive' educational mission. On the other hand, virtually every other country on the planet, whether socialist or capitalist, has moved on. Interestingly, the loudest applause at the Leighton Andrews June 2011 lecture was reserved for the questioner who wondered whether the educational reforms would drive out the children's capacity to be inspirational in what they do. Serendipity favours the mind prepared for it – inspiration likewise happens or not in the paths prepared for it.

Thirdly, the emphasis, as Leighton Andrews is fond of suggesting, needs to shift towards delivery. The Education Department is itself shedding staff and reorganising, but it is unclear if that is generating the lean, mean educational

machine that is needed. Perhaps one of Wales' most sacred taboos – about the employment of private sector companies in State-provided services – needs to be challenged. And if policies are to be 'scaled up' through the winning of hearts and minds, then a much better communications strategy needs to be employed, with perhaps a softer emotional tone.

Paradoxically, it is within Wales itself that the solution to our massive educational problems may lie. That is, in the programmes and national policies used to help the Welsh language. No nation in the world except Wales has successfully used its State education system to rescue a minority language as we have done in Wales. How was it done? There was an international search for language programmes that worked – in this case finding immersion techniques from Israeli schools. Dedicated funding was found for Special Programmes and special training on a scale far above that now being attempted.

Mainstreaming of policies about the language through all public sector bodies was put into effect. The concern about the effects of all policies upon the language was a part of the legislative process for all proposed legislation. There was a fierce commitment to the language being a part of our national political discussion, and a concern that language policies ran through all policies about the families and communities of Wales.

How many of these characteristics of Welsh Language policies exist in our educational policies at the moment? Probably none. It would be extraordinarily symbolic if the policy area of greatest success post devolution were the solution and model in the area of greatest policy failure – the educational system.

David Reynolds is Professor of Educational Effectiveness at the University of Southampton and a Policy Adviser to the Welsh Government.
NHS must do more



with less Marcus Longley

Who would be the new Minister for Health and Social Care? Lesley Griffiths inherits a system under almost daily criticism, generally acknowledged to be unsustainable without major reform, and facing real terms funding cuts of about 20 per cent over the next three years.

Her agenda essentially falls into three parts. By far the most urgent is to save money. The usual euphemism – ‘improving efficiency’ – is no longer adequate. Doing more with the same amount of money, the usual definition of efficiency, is not going to reduce expenditure by the almost 20 per cent that real budgets will be cut over the next three years. In other words, cuts means cuts. Very few NHS managers yet know where they are going to be found.

The second objective must be to force the NHS to implement a new model of care. To achieve it the Minister needs to move simultaneously in opposite directions. She needs to transfer services out of hospital into the community, to support more people at home. At the same time she should centralise other specialised services into fewer hospitals, where better quality care can be more easily assured. One of the most visible and contentious aspects of this will be delivering Labour’s manifesto promise to extend opening hours for GP surgeries. More profound will be the aspiration to transfer ten per cent of resources out of hospitals and into the community.

In the longer term the third objective is both the most important and the most difficult. This is to find a way – or, more probably, dozens of different ways – of helping people preserve their health, and to cope much better with the consequences of long-term ill health. The challenges range from the very different problems of obesity and dementia on

the one hand, to teenage pregnancy and substance misuse on the other.

Can Lesley Griffiths deliver? Any one of these three challenges would be a tall order. All three at once will make for interesting times.

The worst case scenario sees the NHS scabbling to survive over the next few years by salami-slicing any service that isn’t strong enough to resist, regardless of effectiveness, popularity or strategic fit. Staff vacancies will remain unfilled, whatever the importance of the post. And waiting times, workloads and new services will all take a hit. It’s a pretty grim picture whose only redeeming feature being that the NHS would actually survive.

The best case scenario is one in which a fury of innovation, service re-design and partnership is unleashed, making the leap to a better and cheaper service. As we know, no health care system has ever made such a change so quickly, and against such odds.

If Lesley Griffiths is to have any chance of success, there are three key arenas to focus on. The first is the opportunity afforded by the NHS reorganisation carried out by her predecessor. This created seven Health Boards which brought together all the services in a locality, ending the nonsense of the ineffective commissioner/provider divide, and bringing primary, community and secondary care (the hospitals) all together in one whole. So far, the change hasn’t gone much beyond the organisational chart on the Chief Executive’s office wall. Now is the time to make it a reality, because this is the way to stop inappropriate hospital admissions and to help people to manage their own conditions. In themselves each are game-changing innovations.

Paradoxically, the second opportunity comes from across the border in England. There the NHS is in such a mess that Wales can now make clear its own alternative vision of the NHS. We no longer need to apologise for perceived failure – we are clearly doing better than England. In particular, we need our own clear, consistent and compelling narrative

of how one makes such a great lumbering beast as the NHS embrace painful change.

Notions like ‘choice’, ‘competition’ and ‘responsibility’ have been commandeered by English propagandists, and they now almost sound like dirty concepts in Wales. Nevertheless choice is a defining characteristic of any civilised health care system, competition is a powerful agent of improvement, while responsibility was a concept well known to Bevan. The challenge is to seize these concepts back, define them to suit our needs, and set them free in Wales.

Finally, the Minister has the prime responsibility for the politics. Previous attempts to make the sort of changes described here floundered when Welsh citizens rejected what they regarded as ill-conceived and deceitful changes to their local health services. People need to be persuaded, not just that change is unavoidable, but that it’s brilliant! People should be marching to demand that their local hospital is closed, where care is substandard. Such pressures will be difficult to manage for an administration without an overall majority, and where many of the professions and trades unions will be more focused on defending the status quo than in arguing for change. The only advantage the Minister has is that perhaps people have now been prepared for the worst. Maybe they will accept that painful change really is inevitable this time.

The Minister inherits all the unsolved problems of her predecessors, at the toughest time for the NHS since the mid-1970s. Just as the NHS survived that IMF-inspired pain, so it will survive the current banker-induced crisis. But will it limp out of the ring as a tired and battered 20th Century model, or stride out as a leaner, fitter, 21st Century NHS? Never waste a good crisis, was the advice given to President Obama. Lesley Griffiths should heed that advice as well.

Marcus Longley is Director of the Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care and Professor of Applied Health Policy at the University of Glamorgan.

Wales’



'One Planet' aspiration
Anne Meikle

The next nine years – to 2020 - are critical if we are to live sustainably on this planet. The global population is consuming the earth's resources at a faster rate than they can be replenished. If Welsh lifestyles were replicated around the world, we would need around two and a half planets worth of resources. So we are fortunate that, in its sustainable development scheme *One Wales: One Planet*, the last Government aimed for Wales to live within its fair share of the earth's resources. This would mean reducing the area of biologically productive land needed to support our lifestyles, our 'ecological footprint', by 75 per cent, within the 'lifetime of a generation'. It set Wales on an ambitious path.

By 2020, we must have made significant progress on this goal. Therefore this agenda must be central to the work of the First Minister's new Delivery Unit. WWF Cymru's recent report *Progress in embedding the 'One Planet' aspiration in Welsh Government* suggests that the Welsh Government has made a promising start but has much more to do.

Ahead of the forthcoming review of its Sustainable Development Scheme, the report sets out lessons and priorities for the Government. A key finding is that not all policies and departments have recognised the 'One Planet' goal. Yet as the Sustainable Development Commission said: "Living within ecological limits is the non-negotiable basis for our social and economic development".

Carwyn Jones has already announced that there will be a Sustainable Development Bill, so there is an opportunity to clarify and strengthen the Welsh Government's sustainable development duty. Legislation should make it absolutely clear that sustainable

development is the central organising principle of government, which explicitly includes living within environmental limits.

The 'One Planet Wales' goal needs to be embedded in the purposes and functions of the public sector, and especially any new single environmental delivery organisation resulting from the projected merger of the Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency Wales, and the Forestry Commission Wales.

On climate change, the United Nations Environment Programme has issued a stark warning. It says that global emissions of greenhouse gases must have peaked by the middle of *this* decade and be on a steep downward path by 2020 if we are to have a reasonable prospect of keeping the rise in global warming to less than 2°C and avoiding catastrophic climate change.

Fortunately, all political parties in the Assembly are committed to cutting our territorial emissions by 40 per cent by 2020. However, that's only nine years away and although our emissions have been falling, the Welsh Government will need to ensure that recovery from economic recession is done without increasing emissions. WWF Cymru is urging the new Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science, Edwina Hart, to review economic development plans and ensure they are more focussed on a low carbon economy.

The Welsh Government will also need to meet its share of the European requirement on the UK that 15 per cent of energy used is from renewable sources by 2020. That is a major challenge for the First Minister himself. Before the election he said that Wales needs to "do a lot more" to make the most of its renewable energy resources. There must be a clear delivery plan with a commitment of how much electricity and heat will be generated from renewable sources by 2020. This should be the framework against which the future of the planning system and decisions on grid infrastructure are made.

Energy prices will continue to rise as

oil resources dwindle and other countries compete for fossil fuels. To avoid more people falling into fuel poverty, it is crucial the Government scales up retrofitting to make buildings more energy efficient. The Welsh Government must also promote and support any Green Deal from the UK government.

Another significant challenge for the new Welsh administration will be managing our natural environment. The previous Government had begun to radically change the way we manage and protect our natural environment through *A Living Wales*, the natural environment framework. This looks at the environment at an ecosystem level, of which humans are a part. It will be a major challenge for Government to change our mindset, planning and regulation systems to achieve sustainable development in relation to pollution, soil formation and fresh water.

Despite the difficulties we should see these challenges as an exciting opportunity. We must ensure that people's expectation of a healthy productive environment is not let down by any drive to 'deregulation', accidentally or deliberately removing protection of the environment. We failed to meet the agreed targets for biodiversity protection by 2010 and we must do better in future.

Wales now has a golden opportunity on this agenda. Carwyn Jones leads a new government with a strong mandate and new powers, and the last administration has laid the foundations for change.

Let's go to next year's Rio+20 global sustainability summit with something tangible to show the world – an exemplary Sustainable Development Act and a country actually *delivering* the One Planet Nation ideal. This will be achieved by supporting sustainable, low carbon businesses, and *delivering* sustainable procurement. In the process we can make a radical step change towards a low carbon, sustainable Wales.

Anne Meikle is Head of WWF Cymru.

Where stand the parties now

John Osmond on why all the parties have their work cut out to be ready for the next election in 2016

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Where stand the parties now

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Why we should control the courts and the police

In the wake of the May election all the parties, regardless of their relative performance, confront acute dilemmas as they face the coming five years of the National Assembly's fourth term.

At first sight Welsh Labour emerged from the election the clear winner, increasing their votes and seats compared with 2007. With the other parties all in disarray in one way or another, Labour eased almost effortlessly into unopposed control of the government.

But how long can this last? For the first few months Labour's majority was assured by the absence from the chamber of two List Liberal Democrat AMs, barred because at the time they were elected they were members of prohibited bodies. Labour AMs may come to regret the intransigent attitude they adopted towards their plight. If they had been more magnanimous at the start, and used Assembly procedures to absolve the Liberal Democrat AMs' undoubtedly unintentional misdemeanour, then they would have built up a good deal of credit for a future coalition deal, or perhaps an arrangement short of that to secure a majority on key votes, such as for the budget.

As it is, Labour will undoubtedly struggle to get vital elements of its programme through at some point in the coming year, and it is now unlikely to find a sympathetic response from the Liberal Democrats. With just 30 seats First Minister Carwyn Jones is in a place he did not want to be. Before the election he made it clear

he had no wish to run a minority administration. If he had won 29 or 31 seats his position would have been more clear-cut. If he had won the former he would have immediately started negotiations with the other parties, seeking a coalition. If the latter, he would at least have had a majority.

The actual result has placed him in a kind of no-man's land. Will he try and create his own political weather or wait for events to dictate his options? The question was prompted by the fourth term's exceedingly slow start, with two months elapsing before the First Minister got around to announcing his detailed legislative programme for the coming year.

Meanwhile, he was placed on the back foot by the momentum of events that were powering the demands for greater fiscal autonomy for both Northern Ireland and Scotland. Wales' legitimate demand for a fairer needs-based formula for allocating the block grant was occluded by Northern Ireland's case for devolution of corporation tax, and Scotland's wish, partially already conceded, for income tax devolution, large-scale borrowing powers, and control over Crown-estate lands. Carwyn Jones is playing catch-up from the side-lines on these issues.

He won May's election on the basis of wrapping himself in Y Ddraig Goch – "standing up for Wales" – to fight an essentially British campaign that was focused on opposing the Conservative Liberal Democrat coalition in London. In the short term this worked brilliantly

Results of the 5 May 2011 Welsh General Election

Constituencies

Party	Seats	+/-	Votes	%	% Change
Labour	28	+4	401,677	42.3	+10.1
Conservative	6	+1	236,916	25	+2.6
Plaid Cymru	5	-2	182,907	19.3	-3.1
Liberal Democrat	1	-2	100,731	10.6	-4.2
Other	0	-1	27,021	2.8	-5.4

Regions

Party	Seats	+/-	Votes	%	% Change
Labour	2	0	349,935	36.9	+7.2
Conservative	8	+1	213,773	22.5	+1.1
Plaid Cymru	6	-2	169,799	17.9	-3.1
Liberal Democrat	4	+1	76,349	8	-3.7
Other	0	0	139,532	14.7	-1.5
Turnout			949,388	42.2	-1.1

well, especially in terms of wrong-footing Plaid Cymru which saw the tactic coming but did nothing to counter it. On the other hand, Labour's failure to focus on Welsh issues and think them through in terms of its promised delivery in government on key policy areas such as health and economic development may well prove a hostage to fortune – though Leighton Andrews has a more sustained grip on his Education portfolio.

The other clear winner of the election was the Conservatives. They increased their share of the vote and their number of seats. However, this very success proved an Achilles heel. The vagaries of the electoral system meant that in the process they lost both their King and their Dauphin - in the form of Nick Bourne, from the List in Mid and West Wales, and his heir apparent, Jonathan Morgan, in Cardiff North.

The result was that the Welsh Conservatives were, ill-advisedly, plunged into an immediate leadership election they did not want with candidates that had not been seriously thought of as potential leaders prior to the election. The ill-advice came from the Secretary

of State Cheryl Gillan, who overruled other voices on the Welsh Conservative's Management Board. These had pressed the case for letting the dust settle, and giving the Conservative Group in the Assembly time to get the measure of a wider range of personalities who might have competed for the leadership.

The precipitate election exposed for all to see the paucity of the contenders' ideas for taking their party forward. Beyond continuing to pursue Nick Bourne's successful campaign to detoxify the Conservative brand by enthusiastic

sign of a willingness to participate in the wider debate about how constitutional relationships within Britain are to be shaped in response to Scotland's independence referendum.

If any party has to ask the question what it is for it is the Welsh Liberal Democrats. They still have to recover from their failure to seize the opportunity of participating in a Rainbow coalition with Plaid Cymru and the Conservatives following the 2007 election. As the decisive voice in that decision their leader Kirsty Williams sounded implausible in the run-up to

The result was that the Welsh Conservatives were, ill-advisedly, plunged into an immediate leadership election they did not want with candidates that had not been seriously thought of as potential leaders prior to the election.

identification with all things Welsh, what do Welsh Conservatives want to do with devolution? There was no real answer to how they can get into government in any foreseeable future. Nor was there any

the 2011 election when she claimed to be open-minded about coalition politics. Of all the parties the Liberal Democrat's manifesto was the weakest, while the predicament of their barred AMs

immediately following the election only added to a sense of amateurism.

But the real Liberal Democrat dilemma is about the identity of their political base and the absence of a sense of momentum around what their political objectives are. Ask the question about either of these and there is no clear answer. Electorally, they now seem to be merely a safe alternative when Labour is unpopular in urban Wales, while in much of rural Wales their vote is being stolen by either the Conservatives or Plaid Cymru. In terms of numbers of AMs their bacon was saved in 2011 by the List vote. In the process, however, their identity has been dissipated.

For the party that has for the last half-century been most closely associated with devolution Plaid Cymru has adapted to its reality least well. To be fair, it secured a good dividend from the *One Wales* coalition with Labour in the third term, in particular the commitment to holding the referendum on further powers and

then being instrumental in delivering the Yes vote.

However, this effort exhausted the party in creating a convincing narrative to take itself and Wales beyond that staging post, and also in putting together an effective policy programme it could implement in government. Plaid Cymru has faltered on three fronts: developing a unity of purpose on wishing to represent communities across the whole of Wales; secondly, on clearly wanting to be a party of government and accepting that this necessarily entails coalition politics; and, thirdly, stating unambiguously its political, constitutional objective and sustaining a narrative about how that can be achieved.

These shortcomings are reflected in Plaid Cymru's ongoing leadership crisis, that began in the Assembly's first term when it so ill-advisedly dismissed its now elder statesman, Lord Dafydd Wigley. In today's politics a leader who

captures attention and admiration across the political spectrum, who is articulate and can communicate in terms that people readily understand is worth ten percentage points electorally. Alex Salmond has demonstrated this in Scotland, as have Rhodri Morgan, followed by Carwyn Jones in Wales. Until Plaid Cymru finds such a leader who can also help it iron out ambiguities about who it appeals to as a party, about being a serious force in politics as a party of government, and about its constitutional objectives it will struggle.

The coming fourth term will be a crucial period for the parties in providing space and time to re-shape themselves in addressing all these issues ahead of the 2016 election. The success of the devolution process depends on how far they are able to overcome their difficulties.

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John Osmond is Director of the IWA.



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Welcome to the legalities of law making powers

Alan Trench says the referendum marks the beginning of the National Assembly's entanglement with judicial process

The legislative powers conferred on the National Assembly thanks to the Yes vote in the March 2011 referendum are much more ample, much clearer and much more legally certain than those it had before. Part 4 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 is a much better foundation for law-making than Part 3. However, the Yes vote is by no means the end of the story of Wales's constitutional development. Part 4 also has some serious legal flaws, and making it work is not going to be a smooth ride.

Some of the reasons have little to do with Wales. The main one is the fact that devolved legislation is increasingly finding its way into the courts. Today the question of how courts approach devolved laws is important in a way it was not in the first decade of devolution.

Unsurprisingly, it is Scottish legislation that has been in the lead here. While the bulk of the devolution cases considered by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council or the UK Supreme Court in the first decade of devolution concerned human rights issues and the treatment of those charged with a criminal offence or in prison, that is now changing. Most cases before the courts now involve

issues of purely domestic law, not the application of the European Convention on Human Rights, and raise wide-ranging questions of principle about how devolution works.

One case, *Martin and Miller v. Lord Advocate*, decided in the summer of 2010, asked the Supreme Court to consider how it should approach the task of judging whether devolved legislation was within the powers of the Scottish Parliament. The issue here was not directly relevant to Wales. It was about the sentencing powers of a Sheriff sitting alone on summary business (not with a jury), when dealing with a driving offence. Criminal justice, including organisation of the courts and sentencing policy, is a devolved matter in Scotland, but road traffic offences are reserved to Westminster. What's important is the way the court looked at the question.

Should the courts look at the general purpose of the legislative provision to decide whether it was within devolved competence? Or should they establish this by means of detailed verbal analysis, the traditional way of understanding what statute law means? In the *Martin and Miller* case, the judges split by three

to two. The majority took a particularly broad-brush approach and concluded the legislation was within devolved powers. The minority took an 'analytical' approach, and found it was not.

So, while the legislation was upheld, the Supreme Court set a two-pronged problem. On one hand, a differently composed court – and this was just five judges out of its 12 members – could easily have reached a different view. On the other, the minority's proposed solution – for the Scottish Government to have negotiated and obtained wider powers from Westminster to cover the legislation it proposed to make, using the order-making powers in the Scotland Act 1998 – would, for many practical purposes, turn the Scottish settlement into something very like Part 3 of the Government of Wales Act 2006.

There has not yet been a judgment in the second major Supreme Court case, *Axa General Insurance v. Lord Advocate*. This was heard by the court in June 2011, and the Welsh Government formally intervened in proceedings both on appeal in Scotland and at the Middlesex Guildhall. It concerns legislation passed by the Scottish Parliament (and the

Northern Ireland Assembly) to allow claims for damages for 'pleural plaques', a condition caused by exposure to asbestos, common in areas where there used to be heavy industry.

In 2004 the House of Lords decided that this condition (which doesn't directly affect the lives of those who have it) did not found a claim in damages. The Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive considered this unacceptable, and proposed legislation to reinstate claims for damages. A number of insurance companies, led by Axa, challenged this

a devolved legislature, and the Supreme Court is unlikely to encourage further challenges, but we must wait for the Supreme Court judgment to see what it says.

The question for Wales is how devolved Welsh law-making will be able to operate in this environment. How well would Acts of the National Assembly be able to stand up to the sort of scrutiny that the courts are subjecting to Scottish legislation? After all, there are some big differences in how Scottish and Welsh devolution work – in particular

ophthalmic, pharmaceutical and ancillary services and facilities. Clinical governance and standards of health care. Organisation and funding of the national health service.

That looks comprehensive, but is it? Do these powers include the power to set up a system of settling potential claims against the NHS in such a way as to limit complainants' access to the courts? That is what the NHS Redress Measure, passed in 2008, does. It's clearly not to do with promoting health or treating or preventing disease. Such legislation probably falls within the general category of "Organisation and funding of the national health service", but one cannot be certain. The issue is not whether readers think this, or even AMs think it, but ultimately whether a court does.

That is where the real difficulties may arise. Scottish legislation may face serious problems if the courts take an 'analytical' approach to considering it, but Welsh legislation would be in much greater difficulties. The idea that every clause of every Welsh bill should be subject to detailed scrutiny, to ensure that it directly relates to the powers set out in Schedule 7 of the 2006 Act, could make legislating very difficult indeed. Certainly, it would run against the current of what people thought they were voting for at the March referendum, as well as creating a good deal of practical difficulty.

Making the 'Part 4' system work will call for give and take in a number of quarters. The Welsh Government and the Assembly are going to have to be canny in deciding how far their powers go. Even then, those powers may need to be tweaked before legislation can be passed. Schedule 7, setting out those detailed law-making powers, has already been amended twice, before it even comes into use. It is likely to require further amendment in the coming years, to ensure that the National Assembly is able to legislate properly on the 20

How well would Acts of the National Assembly be able to stand up to the sort of scrutiny that the courts are subjecting to Scottish legislation?

legislation. Central to their arguments is the view that devolved legislation cannot exceed certain common-law limits of rationality, and that by overturning a decision of the House of Lords this legislation was irrational.

It is hard in principle to question the idea that devolved legislatures – which legally are creatures of Westminster, even if they were endorsed by referendums and have their own electoral mandates – are subject to some such limit. The real question is how that is applied. Even local authorities benefit from what is known as the 'Wednesbury' test, which holds that a decision is only unlawful if it is "so unreasonable that no reasonable authority could have reached it". That sounds tautological (though it isn't), and it creates a pretty high threshold for unreasonableness to be proved. The threshold should be higher than that for

the difference between the 'reserved powers' and 'defined powers' model. The Scottish Parliament can pass any laws it wishes, unless they concern matters reserved to Westminster. The National Assembly can only pass laws on subjects where it expressly has powers.

So, for example, the fact that the Assembly has powers over 'health and health services' doesn't mean it can do anything it likes that affects health. Legislation must fall within the definition set out in the 2006 Wales Act in relation to health, which (with some exceptions) covers:

Promotion of health. Prevention, treatment and alleviation of disease, illness, injury, disability and mental disorder. Control of disease. Family planning. Provision of health services, including medical, dental,

subject areas devolved to it.

This isn't a case of 'creeping devolution', so much as simply making it work. If Schedule 7 is regarded as being set in stone, that is likely to hamstring the Assembly, to no-one's real benefit – most certainly not that of the Welsh public. So Welsh law-making will in turn need

The Welsh Government and the Assembly are going to have to be canny in deciding how far their powers go. Even then, those powers may need to be tweaked before legislation can be passed.



ongoing cooperation between the Welsh Government and the Wales Office, and between the National Assembly and UK Parliament. There's nothing new about this. The number of orders made under the Scotland Act 1998, to adjust law either side of the border following legislation made at Holyrood, is pretty large. About half the Acts of the Scottish Parliament necessitate some sort of tweak somewhere. The much greater entanglement of government and public services between England and Wales only increases the need for that for Wales. March's referendum result may create

The four party leaders in the Senedd on 4 March as the referendum results were announced – Ieuan Wyn Jones (Plaid), Nick Bourne (Welsh Conservatives), Carwyn Jones (Welsh Labour) and Kirsty Williams (Welsh Liberal Democrats). On the right is Roger Lewis, Chair of the Yes for Wales campaign. Photo: Natasha Hirst

a much more powerful legislature than Wales has known since before the Middle Ages, but that legislature remains part of a complicated system of devolved governance. Making this new system work in the interests of the people of Wales will be a complex task, and there will be some rough patches on the way. Managing the complex relationship will be central to making the new phase of Welsh devolution work. Law-making

powers are far from the end of the Welsh devolution. Instead, they are merely the start of a new chapter.

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Alan Trench is a solicitor and an academic, associated with the University of Edinburgh and the Constitution Unit at University College London. He writes regularly on his blog *Devolution Matters*.



Delivering the Yes vote

Daran Hill describes how the parties collaborated in the referendum campaign

“The cross-party Yes campaign, in the run-up to the referendum earlier this year, proves we can be innovative in our approach to modern politics, when it comes to the best interests of Wales. We worked well together to deliver a new Assembly, with a new framework and now the onus is on us all to work together again, to make good that trust shown in us, and to deliver for the people of Wales.”

So said First Minister Carwyn Jones on 11 May, the day he confirmed that Welsh Labour would form a single party administration in the National Assembly. In doing so he cast his mind back further than his most recent experience of campaigning in the Assembly election. He took us back to the colder days of January and February when people from all parties and none aligned together to produce a Yes vote in the Assembly powers referendum. Yet those same party political allies have also been quick to suggest that their own role was somewhat different to being equal partners.

In doing so they mirror the same attitudes from 1997, when different parties were also quick to

claim the credit for victory. Perhaps cross party campaigns are always likely to produce outcomes in which one or other of the participants believes they did the heavy lifting. Back in 1997, Carmarthen was the critical county that delivered last and sealed the narrow victory for Yes for Wales. In the following months both Labour and Plaid told me they had not seen campaigners from the other party out there on polling day. It is a half truth both persist in repeating to this day. Knowing both were present – and present in significant numbers – it can only be put down to Carmarthenshire being such a large county that they didn’t stumble across each other. Surely there’s no other explanation?

Cross party respect is critical during referendums, even if it can be dispensed with afterward. When I was appointed Campaign Director of Yes for Wales it was very much an interdependent post which would never have worked without a talented team of core strategists alongside me. One of the things which I pledged at interview was to make sure that the cross party coalition which had been assembled would not be allowed to fall apart. Naturally this was not solely my doing, but it was

my main priority throughout. The unique coalition of four party leaders, followed by the thinking parts of their respective parties, was hugely significant in shaping and delivering the final vote. It was a carefully constructed platform of progressives which had been years in the making. Both Roger Lewis as Chair and Leighton Andrews as Convenor of the Steering Group also saw this clearly.

Indeed, to have Nick Bourne, leader of Just Say No in 1997, now advocating a Yes vote was a testament both to how common sense underpinned the proposition of Yes for Wales, but also the journey the Welsh Conservatives had made. That the whole Welsh Conservative Assembly group followed Bourne on that journey demonstrated the appeal even more. It was a path for the brave and alongside Nick his colleagues Darren Millar, Paul Davies and Nick Ramsay were especially visible in championing the Yes cause – all of them in areas not naturally favourable to devolution.

Of course, all of this was not without its challenges to other parties as well. Several voices in Labour indicated to me early on that the campaign would be much easier without Conservative involvement since it could be more clearly fought on an anti-UK government agenda. In light of the way they fought the 2011 Assembly election, this was not surprising and to a point I agreed with them, recognising the powerful simplicity of such an appeal. At the same time several of us made it crystal clear that such an approach was not going to be one which Yes for Wales took. Our messages would be based on the question in hand, complicated as it was, and would not play to the gallery. To our collective minds, the Conservatives were as integral to delivering the Yes vote across the whole of Wales as any other party. We were, indeed, all in this together.

That did not mean that everything a political party did had to be done through the auspices of Yes for Wales. Both Plaid and the Liberal Democrats produced some of their own party

literature during the campaign period which drew on Yes for Wales themes but were clearly their own communications. As in 1997, Labour went further. They viewed that in some places their own clearly branded literature with their own clearly stated views on the UK coalition and Wales as a buttress against neo-Thatcherite excesses was the right way to proceed.

The core steering group of Yes for Wales agreed. Frankly, we were pragmatic and realistic enough to realise that we could control our own message but had no say over what parties and other organisations might say in support of the central case we were making. To my mind there was no difference between Welsh Labour tilting at the Conservative bogeyman compared to Cymru Yfory, another key stakeholder in the campaign, arguing for more Assembly Members. Both were off message to Yes for Wales, but equally both had nothing to do with us.

What is clear to me in comparing

he managed to take the overwhelming majority of his party with him. That was a crucial difference. Of course, the presence of different governments at both ends of the M4 helped him do so, but at the same time it can't be denied that Welsh Labour was energized to win. The proximity of the referendum campaign to the Assembly election two months later undoubtedly helped. But ultimately politics comes down to people and – in stark contrast to 1997 – the vast majority of Labour elected members were out in force this time. Without Welsh Labour's energy, much of which was directed through their own campaign rather than through Yes for Wales, the win on 3 March would not have been so conclusive.

Anyone who disputes this need only look to Flintshire, where the Yes for Wales activity was at its most minimal but which saw the biggest swing from No to Yes of any county in Wales. In Flintshire it was Labour that counted, and especially the leadership of Carl Sargeant, the AM for



First Minister Carwyn Jones shares a word with Yes for Wales vice-chair Lee Waters (to his left) and Education Minister Leighton Andrews. Photo: Natasha Hirst

1997 and 2011, is that Welsh Labour was more united and purposeful this time around. Carwyn Jones led from the front throughout and, unlike Ron Davies,

Alyn and Deeside. We discussed the way the campaign should be run there on several occasions and the local boy was right that Labour should be pretty much



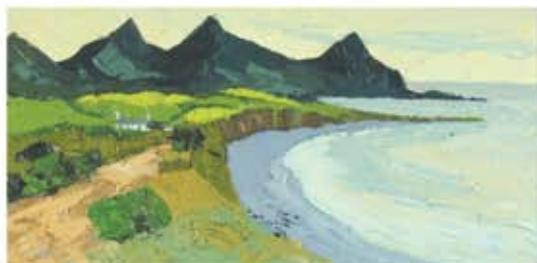
'Abereddy Cottages' oil on board 2011 70 x 120cm

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5 - 27 August 2011



Gwen John 'Kneeling Girl in Pink Hat' w/c 14 x 10cm

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'Traeth Aberdesach' oil on canvas 2008 30 x 60cm

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left alone to deliver for Wales, so hegemonic was their presence in population centres in the county. Yes for Wales was mostly irrelevant in delivering the vote on the ground in the county which changed its mind most emphatically. That is not to say that Yes for Wales did not contribute to the overall victory. Rather, we recognised that in certain population pockets we were not the best placed organisation to deliver.

Indeed, there was no single solution to campaigning across Wales. It was the sheer flexibility of the way the parties approached things that enabled local solutions to be delivered. For example, where the Liberal Democrats were strong, such as Powys and Cardiff, they were key deliverers of votes and leaflets.

One equally important factor, though, was the omnipresence of Plaid Cymru in Yes for Wales. There was no local or national Yes for Wales group across Wales which did not rely on Plaid to do the heavy lifting. That fact is indisputable, regardless of how you look back on the Yes campaign. Key Plaid organisers like then Chief Executive Gwenllian Landsdown and the formidable Caryl Wyn Jones were true heroes of the campaign and, as people, to me symbolised the total dedication of the party to achieving the size of the Yes vote that was delivered. That can never be taken away from them, although it undoubtedly left their grassroots troops more beleaguered than their opponents when one campaign was over and another began.

But in recognising the immense contribution Plaid made, that party should not kid itself it was the only one working through Yes for Wales. It may have been the party that worked most consistently

and wholeheartedly, but the achievement of Yes for Wales was a sum of many parts and parties. This included, of course, those who operated outside the party political structure, most notably the Wales TUC and Cymru Yfory, both of which provided valuable funds and support. The latter organisation also contributed greatly to the ground campaign. Figures like Hywel Ceri Jones and Cynog Dafis need proper appreciation for the sterling and consistent work they did. After all, things may have been managed from the centre, but they were delivered by the thousands of volunteers across Wales who gave so much time, effort and love to the vote we had to win.

Being at the centre of a campaign which truly united Wales will be one of the high points of my life. However, standing on a high point means that although you can see far, you cannot always see everything clearly. My view on the coalition of the willing which won for Wales is not definitive and nor is it intended to be. But having fought at the centre twice for my country's democracy, perhaps others may extend to me a little charity when they read my interpretation. My hope is that they will also extend that same charity in remembering the roles of those they fought alongside. We did it together.

Daran Hill is a political commentator and manages Positif Politics, a public affairs firm he founded in 2006. In the 1997 referendum he was National Organiser of Yes for Wales and in 2011 Campaign Director of Yes for Wales.



The No campaign's main spokesperson Rachel Banner speaking at a referendum debate at Cardiff University a few days before the vote, with former First Minister Rhodri Morgan in the foreground – "there was more than a grain of truth in some of her central charges."

Challenging a culture of mediocrity

Lee Waters says Wales can no longer afford to be the land of the pulled punch

Much as I disagreed with the arguments Rachel Banner marshalled to make her case for a No vote in the devolution referendum, there was more than a grain of truth in some of her central charges. As depressing and hypocritical as I found her anti-politics tone, there is no denying that there was much in her analysis of the challenges we face. The No campaign's assaults struck a nerve in three areas: capacity, scrutiny, and quality.

It is only human for those of us who campaigned for a Yes vote to have basked for a brief moment in the

satisfaction of a well fought campaign. But it is incumbent on us now to examine the weaknesses in the case that we presented and seek solutions, however uncomfortable they may be. Though non-governmental organisations have grown significantly in Wales since 1999 they remain a weak force. Most proved themselves either unwilling or incapable of persuading their UK head offices of the merits of engaging in the referendum campaign. Otherwise, they were too reliant on Welsh Government grant-in-aid to risk taking sides. Of course, as individuals most of the people engaged in Welsh civil society supported the reforms, in some cases actively. However, the small civil society to which they belong has developed a culture of risk aversion when it comes to political engagement. The rules of the Charity Commission do not help, although they are too often a convenient excuse to fall back on to justify the new credo: don't upset anyone!

Of course, it is difficult to run a campaign in which few are taking much notice. A declining Welsh media, allied to a metropolitan corps of journalists

disinterested in developments that do not fit into a Westminster narrative, made the telling of our own story very difficult. The frustration was only added to by having the disengagement played back to us as evidence of a disinterest in the devolution project amongst the people of Wales.

There's no use railing against it, it's a reality. And that reality presents enormous challenges to the future viability of Welsh politics. As Rachel Banner herself said, in an essay on the Wales Home website:

"The serious lack of plurality in the Welsh press means that it is much more difficult for a unicameral Assembly with greatly enhanced law-making power... to be held accountable".

She's right, but of course her solution was to campaign against improving Wales' law making powers. So how do we address the problem of accountability and scrutiny in a more autonomous Wales?

Cymru Yfory have an answer to this question, and they've been perfectly



Yes for Wales Chair Roger Lewis: "Now is time for us all to take responsibility. Let us not be afraid to make decisions, or make mistakes. The real failure is if we do not try. The culture of blame and excuse is behind us."
Photo: Natasha Hirst

consistent in making the case of the Richard Commission. They say the number of Assembly Members needs to be increased from 60 to 80. Their position has support from unexpected quarters. In a letter to the *Western Mail* in the aftermath of the vote the former Labour leader of Bridgend Council, Jeff Jones, wrote that "one of the problems with our Assembly is that it is actually quite a tiny institution with not much depth of talent". He drew the comparison between the size of the Assembly with the Parliaments of Estonia (which has 101 MPs with a population of 1.3 million), and Ireland (166 TDs and a population of 4.5 million). He might have added that it is also smaller than the House of Representatives in the US states of North Dakota (94), and Vermont (148) – all of which have smaller populations than Wales.

Yet, while there may be an intellectual case for increasing the number of AMs, it is politically difficult to justify in the aftermath of a referendum campaign that was fought on the premise that the number didn't need to rise.

That said, the question of how we apportion elected representatives to our various levels of Government has been reopened by the decision of the Westminster coalition to reduce the number of MPs from Wales by a quarter

(from 40 to 30). The precise calibration of how many politicians we need at each level of government is a question that will come up again when the time comes to re-examine the number of Welsh councils. By then we will have had some experience of operating a legislative Parliament with 60 AMs. At that point it may be possible to recalibrate and increase the number of AMs, providing the total number of politicians in Wales does not rise overall.

In the meantime, how do we strengthen the Assembly's ability to scrutinise the Welsh Government? Professor Laura McAllister of Liverpool University has analysed the devolved legislatures across the UK and believes there is a weakness in scrutiny capacity in general, and in Wales in particular. She points to the small scale of the Assembly and the weakness of civil society as the main causes, and argues that the coming of primary powers is likely to stretch ever further our capacity to scrutinise.

As Jeff Jones suggested, there is a need to draw on a greater 'depth of talent', and even if the number of AMs was to increase, the question of 'depth' would still remain a moot one. The dedication and drive required to gain entry into formal politics is resulting in

an increasingly narrow political class. A small country such as ours with its democracy still in its infancy needs to draw on as wide a talent pool as possible to prove the naysayers wrong.

One way forward was floated three years ago by the former Welsh Government Minister Jane Davidson. She suggested bringing 'talented non-politicians' into the Assembly via the PR top-up lists. She argued there were many people of ability with a passion for Wales who did not want to enter formal politics, but would be willing to serve for a defined period. However, her call for political parties to reserve a third of the Assembly seats for outsiders and to put tribalism to one side came unstuck because of, well, tribalism.

Nonetheless, the spirit of her suggestion is surely right. Laura McAllister has pointed to examples of Scandinavian and Commonwealth states like Norway, Iceland, Canada and New Zealand where outsiders are co-opted onto parliamentary committees. By 'outsourcing' some of the scrutiny function their parliaments have increased their ability to hold their Governments to account and simultaneously strengthened civil society.

It is a model that should be considered by the Assembly Commission. After all, it was adopted by the business community long ago in the form of non-executive directors to challenge the executive, look after the interests of the company's share-holders, and bring a range of experiences to the board table. The particular advantage of adapting the model to fit into the context of the Assembly is that it would bolster its capacity to scrutinise, without increasing the number of AMs.

Yet the main challenge we face is not simply about the number or quality of our politicians. Rather, it is about developing a more mature political culture. In short, we've got some growing up to do. During the referendum campaign Roger Lewis, Chair of Yes for Wales, made it his mantra that in order to gain respect Wales first needed to

build self-respect. And, as he said, the first step on that journey was to take responsibility for our own problems.

The theme was echoed just days after the result by Charlie Jeffery of Edinburgh University, one of the few academics to take an interest in the development of devolution across the UK. In a sobering lecture to the Wales Governance Centre he deflated the rhetoric of the campaign with an assessment of the cold realities we now face. Professor Jeffery argued that “the political logic of the UK’s multi-level state” suggests that Wales will become even more marginal to considerations at the centre. “Expect to hear refrains to the effect of, ‘Well done on the referendum, but you’re on your own now, hope it goes well’”, he told his audience at the Pierhead:

“Westminster will from time to time do things – like the near wholesale withdrawal of state funding for tuition in English universities – that have tremendous knock-on effects in Wales, without feeling a need to consult anyone in Wales about the policy and its effects. Get used to it.”

He suggested we can forget about demanding fair funding from the UK Government without first accepting responsibility for raising some of our own revenue. But the flip side was that if the new logic is embraced and politicians and interest groups understand that they can’t have it all ways, then Wales has the opportunity to fashion Welsh answers to Welsh questions. As Professor Jeffery concluded:

“It is an opportunity for the people of Wales and their representatives to define just what kind of political system Wales should have, what values it should embody, and what outcomes it should pursue”.

Of course he’s right. To govern is to choose. However, translate that into real world politics and the going gets tough. A problem is that we built a consensus

leading up to the referendum, but we don’t have one on the direction beyond it. We did well on the rhetoric, but didn’t think much beyond 3 March. That’s where Rachel Banner was really right. Of course, we’d have never held a four party campaign together had we tried to do so.

However, there’s now no escaping the need for hard headed assessments on what our real priorities as a nation are. While anti-Tory rhetoric is seductive to our political leaders, it doesn’t address the scale of the challenges we face. Neither does the constant search for more powers to devolve to Wales. Both preoccupations seem like displacement activity.

If we want the vibrant and prosperous country we talk about, then we need to accept the stark reality of our situation. We are poor, we are small and we are bound together into a dependency culture. To become more self-reliant we must first encourage a culture of self-criticism. “Our critics are our friends,” Benjamin Franklin once said. “They show us our faults”. Well, there’s not much evidence of that attitude in modern Wales – the land of the pulled punch. That has to change.

So how do we encourage more people to speak truth unto power? As an early sign of intent the First Minister should make a statement that no organisation receiving public funds should fear criticising a policy or action of the Welsh Government. Indeed, he should demand that any that come under pressure for doing so should bring it to his attention. Though not a panacea it would be a useful symbol.

The same should go for the so-called sponsored bodies. Ministers must encourage arms length agencies to challenge official thinking. Since the ‘bonfire of the quangos’ the trend for seeing sponsored bodies as mere delivery arms of the Welsh Government has intensified. Civil servants have been actively discouraging chief executives and Boards from any ‘political’ role. Though that might have been an understandable instinct a decade ago as the new Welsh Government sought to

establish itself, today there is a need to take a longer term view. Of course, it is Ministers that must decide but they also should respond positively to robust and challenging advice.

It has to work both ways. To achieve the new focus on outcomes and ‘delivery’ that we are told will be the hallmark of the fourth Assembly, Ministers must make greater demands of bodies that receive public funding. Until now politicians who have demanded an explanation for a culture of poor performance have been resented as interfering micro-managers. Indeed, the response of the teaching profession to Education Minister Leighton Andrews’ robust demands that they raise their game proves Corporal Jones’ famous dictum: “they don’t like it up ‘em”.

If we are to meet the challenges before us we must confront the culture of mediocrity. We have to shake ourselves out of our cosy, ‘we all know each other’ culture, and encourage a more testing environment. These are considerable challenges, but exciting ones nonetheless.

We should be under no illusions. The ‘project’ of making Wales a more self-reliant country is one that will take many generations to achieve. There are no quick fixes. Though some of her analysis struck a cord, ultimately Rachel Banner was profoundly wrong. The optimism of the Yes for Wales campaign won through. As Roger Lewis put it in his speech at the declaration on 4 March:

“Our country has great potential.

Yes, it faces great challenges.

But now is time for us all to take responsibility. Let us not be afraid to make decisions, or make mistakes. The real failure is if we do not try. The culture of blame and excuse is behind us. Today we have found our voice.”

.....
Lee Waters was Vice-Chair of the Yes for Wales campaign, Labour’s representative on its steering group, and led on communications.

Why we should control the courts and the police

Eurfyl ap Gwilym finds devolution of criminal justice cannot be opposed on financial grounds

Many have argued that a logical consequence of having devolved primary law making powers is the need to devolve the justice system to Wales. In evidence to the Richard Commission Mr Justice Roderick Evans and Professor Iwan Davies noted that there are three commonly accepted characteristics of a jurisdiction: a defined territory, a distinct body of law, and a separate structure of courts and legal institutions.

First Minister Carwyn Jones is on record as pointing out in a series of speeches over the past few years that the steady development of these criteria are pointing to the inevitability of creating a distinctive jurisdiction. For example, in September 2007 at a Legal Wales conference in Cardiff he stated:

“If you’ve got two parliaments which have primary powers, I think it makes it very difficult to have one jurisdiction. I’m not aware of anywhere in the world where you have that”.

The case was made in much bolder terms by Winston Roddick QC in the Lloyd George lecture he delivered in Crickieth when he expressed his view that:

“... a devolution settlement by which the Assembly is given full legislative competence but not the

responsibility for the administration of justice would be dysfunctional, constitutionally unsound and demeaning to Wales’s developing constitutional status”.

Some of the building blocks for devolution of justice and policing in Wales are already in place:

- An Administrative Court for Wales was established in Cardiff in 2000.
- Both the civil and criminal division of the Court of Appeal now sit regularly in Cardiff.
- Most judicial review cases involving decisions of Welsh public authorities are heard in Wales.
- Employment Appeals Tribunals now sit regularly in Wales.
- The Chancery Court in Wales sits in Wales and is no longer shared with Bristol.
- Welsh judges have established their own association.
- A single unit of Her Majesty’s Court Services was established in Wales with a Director for Wales in 2006.
- The ‘Wales and Cheshire’ circuit for the administration of justice became Wales-only in April 2007.

The four Welsh police forces have demonstrated a commitment towards collaboration and have established national bodies such as the Association

of Chief Police Officers and the Police Authorities of Wales. In April 2011 a Western Mail poll indicated that 56 per cent of respondents favoured the devolution of police and the criminal justice system. On the other hand Wales remains in the unsatisfactory position of having five prisons, all for men, with the most northerly institution being in Usk, 16 miles from Cardiff.

Nonetheless, momentum is building for the devolution of the justice system. What is the position of the four political parties? In its 2011 manifesto Plaid Cymru called for the transfer of responsibility and funding for the police and criminal justice system to the National Assembly. The Conservatives promised “to publish a White Paper on the legal jurisdiction of Wales”. The Liberal Democrats undertook to continue “to press for the devolution of policing and justice”. The Labour manifesto was silent on the subject except for the modest proposal that, “In time we want to be able to manage all of our youth justice services in Wales ourselves”.

During the election campaign Labour’s principal contribution to this subject was to claim that Plaid Cymru’s policy would leave a “£600 million black hole” in the National Assembly’s budget. This begs the question of what was their policy. It is not clear whether or not Labour is against a Welsh jurisdiction in principle or simply concerned about the financial consequences.

What are the likely financial implications if the administration of justice, including policing and prisons, were devolved to Wales? The most reliable source of financial information is the Treasury’s Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses reports, the latest of which was published in April 2011. ‘Public Order and Safety’ is classified by the Treasury and ONS as encompassing police services, fire protection services, law courts, and prisons.

In 2009-10, the latest year for which information is available, total identifiable public expenditure in Wales on these functions was as follows:

- **Police Services**
£763m
- **Fire protection services**
£195m
- **Law Courts**
£325m
- **Prisons**
£228m
- **Other**
£16m

- **Total**
£1,527m

Source: HM Treasury PESA 2011.

This spending was divided three ways between :

- **Welsh Government**
£34 million
- **Local government**
£843 million
- **UK Government**
£650 million

In 2009-10 total public expenditure on Public Order and Safety in the UK was £32.5 billion, of which £2.2 billion was *non-identifiable*. That is, it was not allocated on a territorial basis but deemed to be for the benefit of the UK as a whole. The Treasury's definition of *identifiable expenditure* is that expenditure which is spent in a geographical area for the benefit of people living in that area. Thus the identifiable expenditure of £1,527 million reported by the Treasury and quoted here was spent in Wales for the benefit of the people of Wales. The relative level of identifiable spending per capita in Wales on public order and safety was 97 per cent of the UK average. If responsibility for public order and safety were devolved to Wales then that identifiable funding which is currently undertaken directly by UK Government in Wales would be devolved to the National Assembly. This would follow the practice in the case of Scotland.

Such devolution of funding would

not, in the first instance, be determined by the Barnett formula. It would be a one-off initial transfer of funding from the UK Government to the Welsh Government's block grant. Subsequent changes in spending on public order and safety in England would have an impact on changes to the Welsh block grant through application of the Barnett formula. This would put Wales on a par with Scotland. There need be little concern that such expenditure would suffer from 'Barnett convergence' because Welsh identifiable spending per head is lower than in England.

A useful *financial* measure of the degree of devolution is the comparability factor employed in applying the Barnett formula to any departmental function. If a departmental function is wholly devolved the comparability factor is 100 per cent. That is to say, the power in Wales or Scotland is on a par with that of the Whitehall department in the case of England. If the departmental function is centralised in London and not devolved the comparability factor is 0 per cent, where there is no corresponding power devolved to Scotland or Wales and it is entirely controlled from London. In the case of some departments some functions are devolved and others are not and this leads to a comparability factor which reflects the weighted average.

Under the current arrangements according to Treasury figures the relevant comparability factors for Wales and Scotland are:

	Wales	Scotland
Home Office	0%	76.0%
Justice	0%	99.7%
Law Officers	0%	100.0%

Source: HM Treasury, *Statement of Funding Policy*, October 2010.

In the case of Scotland the major, *non-devolved* Home Office functions are: immigration and nationality, organised and international crime, and the Serious

Organised Crime Agency. In the case of Wales no Home Office or Justice and Law Officers' functions are devolved and this is reflected in comparability factors of zero.

As can be seen, public order and safety is already substantially devolved in the case of Scotland with the division of spending between layers of government being:

- **Scottish Government**
£1,133 million
- **Local Government**
£1,234 million
- **UK Government**
only £156 million

Thus a mere 6 per cent of expenditure on public order and safety is spent by the UK Government in Scotland compared with 42 per cent in Wales. It is worth noting that Treasury figures show that in Scotland identifiable public expenditure on Public Order and Safety in 2009-10 was £486 per head, compared with £509 per head in Wales. Thus Scotland appears able to manage public order and safety in a slightly more cost effective way than the same functions are managed in Wales.

This analysis of public spending on justice and the police shows there are no sound financial reasons for opposing the devolution of these functions to the National Assembly - provided expenditure by the UK Government already recognised as being indefinable were transferred. The constitutional and practical reasons for devolution are compelling. It is to be hoped that the new Welsh Government will both accept the principle of devolving these important functions to Wales and also actively press the UK Government for this to happen.

Eurfyl ap Gwilym is Paid Cymru's economics adviser.

2

Economy

Articles

Time to be bold

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Bring back the Wales Tourist Board

Charting our progress in and out of recession

In association with



Time to be bold

Gerald Holtham urges there could not be a better moment to borrow and invest in Wales' infrastructure

Wales needs a bold policy to promote faster economic growth. Currently the UK faces a period of slow growth as the central government and households retrench and reduce debt. As a peripheral economy Wales is unlikely to do better than the UK average without a strong initiative of its own. It faces the risk of continuing high, perhaps rising, levels of unemployment and economic inactivity.

In the long run, Welsh prosperity will depend on the level of skills and resourcefulness of the Welsh people, so education and training policy will be critical to success over coming decades. In the shorter run, the consensus view is that development can be promoted by provision of good infrastructure that only the state can provide, such as roads, or that large corporations will provide only with state aid, such as telecommunications, high-speed broad band, and rail.

In addition, factors that make for a positive business climate and thereby encourage investment include: a predictable and rapid planning system, accessible business advice and liaison services and attractive places for senior executives to live. There is a role for provision of concessionary finance or tax advantages. The Welsh Government has a budget for aiding companies and European funds are also available. The general impression is that the returns to this expenditure have been disappointing in the past and it is questionable whether the best means have been found to maximise those returns. Moreover, the scope for tax concessions is currently limited to granting allowances against business rates and the Welsh Government has made relatively little use of this instrument.

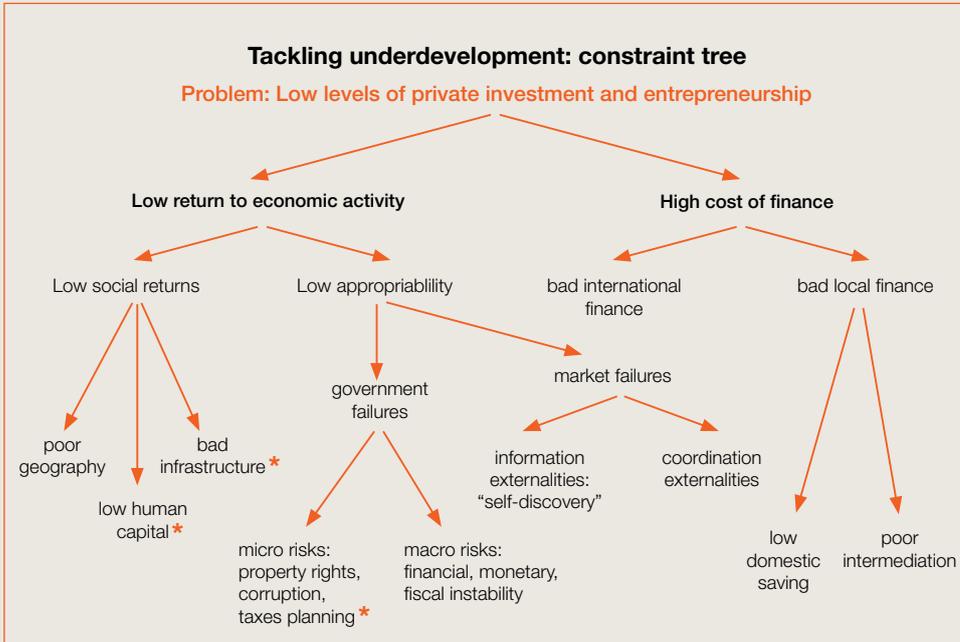
While improvements in those policy areas should be pursued, at times like the present there is a role for bold initiatives that create a sense of momentum, even excitement. In line with the times, any such initiative should entail delivery rather

than creating castles in the air. Such an initiative could take the form of a national infrastructure plan, which would include a few large, detailed projects in the areas of broadband roll-out, railway electrification, selected port development and strategic road development.

The plan could have a central element: a concordat between the Welsh Government and local authorities. The Welsh Government is currently seeking borrowing powers from Westminster. Even if those are not forthcoming, local authorities have so-called prudential borrowing powers. Borrowing costs currently faced by local authorities, along with gilt yields, are extremely low by historical standards. Loans of 20 years or more can be obtained from the Public Works Loan Board for around 4 per cent. Moreover, the construction and civil engineering industries are at a low ebb with plenty of spare capacity. There could not be a better time to borrow and invest. It will never be as cheap again.

Local authorities are well inside the borrowing envelop the Public Works Loan Board operates. However, they cannot prudently contemplate expanding their borrowing on the scale required without the active support and underpinning of the Welsh Government. The plan would require the Government to decide on a range of projects, then for each project to agree a share of the cost among itself, local authorities and users of the infrastructure. Local authorities could then borrow for projects in their area, against guarantees that agreed shares of the cost of servicing and repaying the debt (perhaps all of it) would be met by the other parties.

Some institutional innovation would be required to make this work. An example would be a liaison body or council between the Welsh Government and local authorities and then particular working groups or institutions for each project. The Welsh Government would



Harvard academics have set up this decision tree as a guide to promoting economic development. The three orange asterisks show where Wales has problems that the Welsh Government is in a position to tackle. Wales has some of the other problems, too, but they are less susceptible to devolved public policy.

also need a planning and evaluation bureau to carry out cost-benefit analysis of projects that were thrown up by the liaison council and to rank them. There would also be a strong case for pulling together expertise in procurement into a single body, which would serve all the projects. Its primary aim would be getting value for money but it would also look to foster and promote local suppliers as far as possible.

There is no shortage of candidate projects. Wales needs to equip two ports to service offshore wind and wave developments, Holyhead and Milford Haven. It needs to electrify the Valley lines into Cardiff and Newport, and perhaps Swansea. Road developments are required in all parts of Wales as well as high-speed broadband roll-out. The candidates emerging from consultations between Government, local authorities and the business sector should be assessed by a technical body, the planning and evaluation unit, and ranked.

After political sign-off, working bodies would be set up for the top projects to hammer out the cost sharing and institutional framework then specify and

cost the project in detail. The detailed plans would go back to the planning and evaluation unit for re-examination and re-ranking if necessary. The decision on go-ahead for the final plan would be political, taken at Cabinet level.

The Welsh Government would presumably not want to see its servicing of past projects, in effect its debt service, rise very high while its only revenue source is the Barnett grant. Still, just one per cent of the annual budget is £150 million. If loans were at 4 per cent with a maturity of 30 years, that would imply an annuity rate of 6 per cent and the sum would service debts of nearly £3 billion.

However, the government would not be meeting the full cost of debt servicing. In the case of ports, railways or toll roads, the users would service some of the debt through charges. Local authorities might also service some part themselves, especially if allowed to keep additions to their business rates flowing from projects. The Welsh Government money would therefore be used to service that part of the debt for which it was paying, plus some contingency reserve, so the full amount of investment could exceed £3

billion, perhaps by a substantial amount.

If there were an investment programme of over £3 billion into the Welsh economy, over and above the capital budget, over a period of five years, that could amount to a stimulus to the Welsh economy of about 1 per cent of GVA a year - Welsh GVA is about £60 billion. Even before we consider the long-run and supply side effects, this could push the Welsh growth rate from, say 1.5 per cent a year to nearer 2.5 per cent.

Unless and until the Welsh Government acquires its own borrowing powers, the actual borrowing would have to be carried out by local authorities. Serious questions then arise over the means whereby the Welsh Government would pay its share of costs by servicing the local authority debt. There are various possibilities and one has to be found in every case that gives the local authorities security and complies with UK Treasury rules. That should certainly be possible. While significant for Wales, the sums involved are negligible in the UK context where the annual government deficit is around £140 billion.

Such a programme would require co-operation between the Welsh Government and local authorities of different political colours. It would crystallise a sense of national purpose and be visible evidence of the Government's determination to deliver economic prosperity. It could help to build administrative, technical and industrial capacity and provide a boost to business in both the short and long term. It would leave the Welsh public with a legacy of debt, but a very small one, just one per cent of its current budget and a proportion that will fall over time as the budget grows. It should also be serviced at fixed rates of interest. Families who have done well by taking out a mortgage to buy their home will easily understand and appreciate the plan.

Gerald Holtham chaired the Commission on Funding and Finance of the National Assembly.

Falling in and out of love with inward investment

Ken Poole advises the Welsh Government to refocus on overseas opportunities

The debate on the merits of inward investment over the past 30 years has been more vitriolic and passionate in Wales than elsewhere in the UK. While competitor regions such as Scotland and Ireland have had a consistent positive approach to inward investment, Wales has fallen in and out of love with it in ways which have confused potential and existing investors, to the benefit of our competitor regions.

In the early 1970s Wales was one of the first economic regions in Europe to recognise the potential of inward investment. A succession of dedicated organisations was established to respond to the market. The Development Corporation for Wales was followed by Winvest and then the Welsh Development Agency. We recognised the emerging sector market opportunities in automotive, electronics and the originator markets of Japan, Korea, USA, Germany and France.

Wales was regarded as a market leader and exemplar of best practice. Global household names like Panasonic, Sony, Aiwa, LG, Ford and Bosch established significant manufacturing investment across Wales. At that time Wales demonstrated a well developed understanding of the market and its drivers. It provided a powerful low cost proposition built around a competitive offer and a location offering a springboard into the European Community. Wales' offer consisted of grants, low cost serviced land, plenty of readily available high quality advanced buildings, and a competitively priced labour force supported by pragmatic trade unions.

Wales understood the market and

delivered what the market required efficiently. The then effective *Team Wales* approach was recognised by companies and competitors as a compelling unique selling point.

During the 1970s and early 1980s inward investors were employing large numbers of people and assisting in the diversification of the economy away from steel and coal. Inward investment was seen as a solution to diversification and mobilisation of under-utilised labour resources, both male and female. There was no question of investors being targeted for innovation or their contribution to the emerging knowledge economy. Rather, they were creating the large number of jobs that Wales needed.

During the early 1990s, the volume of inward investment projects flowing into

The love affair with inward investment began to sour between 1998 and 2008 when there were 171 foreign owned site closures

Wales peaked at around 15 per cent of the UK total, in terms of project value and employment creation. However, over the following 20 years, Wales' share of UK inward investment has steadily fallen away.

The love affair with inward investment began to sour between 1998 and 2008 during which time 171 foreign owned site closures occurred in Wales with the loss of 31,000 jobs, mainly in manufacturing. Many of these companies were heavily criticised and the value of inward investment questioned. However, job losses in sectors such as electronics, automotive components, textiles and call centres were predictable as the companies and their products or

services were becoming uncompetitive. They required lower cost locations with many choosing Eastern Europe as new investment locations.

The same trend was occurring in Ireland and Scotland, yet they continued to refine their inward investment strategy and reinforced their inward investment presence globally in the face of market changes. In Wales we continued to promote Wales with the same proposition and failed to recognise that these emerging pressures could not be halted. Whilst there were some successes, they were certainly not enough.

Not only was Wales losing existing investors, we were also failing to capture new opportunities from a new inward investment market. This was one in which high level skills, innovation, linkages, and access to knowledge were the key drivers rather than low cost buildings and labour.

By 2008-09 Wales was securing just over 6 per cent of all new jobs created by foreign inward investment projects in the UK, well below the earlier peak of 15 per cent. This figure fell to 4 per cent during 2009-10, and Wales was now trailing our main traditional competitor regions.

In 2010-11 Wales secured just 38 out of the UK's 1,434 foreign direct investment projects, which was 2.6% of the total. This compared with 6.4% in 2009-10 and 6.2% in 2008-09.

In terms of project mix, a large proportion of projects coming into Wales continue to be in manufacturing, followed by services, with a relative lack of higher value investments in knowledge and R&D fields and headquarters projects.

The 2011 Welsh Labour manifesto signalled a renewed interest in inward investment with a declaration that Wales is "open for business... whether they are Wales based or an inward investor". This is a welcome positive approach. However, there is a lot to do if we are to



Secretary of State for Wales Cheryl Gillan visiting the Japanese Panasonic factory at Pentwyn, Cardiff in June. Meeting her is Tim Onoe, Managing Director of Panasonic UK, which has been operating at the site since 1976. Today it employs 520 staff in four business units involved in microwave oven manufacture, laptop computer configuration, disc encryption, and television research and development.

Bring back the Wales Tourist Board

Terry Stevens presses the Welsh Government to address a malaise in our tourism industry

Overnight in July 2004 Wales was placed in the unenviable position of being amongst a small minority of countries around the world without a national tourism organisation. At the time I wrote:

“When the UN World Tourism Organization is stressing the importance of having strong national tourist boards, along with competent local delivery systems, Welsh politicians have ignored international best practice”.

In so doing they neutered an essential vehicle for tourism development. Five years on and the results are telling. They reflect an economic sector struggling to be competitive in a global marketplace.

Read in isolation the headline statistics about tourism in Wales appear to be impressive. As of March 2011 Visit Wales – the Welsh Government’s tourism department - announced that the industry was worth over £3 billion. It constituted 6.1 per cent of all economic activity, 13.3 per cent of GVA in mid Wales and 3.9 per cent in south east Wales, and supported 104,000 jobs, 8.7 per cent of all full-time equivalent jobs in Wales.

However, at the same time the Welsh Government’s Official Statistics Wales website was painting a somewhat different picture. In the period 2005–09 expenditure by UK domestic visitors to Wales had declined from £1.73 billion in 2005 to £1.41 billion five years later, a decrease of £317 million or 18.3 per cent (3.7 per cent a year). This was at a time when tourism was growing in Europe at between 2.5-3 per cent. In 2009 the value accrued by UK domestic tourist trips and bed nights spent in Wales was significantly less than in 2000.

On the other hand, international tourism has shown marginal growth. In 2005 Wales attracted 333,000 international tourists who spent £312 million. Five years later the numbers had increased to 394,000, (that is 3.5 per year and 18 per cent overall), and spend by £20 million (6.5 per cent or 1.3 per cent a year) to £332 million.

The demise of the Wales Tourist Board may go some way to explain

be in a position to secure companies in some of the globally competitive sectors that Wales requires.

One of the first priorities for the new Government is to get the message into the inward investment market that Wales is hungry for new investment. This is important as 2010 saw a revival in the global inward investment market for the first time since the credit crisis two years previously. Ireland’s long term commitment to securing inward investment has seen it secure a top ten place amongst European locations despite its current fiscal weaknesses.

Hopefully, Welsh Labour’s manifesto and recent statements by the First Minister will be the beginning of a new love affair with inward investment for Wales. If so we need a new strategy, a new focus and a long term commitment to this vitally important source of future investment.

Ken Poole is Director, inward investment, economic development and incentives with PwC in Wales.



or excuse this disappointing downturn in our tourism economy. However, it is not primarily the fault of Visit Wales. There are more fundamental issues. Longer term analysis of figures for UK domestic tourism activity in Wales shows that tourism has been static and, arguably,

Ten years ago even in Switzerland tourism was stagnating and changes had to be made. Today it tops all global performance benchmarks.

under-performing for 20 years. The value of tourism has only grown by £513 million since 1990 – that’s approximately £26 million a year, the equivalent impact of hosting two FA Cup Finals or three major rugby internationals in the Wales Millennium Stadium.

This 20-year period has seen significant growth in international tourism and up to 6 per cent growth a year in some regions of Europe. This level of growth has been recorded in countries with a mature tourism industry such as Switzerland and Austria, as well

as in countries like Slovenia and Croatia that have had to reinvent themselves due to civil strife. Ten years ago even in Switzerland tourism was stagnating and changes had to be made. Today it tops all global performance benchmarks.

Similarly, in 1990 Barcelona set about successfully transforming its tourism economy, leveraging the 1992 Olympics. Twenty years later it has reinvented its tourism brand and organisation, causing the UN World Tourism Organisation to state that it has amongst the best destination management structures in the world.

So, if others can get it right it suggests that there is something more substantially and structurally wrong with the way tourism is organised in Wales. What restricts our ability to respond to the dynamics and growth in the marketplace in a competitive way? There are three main answers:

1. The organisation of our tourism industry remains wedded to a way of working forged by a piece of legislation 40 years old.
2. We continue to ignore the lessons learnt by successful, competitor

destinations around the world.

3. We do not benchmark against leading destinations.

At the heart of the problem is a failure to understand the principles of destination development and to create the appropriate type of strategically focused organisations that drive tourism at the destination level.

A destination is what visitors understand. It is a relatively small geographic area that is the place of consumption of most tourists’ activities and spending. The destination, therefore, has to be well managed and marketed. The UN World Tourism Organisation has recently stated that there is a direct correlation between tourism success and the existence of effective destination management organisations.

This requires a private sector led, and public sector supported approach. The World Economic Forum’s *Tourism Competitive Index* highlights the crucial role played by private sector led destination organisations in the world’s most successful and, hence, competitive destinations.

In association with the University of

Calgary, in 2006 my company Stevens & Associates analysed 22 countries and 16 destinations which were outperforming other places in the world in tourism. The conclusions showed that from Istria in Croatia to Summit County in Utah, and from Gorenjska in Slovenia to Turku in Finland, they all had a similar organisational structures. They focused on specific destinations within their countries or regions, such as Swansea Bay, Snowdonia or Ceredigion in Wales. Further, they ensured that the industry at this level was business-led and worked to achieve the following:

- Creation of unambiguous destination brand positioning .
- Critical mass, so that around 20 per cent of the destination’s tourism firms delivered around 80 per cent of the business.
- Strategy led by a Board responsive to the market drivers of tourism in the destination.
- Respect community interests.
- Emphasise innovation and creativity.

Three anecdotal comments from leaders in these successful destinations stand out as tenets we should seriously reflect upon:

- Ignore anyone who says *I do it this way*.
- Ignore anyone who speaks in a past tense, for example saying *We tried that*, or *We used to do it this way*.
- Don’t ask what the organisation can do for you; rather, ask what you can do for the destination.

Myles Rademan, inspirational former Director of PR and Leadership for tourism in Utah’s Summit County, acknowledges that these ‘principles’ can be difficult for many who have enjoyed a comfortable but ineffectual role in tourism in the past. However, he is adamant that strategically focused leadership is essential if often unpalatable. As he puts it, “If the moon listened to all the dogs that barked it



Jackson Hole, Wyoming, one of the world’s leading year round destinations. Despite over 90 per cent of the land being in public ownership, destination management is a private sector led initiative.

wouldn’t rise each night”.

At present our tourism organisations are dominated by risk averse, non market focused public bodies with local authorities often ‘leading’ tourism strategies. As a result, the industry is characterised by a lack of innovation and creativity in its product development and marketing. The industry is over reliant upon subsidies and handouts which prevents innovation. Small voices continue to shout loudly and, worse, are all too often heard at the expense of those whose businesses can make a real difference.

We need to shift to a culture where icons and drivers of tourism lead and receptors or beneficiaries of successful tourism take a back seat. As uncomfortable as this may sound it is how others approach the way their industry is led and organised. Often, this means leadership by people outside the tourism industry.

Do we have the appetite and the hunger to do things differently? If we don’t more of the same will simply take us to the place that the British Association of Chambers of Commerce defined in its August 2009 report:

“Britain has the worst performing tourism economy of the expanded Europe of 27 countries other than Romania”.

We need a new way of working. In his new Cabinet following the May elections, First Minister Carwyn Jones moved responsibility for tourism from the Heritage to the Economic Development portfolio, handing responsibility to Edwina Hart. A key question now is whether the new Minister has the appetite to deliver a fresh, dynamic and competitive future for tourism in Wales.

If she chooses to do so Edwina Hart has an opportunity to make a real difference. Her first step should be to move responsibility for providing national leadership for Welsh tourism to a new arms-length private-sector led organisation, outside the civil service. This should be charged with ensuring that entrepreneurial values percolate to every level of tourism’s organisation and leadership in Wales.

Professor Terry Stevens is Managing Director of the international tourism consultancy Stevens & Associates.

Charting our progress in and out of recession

Michael Artis and Marianne Sensier argue the Welsh Government should respond to timing variations across the economic cycle

The economic cycle is of interest to the Welsh Government as it tries to use the economic levers at its disposal to mitigate the impact of any economic downturn. Here we analyse the employment cycle at the Welsh and local authority level to assess how the economy has fared in the recent recession. Welsh employment emerged from recession in the second half of 2009. All unitary authorities emerged from recession by February 2010. The recovery has been led by areas with greater concentrations of employment in the service sector and particularly in tourism related industries.

We date turning points in the economic cycle using a mathematical model and compare Welsh employment and unemployment claimant count cycles to England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the UK as a whole. Monthly employment data are reported in the Labour Force survey which starts in April 1992 and ends in February 2011. The claimant count records the number of people claiming Job Seeker's Allowance and this is analysed from January 1988 to August 2010.

Table 1 lists the dates for the turning points in the employment cycle for the UK and its component nations. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have experienced five recessions since the early 1990s compared with two in England.

The Welsh employment cycle is shown in **Figure 1** along with peak and trough turning points in the cycle. The vertical axis notes the minimum amount of employment from the trough of the 1990s recession in May 1993 to the most recent maximum of the peak in May 2008 after which the latest recession is dated to

have commenced for Wales.

Welsh employment entered the current recession in June 2008, one month later than the rest of the UK. The ProAct scheme introduced by the Welsh Government in 2009, part-financed by the European Social Fund, offered subsidised training places to companies facing redundancies. In May 2010 the Welsh Government reported that this had helped 10,000 people keep their jobs during the recession. As seen from the last two rows of Table 1, the most recent recession lasted 15 months in Wales and from peak to trough there was a fall in employment of 4.78 per cent. If we subtract a further 10,000 employees at the trough, the percentage of the employment lost would have risen to 5.5 per cent.

Northern Ireland's employment emerged from the current recession first in May 2009, followed by Wales in August 2009, England in February 2010 and then Scotland in April 2010.

Table 2 lists the turning points dates for the claimant count cycle with three

Table 1:
Cycle Turning Points for UK Employment

Turning Point	UK	Wales	Scotland	England	Northern Ireland
Peak	1990m6			1990m6	
Trough	1993m3	1993m5	1993m1	1993m3	1993m7
Peak			1995m2		
Trough			1996m2		
Peak		1997m6	1997m12		1997m10
Trough		1998m6	1998m8		1998m8
Peak		2000m11	2000m12		1999m8
Trough		2001m8	2001m12		2000m3
Peak		2004m4			2003m2
Trough		2005m4			2003m11
Peak	2008m4	2008m5	2008m4	2008m4	2008m4
Trough	2010m1	2009m7	2010m3	2010m1	2009m4
Duration of last cycle in months	21	15	23	21	12
Peak to Trough % of employment lost	2.54%	4.78%	5.15%	2.35%	6.76%

recessions in this data for most and two recessions for Northern Ireland. By this measure the Welsh claims cycle, seen in **Figure 2**, now entered the current recession in February 2008 - earlier than most of the UK, in April 2008, apart from Northern Ireland which entered in September 2007 (it also earlier than the general employment cycle).

The Welsh claimant count cycle has

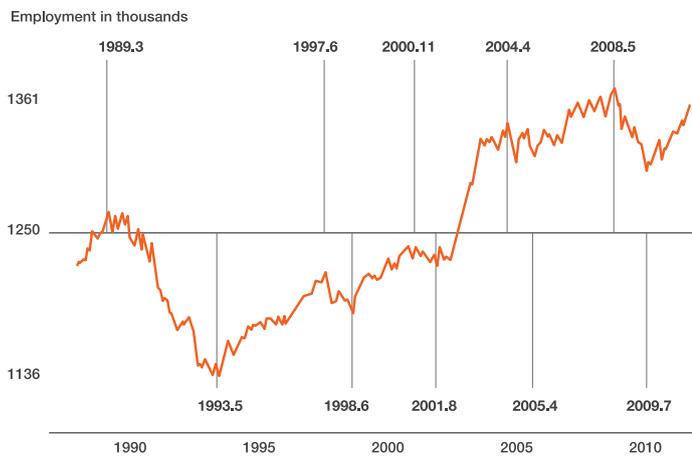
emerged from recession at the same time as England, in November 2009, but Scotland and Northern Ireland's claims are still increasing.

We have shown the percentage amount of increase in claims between recession peak and trough in the last row of Table 2. Here we can see that claims increased by 114 per cent during the recession in Wales, However, if it was

added to the peak amount, the 10,000 employees saved by the ProAct scheme then the claims increase would have risen to 140 per cent unemployed.

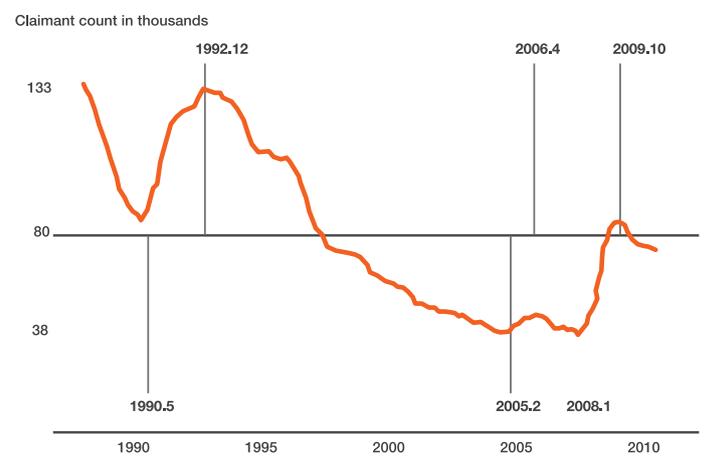
We applied the cycle dating algorithm to 22 Welsh unitary authority level claims data and obtained peak and trough cycle turning points. Here we find a greater occurrence of recessions than at the national level. We dated:

Figure 1:
Turning Points for Welsh Employment



Note: The figures for the other countries can be found in the fuller discussion paper version on the web-site of the Spatial Economic Research Centre at the London School of Economics (http://rlab.lse.ac.uk/_new/publications/abstract.asp?index=3808).

Figure 2:
Turning Points for Welsh Claimant Count



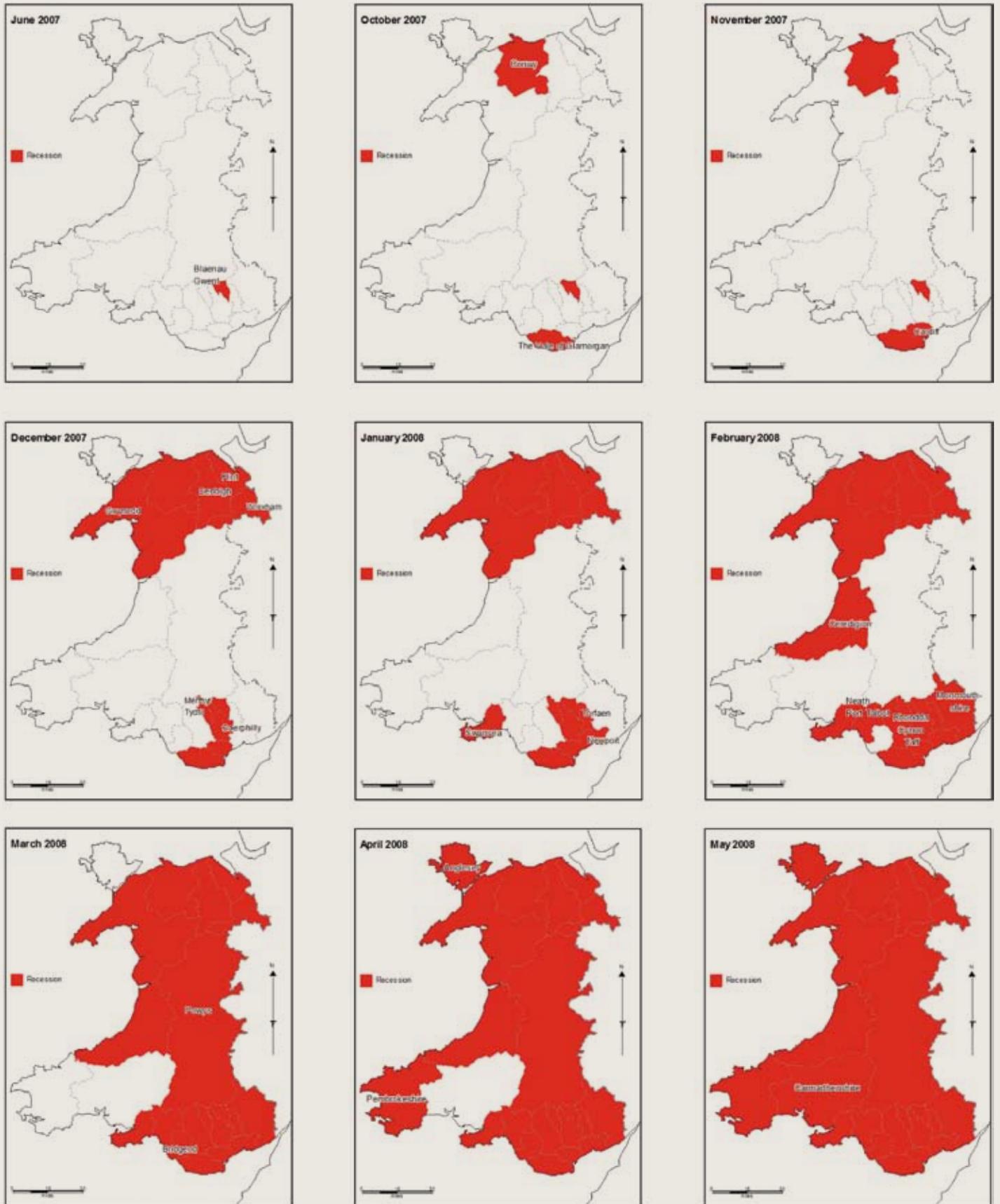
Note: The figures for the other countries can be found in the fuller discussion paper version on the web-site of the Spatial Economic Research Centre at the London School of Economics (http://rlab.lse.ac.uk/_new/publications/abstract.asp?index=3808).

Table 2: Cycle Turning Points for UK Claimant Count

Turning Point	UK	Wales	Scotland	England	Northern Ireland
Peak	1990m5	1990m5	1990m8	1990m4	1990m8
Trough	1992m12	1992m12	1992m12	1992m12	1993m2
Peak	2005m2	2005m2	2005m7	2005m2	
Trough	2006m10	2006m4	2006m7	2006m10	
Peak	2008m3	2008m1	2008m3	2008m3	2007m8
Trough	2009m10	2009m10		2009m10	
Duration of last cycle in months	19	21		19	
Peak to Trough % of claims gained	108.84%	113.95%		109.16%	

Note: we date peaks in claimant count data at local minima and troughs at the local maxima as unemployment is inversely related to output and movements in it are a contra-cyclical measure of the business cycle.

Figure 3: Geographical Progression of Welsh Unitary Authorities into Recession (maps courtesy of Tim Fearnside)



- Three recessions for claimants in Caerphilly, Flintshire, Monmouthshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Torfaen, and the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Four recessions for claimants in Anglesey, Blaenau Gwent, Cardiff, Ceredigion, Conwy, Gwynedd, Newport, Pembrokeshire, Swansea and Wrexham.
- Five recessions for claimants in Bridgend, Carmarthenshire, Denbighshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot and Powys.

Regional policy should target the authorities more prone to recessions and help ease labour market frictions in those areas. In Figure 3 we chart the geographical progression of the recession in Wales over time in a sequence of maps. We begin in June 2007 when Blaenau Gwent entered recession.

The economy of Blaenau Gwent has mirrored that of much of industrial south Wales. As late as the 1970s coal and steel were seen as the backbone of its industrial economy. The decline of these industries has given rise to the incessant search for replacement jobs. However, the area struggled more than many other areas to modernise and restructure its economy and currently has the lowest employment rate of the 22 Unitary Authorities in Wales. It also has the lowest level of weekly earnings, £361.60 per week, £83.80 below the Welsh average. In 2008 28 per cent of Blaenau Gwent's workforce was employed in manufacturing, the second highest in Wales and well above the Welsh average at 14 per cent. The recession started with a banking crisis but it was a relatively deprived area strongly dependant on manufacturing which was first to enter recession in Wales.

In October 2007 Conwy and Vale of Glamorgan entered recession and Cardiff entered in November 2007. By December 2007 a number of northern authorities had also entered recession. It is noteworthy that these have high

proportions of people employed in the manufacturing sector with Flintshire being the highest in Wales at 34 per cent. By early 2008 the rest of the southern authorities had entered recession, until the last authority, Carmarthenshire,

The economy of Blaenau Gwent has mirrored that of much of industrial south Wales. As late as the 1970s coal and steel were seen as the backbone of industrial economy. The decline of these industries has given rise to the incessant search for replacement jobs.

entered in May 2008.

Our mathematical model now finds that all unitary authorities have emerged from the current recession. The first was Neath Port Talbot which emerged in June 2009, possibly helped by the car scrappage scheme stimulating output at the Port Talbot steel plant. It was followed by:

- July 2009: Monmouthshire and Powys.
- August 2009: Bridgend and Torfaen.
- October 2009: Flintshire, Swansea and Wrexham.
- November 2009: Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Conwy, Merthyr Tydfil, Newport, Pembrokeshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf, and the Vale of Glamorgan.
- December 2009: Cardiff and Denbighshire.
- January 2010: Ceredigion.
- February 2010: Anglesey and Gwynedd.

Anglesey was one of the last unitary authorities to emerge from the recession and it has the lowest GVA per capita in the whole of the UK. It has seen major job losses, across a number of industries, during the recession, including more than 400 at Anglesey Aluminium, 250 at the electronics plant at Eaton and 180 at the Gaerwen meat processing plant. Holyhead, the largest town on the

Island, has the highest unemployment rate in Wales.

We estimated a Spearman Rank correlation coefficient to test if the order in which the authorities entered or exited recession was correlated

with the share of employment in each sector. We found some weak evidence that authorities with a higher share of construction employment entered recession earlier (with 0.32 estimated correlation coefficient, significant at the 15 per cent level).

Authorities with a higher share of services (0.38, significant at 10 per cent level), or tourism (0.32, significant at 15 per cent level) were earlier to leave the recession. However, those with a higher proportion of employees in manufacturing (-0.45, significant at 5 per cent level), or finance (-0.42, significant at 5 per cent level) were late leaving recession.

The story that this recession was finance-led is not upheld in Wales. It appears that areas with higher proportions of employees in manufacturing were actually later to emerge from recession.

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3

International

Articles

Cultural corridor to the east

Patagonia Special

Tenacious settlers

Y Wladfa today

A forest the size of Wales

Cultural corridor to the east

Ned Thomas revises his view of Turkey following cross border events organised by Aberystwyth University's Mercator Institute

The June elections in Turkey stayed at the top of the Western news agenda for two whole days, which is unprecedented. This was no doubt due to the increased interest in the Middle East generally following the Arab Spring, but it also reflected the growing recognition of Turkey as a rising economic and political power.

Sometimes Turkey is placed in the same league as the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) which is probably overdoing it given Turkey's population of 73 million. Nonetheless, like them it is a fast expanding, export-led economy whose problems are mainly those of overheating. Exports increased four-fold in 2009. From 2002-2008 growth averaged six per cent, and after a setback in 2009 rebounded to seven per cent in 2010. In the first half of this year it has hit 11 per cent, outpacing China. If Turkey ever enters the European Union, those 73 millions will form the second largest national grouping, behind Germany but well ahead of Britain, France and Italy.

Until last year I had never been to Turkey. I have no knowledge of the language, and I see that as a severe handicap for anyone who takes their political and cultural interests with them when travelling. But I was reasonably well-informed about the recent history of the Kurds in Turkey and that also had kept me away. As always there is a complex argument to be had as to whether foreign tourism serves to moderate or legitimise the activities of repressive regimes. However, I found it hard, without good reason, to visit a country whose military had in the mid 1990s razed 3000 Kurdish villages to the ground in south-east Turkey and which continues to deny the Kurds fundamental cultural rights.

Over the last year that good reason has arrived. *Literature across Frontiers*, the largest of the programmes currently run by the Mercator Institute at Aberystwyth University, though overwhelmingly European in its focus, has increasingly been drawn into a trans-Mediterranean dialogue with Arabic-speaking and other Middle-Eastern countries. Our field is literary translation which is now seen as contributing to conflict-resolution. I hardly need say that the conflicts in that region are intense. Writers from Arab countries will often withdraw from events if a single Israeli is to be present, even if that Israeli has strong pro-Palestinian credentials. And because we are who we are, an international programme headquartered in Wales, we cannot ignore the minorities, including the Kurds in Turkey.

Turkey has offered something approaching neutral territory within the region and been willing to cooperate at governmental level even when we touched on the question of minorities. Last autumn we ran a session at the Istanbul Book Fair on publishing and translation in minority languages. We had originally been scheduled to stage the event in Diyarbakir, the unofficial capital of the Kurdish area in the south, but were advised that we needed to move to Istanbul. And just as well perhaps, since the dates overlapped with the opening of a mass show trial of 120 Kurdish activists and elected mayors in Diyarbakir, an event which Plaid Cymru's Arfon MP Hywel Williams reported on as one of a number of international observers.

Nor was the event held under the most auspicious of circumstances in Istanbul. A bomb exploded the day before our meeting in one of the central squares,



Ned Thomas speaking at a session on publishing and translation at the Istanbul Book Fair last November. To his right are Robyn Marsack, Director of the Scottish Poetry Library, and Amaia Gabantxo, a literary translator and writer from the Basque Country.

some 200 yards from where many of our participants were staying. CNN and BBC World (on which I had to rely) immediately took it for granted that the Kurdish PKK were responsible, since a formal truce signed with the Government had run out the night before. However, conversations the following day revealed that the truce between the Government and the PKK had been renewed a week previously. The likelihood was that the bomb was an attempt to undermine the renewed truce, either by a break-away faction of the PKK or by a Turkish nationalist group. This revealed the limitations of Western media coverage. Turkologists are so few and far between that you may not even have come across the word!

But when all is said and done our event was held, which would not have been conceivable even five years ago. One or two Kurdish writers turned up as well as some supportive Turks - one should never forget that several prominent Turkish writers, editors and publishers have been prosecuted and imprisoned for their support of Kurdish rights. What is more, we were able to return to Istanbul shortly before this year's election and hold a much larger international conference

on literary translation which crossed all kinds of boundaries of language, religion and culture while concentrating on more technical matters such as the training of translators and the subsidizing of literary translation.

Talking of subsidies, many of us from Western Europe, including those from Wales Literature Exchange, gasped when a Turkish official, asked about the total annual sum available to support translation from Turkish into other languages, replied that the fund was limitless. I think what he really meant was that the money available far outstripped the demand. Yet even this was indicative of the economic and cultural self-confidence now to be found in Turkey.

I had come to both our events thinking that the wish to promote Turkish literature abroad, the cooperation we were receiving and the desire at least to *appear* more conciliatory towards the Kurds, were to be understood entirely in the context of Turkey's candidacy for EU membership. That is undoubtedly a factor, but following a number of those private conversations which are the real justification for conferences, I now think that is too eurocentric a view.

So far as its foreign policy goes we have got used to Turkey as a loyal member of NATO and ally of the US. But while keeping these alliances, the government now returned to power for a third term, is pursuing an increasingly independent foreign policy and looking for friends in several directions. The official rhetoric is 'zero problems with neighbours' and citizens of neighbouring countries do not need visas to enter Turkey as citizens of the UK do. The EU is no longer Turkey's only or exclusive option. It takes half of Turkey's exports but that proportion is declining.

Each of these new directions offers opportunities, particularly opportunities for trade (including cultural exports) and inward-bound tourism. Turkish-made soap operas are popular across wide areas of the Middle East and Istanbul is a major destination for Middle Eastern tourists who find it congenial because it is more relaxed than their home cultures, though still within a Muslim cultural environment.

At the same time relations with neighbouring countries also impose constraints. Iran is an important trading partner, but closer ties with Iran alarm the United States and NATO. The collapse of the Soviet Union has allowed Turkey

It speaks volumes that they had to field independent candidates for fear that a Kurdish party would, as on previous occasions, be banned.

to look east for the first time since the Bolshevik revolution, an opportunity brought home as you watch the ships heading east through the Bosphorous to the Black Sea countries of the Ukraine and Georgia. Beyond those are the Turkic republics of Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan.

Relations with Azerbaijan are particularly close and the Azeri language is readily intelligible to speakers of Turkish. The Armenian genocide of 1915 remains a taboo subject for Turkish nationalists, although the first few hesitant steps have been taken towards a normalisation of relations with neighbouring Armenia. That initiative had to be put on hold because Azerbaijan, which supplies Turkey's oil, opposes a rapprochement while the future of the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh remains unresolved.

The Kurdish question, too, has an international dimension and has to take account of an autonomous Kurdish region and government over the border in northern Iraq. The Turkish Government has established a (severely controlled) Kurdish-language TV channel, aware that otherwise its Kurdish-speaking citizens will be receiving their news from Iraqi Kurdistan or from a Kurdish satellite channel based in Europe. Under the present government some small concessions have been made to the Kurds, starting from a very low level and in the face of strong opposition from the Turkish military. However, two steps forward were followed by one step back as the governing party played the Turkish Nationalist card before the recent elections to ward off opposition criticism. This backfired as the number of independents in Parliament supported by the Kurdish party surged. It speaks volumes that they had to field independent candidates for fear that a Kurdish party would, as on previous occasions, be banned.

A quite different kind of minority are the Alevi, a religious rather than a linguistic minority that even includes some Kurds. The Alevi make up an estimated ten million of the Turkish population as compared

with a total of, at the very least, 14 million Turkish Kurds. Like the Alawites in Syria to whom President Assad belongs, the Alevi minority strongly supports a secular state for what might be called religious reasons, seeing secularism and a Turkish rather than Islamic identity as a bulwark against domination by the majority Sunni. Alevi can be seen as more in the Shia and Sufi traditions, though that is a gross oversimplification. The leader of the opposition CHP (Republican People's Party) Kemal Kılıçdaroglu is an Alevi, though he does not advertise that fact.

The Western preference would undoubtedly be for a democratically elected staunchly secularist government in Turkey which could be contrasted with a conservative religious and authoritarian alternative. But that is not the choice on offer. The fault-lines in Turkish society are more complicated. The secularist party is still the party closest to the military, though it tries to distance itself in public. It is also associated by some with the Alevi minority. The AKP (Justice and Development Party) under Prime Minister Recep Erdogan is widely believed to support (or perhaps it reflects?) the growing Islamization of Turkish society, though still within the parameters of a formally secular state; but its democratic mandate is undisputed, now that it has just been re-elected to government for the third time running. I find it interesting that the main opposition to President Assad in neighbouring Syria has also adopted the term "Justice and Development" in its title which suggests that it wishes to follow something like the Turkish model. In Syria too, democracy would bring a Sunni majority to power.

The AKP government has brought Turkey closer to the Arab world than in the days when the country was governed by the secularist heirs of Kemal Atatürk backed by the military. Relations with Israel, which were friendly, have deteriorated sharply following the Israeli assault on the Turkish ship bound for

Gaza, but this same event has enhanced Turkey's status in the Arab world.

Critics of the present Turkish government sometimes accuse it of Neo-Ottomanism, not in the sense of having territorial ambitions to re-establish the Ottoman empire, but in terms of world view. A Turkish historian defended that world-view very persuasively to me, arguing that modern Turkey was a country without a knowledge of its own history. Part of the re-invention of the country as a European-type centralised secular state by Kemal Atatürk at the end of the First World War was the abandonment of Arabic script for Latin script. The consequence is that only a small band of specialized historians now have access to the documents of previous centuries. He saw the re-evaluation of the Ottoman period as fundamental to Turkey's future because it necessarily involved looking at relations with all its neighbours and their cultures, the peoples that had once formed its empire. This complex view of the region may also be marginally more accommodating to the Kurds within Turkey.

I have not become a Turkologist overnight nor am likely to become one, but the few glimpses of modern Turkey obtained through cultural contacts were enough to convince me that I have hitherto seen Turkey not as it sees itself but too exclusively in terms of our own European concerns: its relation to the EU, the Cyprus question, and Islam. And in case you should ask, yes, Mrs Erdogan, the Prime Minister's wife, wears the *hijab* in public as did a minority of female students I observed on one Istanbul campus which we visited. This form of headscarf, which does not cover the face, is controversial in Turkey, but reminded me of nothing so much as what our own dear Queen might wear when off-duty and inspecting her racehorses. I had to wait to get back to Reading station to see a woman in a full burka.

Ned Thomas is President of Mercator Cymru/Wales.

Tenacious settlers

Gerald Holtham discovers a compelling example of what ordinary Welsh people can do

Everyone in Wales knows there was a Welsh settlement in Patagonia and there are still a few people there who speak Welsh. Yet very few seem to know the real story. The survival of the language in a few families is the least of it.

The people who went out, starting in 1865, were from all over Wales and they were very ordinary people for the most part. There were Ministers of religion among them but no gentry, no doctor, few professional people. There were some smallholders but most were miners or small trades people. The biggest single contingent on the first boat came from Mountain Ash, some six families. In those days, Mountain Ash, like most of Wales was overwhelmingly Welsh-speaking.

The settlers arrived in a stony desert where annual rainfall averages just 100 millimetres, but some years it doesn't rain at all. There were no trees to make dwellings. They carved temporary shelters out of the soft rock of the cliff face where they landed. Then they had to trek 50 kilometres to the Chubut valley, the river being the only reliable source of fresh water. Some died on the way.

Reliable is perhaps the wrong word. The Chubut is fed by melting snow where it rises in the Andes mountains 600 kilometres to the west, and sometimes it flooded. Flash floods wiped out the early settlement more than once. Disgusted the settlers banished their leader Lewis Jones who had misled them about conditions and he went off to Buenos

Aires to get help from the Argentine government. Meanwhile, the settlers scraped a living by trading with the local Tehuelche Indians getting meat and hides from them in exchange for bread.

The Argentinians were keen to keep the Welsh in the empty lands of Patagonia to prevent them being claimed by Chile or the British in the Falkland Islands. They sent Lewis Jones back with supplies and a surveyor who mapped out the lower Chubut valley into 100-hectare farms. The Welsh drew lots for the farms and moved in. They carved the valley into districts. Every ten kilometres they built a chapel that served as place of worship, school and community centre for the district. Everyone over 18 had the vote, men and women. This was probably the first place in the world to give young women of 18 the vote. They elected a Llywydd (president) and began to irrigate the valley. Local tradition has it that the idea of irrigation canals first occurred to one of the women from Mountain Ash.

Slowly the settlement began to thrive and more Welsh people emigrated. They grew wheat that won international prizes, built a railway from the valley to the landing place at Porth Madryn so they could export. They formed a trading company – a co-operative – and a water company. Uniquely among settlers in the Americas, they remained on good terms with the Indians, trading with them and playing games with them – riding and shooting competitions. They didn't sell them alcohol or cheat

A typical irrigation canal in the Chubut valley – local tradition has it that the idea first occurred to a woman from Mountain Ash. "The Israelis were called in a few years ago to improve the system but shrugged and said it was fine, nothing to be done."



Left: The arid scrub that is typical of the Chubut Valley, contrasting with the green irrigated land in the distance.



Right: The monument in Trefelin to the 1885 expeditionary column led by Luis Fontana, the first governor of Chubut, that opened up the Andes valleys. There were six Argentinians, 20 Welshmen (Galeses), two Germans and one North American.

them. Later the Argentine sent its army into Patagonia to wipe the Indians out prior to more European settlement. The Welsh interceded on behalf of the Tehuelche. They felt fellowship with a people who were being dispossessed and whose way of life was endangered. It was in vain. While some people in Argentina still speak Welsh, no-one now speaks Tehuelche.

For two generations the Welsh governed themselves in the Welsh language. They manned an expedition to the Andes foothills and founded more settlements in the area of Esquel and Trevelin. There the rainfall was plentiful and they grew wheat, built flour mills and founded a thriving community. In 1916 they even started a local telephone company. But eventually their very success was their undoing. The Argentinian state arrived in force and from the beginning of the 20th Century there were tens of thousands of other immigrants, often Italian. The Welsh had never numbered more than about 5,000 and they were swamped. The Argentinian state abolished schooling in Welsh, compelling everyone to attend Spanish schools. They also undermined the wheat trade by subsidising production

further north. Eventually, after the Second World War they nationalised the water company – without compensation.

One or two Welsh chapels are still in use and cymanfeydd canu and eisteddfodau (singing and poetry festivals) are still held but the towns of Welsh settlement - Puerto Madryn, Gaiman, Trelew and Trevelin - are now wholly Argentinian towns. The staff in the local museums and even in the Welsh teashops seldom speak Welsh. Perhaps a couple of thousand people speak it in a population of 300,000.

Yet in every town there is a 28th July Street – the date the first Welsh landed. There are imposing monuments to the Welsh pioneers. If you have a Welsh name in Patagonia, you are aristocracy. Tens of thousands of people claim some Welsh ancestry, with pride. As one Argentinian woman said to me: “No-one could settle here. The Spaniards tried first in the 16th Century but it was too hard. The Welsh were the first to do it. They were very...” she groped for the English word but relapsed into Spanish, “...tenaz”. Tough, stubborn, tenacious. “And they worked hard and were clever with their irrigation”.

Today you can drive from Trelew up

the main road towards the Andes. On the right is a moonscape of dessicated scrub, a stony desert that looks like the backdrop to a Western. On your left is the green strip of the Chubut valley with poplar and willow trees. The irrigation system the Welsh built still works. I was told that the Israelis were called in a few years ago to improve it but shrugged and said it was fine, nothing to be done.

Looking at that green valley it is impossible for a Welsh heart not to feel pride. These were ordinary people. They suffered appalling hardships but fought through them to make the desert bloom. They were enterprising but often in a co-operative way. They founded a perfectly democratic society and treated the indigenous people with fairness and respect. In the end they were not numerous enough to fulfil their dream of an autonomous Welsh-speaking province. But, backs against the wall, relying on themselves, they demonstrated to the ages what ordinary Welsh people could do.

.....
Gerald Holtham chaired the Commission on Funding and Finance of the National Assembly.

Y Wladfa today

Cynog Dafis welcomes the growing connections between Wales and Patagonia

Gerry Holtham's account of the Welsh settlement in Patagonia ('Y Wladfa') reflects the inspirational effect that the story of its establishment and growth has on those who come across it, in literature or, better still, in the flesh. Like many other Welsh-speakers I had been fascinated by the works of R. Bryn Williams, including his magisterial *Y Wladfa*, his eisteddfodic ode 'Patagonia' and his searchingly honest drama *Cariad Creulon*.

Yet nothing had quite prepared me for the experience of seeing it for myself: the extensive network of irrigation canals in the Camwy valley; the caves in the rock face at Porth Madryn; the fine statues of Lewis Jones and Eluned Morgan in Trelew and Porth Madryn; the streets named after the Welsh pioneers; staying in a hotel called Y Tŷ Gwyn and eating in restaurants called Gwalia Lân and Cornel Wini; finding the glorious Cwm Hyfryd at the foot of the Andes. But more than anything else I didn't expect such a warm welcome from third- and fourth-generation Argentinians who speak Welsh as naturally as I do, as well as many others who have become competent second-language speakers.

Elvey Macdonald, a Welsh Patagonian who settled in Wales in the 1960s is the author of *Yr Hirdaith* (The Long Trek), a history of the Wladfa based on the life of one of the founders Edwin Cynrig Roberts. Elvey organises regular trips to the Wladfa and reports that visitors are invariably fascinated, often intensely moved, by the experience. Since the centenary celebrations in 1965, which seem to have revitalised Welsh life in Patagonia, and the advent of long-haul



This statue on the promenade at Puerto Madryn (Porth Madryn), where the Welsh settlers first landed, is dedicated to the women of Y Wladfa. The figure, also shown as this issue's cover photo, is said to represent Eluned Morgan, daughter of the founder Lewis Jones. She was born on the ship *Myfanwy* en route to Patagonia in 1870 (hence her name Morgan, an abbreviation of '*mor ganed*', born at sea). She became a significant figure in the life of the colony, authoring *Dringo'r Andes* (1904) and *Plant yr Haul* (1915). Photo: Llinos Dafis.

international flight, there has been an enormous increase in traffic between *yr hen wlad* and the colony. The Wales-Argentina Society has been crucial in this process.

Naturally, these have focussed on Welsh-speakers who also have the benefit of access to a growing corpus of literature about the Wladfa. For those among them wanting to learn, an excellent starting-point would be Mari Emlyn's *Stori'r Wladfa* (Gomer), which also contains a useful reading list. For those who cannot read Welsh there in the lavishly illustrated and thoroughly researched bilingual English-Spanish *Rocky Trip: the*

route of the Welsh in Patagonia by Sergio Sepiurka and Jorge Miglioli (details on www.rockytrip.com).

Wales-Patagonia relations were formalised in March 2007 when Rhodri Morgan signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the Welsh Government and Chubut Province

“... to encourage the development of links between cultural institutions ... build on the existing work to develop the knowledge and use of the Welsh language in Chubut... and to promote links through contacts, information and joint initiatives



"... the glorious Cwm Hyfryd at the foot of the Andes."

for the benefit of participating communities in Wales and Chubut".

The Welsh Government has committed £54,000 a year for 2009-2012 and there are further contributions for various projects from the British Council, Welsh Language Board and the Wales-Argentina Society. Voluntary contributions and assistance from the Chubut Government enabled the establishment of a Welsh-medium school in Trelew and a new nursery unit is being built next door to the beautiful and atmospheric Moriah Chapel where Lewis Jones is buried. There are Welsh-medium nursery units at Gaiman and Esquel with plans for a school in the former, easily the most Welsh of the Wladfa communities.

In a recent presentation to the London-Welsh community Jeremy Wood, an ardent supporter of the Wladfa who lives in Esquel, set out a perceptive analysis of the current arrangements, which are both fragmented and fragile (available from jeremywood@welshpatagonia.com). There is a clear need for the various initiatives to be coordinated and placed on a firmer footing and the new Welsh Government needs take a lead in this.

The forthcoming centenary-and-a-half celebrations in 2015, orchestrated by the Wales-Argentina Society, provide a promising context for strengthening Welsh-Patagonian relations. The good

news is that there is already an impressive steering committee, chaired by Dafydd Wigley. The range of proposed activities include film, television and drama, music (the choir tradition is alive and prospering in the Wladfa), the erection of memorial plaques, reprinting of key publications, a bilingual New Testament and international rugby and soccer.

It is particularly gratifying that discussions are under way with the Welsh Government's Education Department about the preparation of curricular materials for schools. Here there is something really significant to be done. It is to be hoped that it goes beyond mere presentation of the narrative, colourful and thrilling as it is.

In a truly national curriculum the Welsh colonial experience (not just that of Patagonia) could and should loom large. It must steer clear of sentimentalism and recognise the extent to which the Welsh were (one presumes) often complicit in the darker aspects of British imperialism. But if what we read of the Welsh Patagonians' relationship with the indigenous Tehuelche people is anything near the truth, there is also something which could be a source of pride as well as illumination for our young people.

Nowhere is this better expressed than in the stunning prose of Eluned Morgan in *Dringo'r Andes* (Climbing the Andes). In this little classic the passionate evocation of the Patagonian landscape and the life of

the Welsh settlers is constantly informed by the author's affection and admiration of the Tehuelche and her horror at the persecutions they endured. Two chapters are particularly powerful. 'The Natives of Patagonia' has an agonised account of the genocide perpetrated by the Argentinian authorities from 1880 onwards. 'The Place of Graves' describes the killing, during this period of persecution, of three Welsh adventurers in search of gold, the near-miraculous escape of one, the search-party that found the mutilated bodies and (to acknowledge the truth) sought to take violent revenge before singing 'Bydd myrdd o ryfeddodau' at the gravesides. Eluned Morgan interprets thus:

"The slaughter had been appalling, demonic in its barbarism and bestiality. The dear simple, peace-loving pagans transformed through the cruelties of civilization into rapacious bandits! Their thirst for blood become the dominating passion of their lives!"

There are more reasons than one why, as Gerry Holtham puts it, "it is impossible for a Welsh heart not to feel pride" in meditating on the Welsh Patagonian epic. We should all know about it.

Cynog Dafis is a former AM and MP for Ceredigion.

A forest the size of Wales



Sarah Jenkinson describes how Wales is taking a lead in rainforest protection and climate change

After a long history of deforestation in Wales, we are now gradually increasing our forest cover and protecting our existing woodland. However, in terms of climate change and poverty reduction, it is the destruction of forests in the tropics which truly threatens the world's climate, as well as the basic needs of food, shelter and livelihoods for the people living there.

How often have we heard the alarming news that an area of rainforest the size of Wales is being cut down? The *Size of Wales* initiative is turning a disempowering deforestation measurement on its head by inspiring a whole nation to protect an area of tropical forest the size of Wales, as part of a national response to climate change.

A practical, people-led initiative, *Size of Wales* aims to protect two million hectares of rainforest and forge lasting links with forest communities in some of the world's poorest countries.

A few months ago in Mbale, in south eastern Uganda, I met an elderly woman living on the fertile land that surrounds Mount Elgon, an old volcanic mountain. She told me that just twenty

years ago, the surrounding landscape had been densely forested. Sitting beside her traditional grass hut, with her daughters and their children, she desperately waved her arms out towards the surrounding bare hillsides where trees had once stood. The women of Busiu village wanted their forest back. Surprisingly, the hills looked quite similar to the ones near my home in mid Wales, except for the families living in this region the loss of trees is impacting on their ability to survive.

In this highly populated region, Mbale's tropical forests have disappeared at an alarming rate as a result of the demand for wood for cooking and construction, as well as the need for agricultural land. As with the other villages I visited, the women of Busiu spoke of the increasing difficulties they face in sourcing firewood for cooking. However, it became apparent that they were even more worried about the unpredictable weather patterns, which they attributed to the loss of forest cover. As subsistence farmers in one of the world's poorest countries, the changing climate is already impacting on their ability to grow food.

Youths delivering wood for use in village construction in Mbale, Uganda. Along with the collecting of firewood for cooking the expanding population's demand for building wood is one of the main reasons for the deforestation of the region.

Wales a part of the solution, rather than a measure of the problem.

Size of Wales is a unique national scheme to sustain an area of tropical forest the size of Wales as part of our national response to climate change.

If you or your organisation would like to get involved we would love to hear from you.

www.sizeofwales.org.uk



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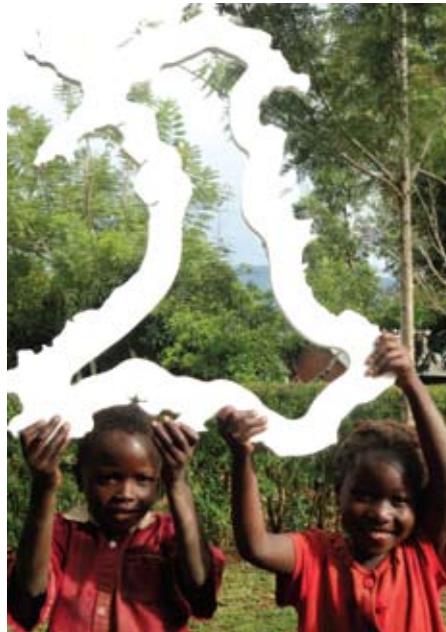
Today Uganda in East Africa has a population of over 32 million people. From just four million in 1986, its population is predicted to grow to 100 million by 2030. The impact on natural resources will be considerable, especially the forests. Between 1990 and 2005, Uganda lost 26.3 per cent of its forest cover, and deforestation continues today at a rate of 2.2 per cent per year, mostly due to subsistence farming, cutting for fuel wood, and the burgeoning population.

A global temperature rise to the danger threshold of 2 degrees Celsius will result in a 10 degree Celsius temperature rise in Uganda. According to Oxfam, 70 per cent of disasters in Uganda are now related to climate change. Increasingly unpredictable and extreme weather conditions destroy 800,000 hectares of crops a year at the cost of £120 billion to Uganda's economy.

Every day during my visit to Uganda I was told that climate change was happening now. Increased droughts, soil degradation and the expansion of disease zones, such as malaria, are effecting communities high on the slopes of Mount Elgon for the first time. Last year, the people of Bumasikeye suffered a landslide which killed more than 300 people. The disaster was attributed to deforestation and unseasonable rain.

On a more positive note, I was visiting Mbale with Welsh Government Minister John Griffiths to launch the planting of a million trees across the district. The project is being led by the Ugandan and Welsh Governments with support from the UN Development Programme. What started as a grass roots community link between Mbale and Pontypridd has paved the way for a major three-year project on climate change. It aims to not only increase forest cover, but also to provide the rest of the country with examples of how the effects of climate change can be mitigated in ways that also contribute to economic growth.

Funded by the Cardiff-based Waterloo Foundation, the One Million Trees planting programme is involving



1,600 families in 30 villages. It is co-ordinated by three local non government organisations, and the Gumutindo Coffee Co-operative social enterprise group. My visit came at an early stage of the tree planting. Women's groups, coffee farmers, child-centred groups and many others, were all busy developing tree nurseries and helping people learn about planting and raising trees.

Communities have now received seeds and all the necessary equipment such a water tanks, wheelbarrows, spades, rakes, watering cans and potting bags. The funding is also supporting training and awareness raising activities, such as community drama groups. A wide variety of trees have been planted to meet the needs for firewood, construction, shade for crops such as coffee, and food such as nut and fruit trees.

Trees in the tropics hold the key to slowing down climate change. Annually they absorb nearly a fifth of the world's man-made CO₂ emissions. They are crucial for storing water, regulating rainfall, and preventing floods, droughts and erosion, as well as producing much of the oxygen we all need to breathe. When you simply fell or burn a tree, it releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. It is the destruction of the rainforest that accounts for a quarter of the world's carbon emissions. This is more than the entire world's transport put together. In fact, we could fly the

population of Wales to New York and back, twice, and make fewer emissions than occurs every day as a result of rainforest destruction.

Protecting tropical forests is a 'no brainer' for climate change action. In fact, it is the cheapest and fastest way to cut carbon emissions. It will cost \$10-\$15 billion per year to tackle deforestation globally. This is only a fraction of the overall costs of stabilising global temperatures at the two-degree danger threshold. The Stern Review calculates this will cost \$650 billion per year, or 1 per cent of GDP.

Working closely with Leeds University, the *Size of Wales* project has selected over twenty-five forest schemes ranging from community tree planting to protecting existing forests in high biodiversity hotspots and helping regenerate damaged forests. Whether you are a company, charity, local council, school or individual, you can help put Wales on the map by showing what one small nation can do to sustain an area of rainforest by working with these forest communities on the ground. From elephant sanctuaries in Nigeria to a chimpanzee forest reserve in Tanzania, you can directly assist the sustainable management of forest resources, via a project of your choice, and make a significant contribution to reducing global carbon emissions.

Whether it is a 'mega city' being built in China twice the size of Wales or a disaster area of flooding in Queensland Australia, our small nation is a scale of measurement frequently used across the world. *Size of Wales* is an opportunity for the people of Wales to reclaim this measurement for ourselves, and show that as a nation we can save an area of rainforest equivalent to the size of Wales, At the same time we can support some of the world's poorest people in our shared fight to reduce the impact of climate change.

Sarah Jenkinson is Development and Communications Director with the *Size of Wales* project: www.sizeofwales.org.uk

4

Education

Articles

Wales' vocational attainment gap
Y Coleg Cymraeg provides critical mass for intellectual engagement

Wales' vocational attainment gap

Gareth Rees questions a moral panic over the recent PISA scores of our school performance

Something peculiar seems to have happened to education in Wales. Not long ago, there was widespread consensus that parliamentary devolution had allowed successive Welsh Governments to develop important and imaginative policies across the whole range of educational provision, from early years to the universities. These policies were celebrated not merely because they were distinctive from those in other parts of the UK, but rather because they were seen to be tailored specifically to the needs and aspirations of Welsh citizens.

However, more recently popular perception has shifted dramatically. Now, the emphasis is on the failure of Welsh schools – and increasingly other educational institutions – to provide adequate educational opportunities for our children and young people. It is said educational attainment is not reaching appropriate standards, to the detriment of individuals' prospects, as well as those of the Welsh economy more widely.

It is unlikely that this change in the terms of the public debate reflects *actual* changes in educational provision or even in educational attainment. Indeed, levels of attainment have been rising year-on-year. What *has* happened is that political priorities in relation to education have shifted. Now the emphasis now is on what the post-devolution education system is actually delivering to Wales, and rightly so.

In this context it is instructive that the bench-marks against which Welsh educational performance have been judged are *external* ones. In particular, attention has been drawn to the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), an international measurement of 15-year-olds' performance on tests in reading, mathematics and science.

Wales' results in the 2009 PISA round have not only been roundly criticised in the British media, but have also been highlighted by Leighton Andrews, the Welsh Government's Minister for Education and Skills, as demonstrating the need for a major overhaul of Welsh schools. As in many other countries, the PISA results for Wales are claimed to provide incontrovertible proof of educational failure and the need for fundamental change, irrespective of any local opposition.

It is undoubtedly the case that the PISA scores do tell an important story about the state of Welsh education. However, as with any measurement of educational attainment, the PISA scores have to be *interpreted* carefully. Certainly, the public debate in Wales gives no indication that there is a very substantial technical literature which is *critical* of the analytical approach on which PISA is based. This is not to argue that all the criticisms are correct, but rather to suggest that PISA results should not be seen as unambiguously definitive.

PISA's strength is in providing a *snap-shot* of educational attainment and its correlations with selected aspects of a national educational system. It can tell you that you probably have a problem. However, because of the kind of survey that it is, it cannot tell you what the causes of the problem are nor how to solve it. To address these questions requires exploring other sources of data and analysis.

As one of the UK's most eminent statisticians of education Professor Harvey Goldstein argues, rather than using PISA results to construct what are, in reality, dubious 'league tables' of educational performance, they should be seen "as a way of exploring

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country differences in terms of cultures, curricula and school organization”.

In the Welsh context, then, there should be no debate that educational performance could – and should – be much improved. However, the much remarked decline in PISA scores between 2006, when Wales first entered the Programme, and 2009 should not be taken to indicate an actual deterioration in the performance of Welsh schools. Given that each round of PISA assessment involves different groups of 15-year-olds, at least part of the – rather small - difference between the two measurement dates is attributable to differences between the two groups of pupils. This is especially the case since a larger number of schools and a wider cross-section of pupils agreed to participate in 2009.

Moreover, the PISA results need to be interpreted in the light of Wales’s very recent entry into the Programme. Unlike in most other countries, Welsh schools and their teachers have had little incentive to learn how to approach the PISA tests and, hence, to instruct their pupils how to do so. This will almost certainly change now that schools are being required to prepare young people specifically for these tests. But what will this really mean in terms of young people’s attainment and future prospects?

The crucial issue here is the extent of the ‘fit’ between what PISA requires and the GCSE curriculum. PISA seeks to measure qualities in pupils, especially capacities to interpret and apply information, which are different from those that are emphasised in GCSEs, where demonstrating the acquisition of knowledge is prioritised. And it is important to remember that it is on GCSE performance that schools have hitherto been judged and for which pupils actually acquire qualifications. What this highlights is the need for serious debate about what the school curriculum in Wales *ought* to be aiming for. Yet this is a debate that is in danger of being pre-empted because of the current preoccupation with PISA.



Top : Access to industry-standard machinery gives trainees the experience needed for work.
Bottom: Catering students gain experience of a working kitchen environment.

The critics of Welsh education will, of course, point out that schools in Wales do not fare much better if GCSE performance is taken as the basis of comparison with other parts of the UK and, in particular, England. This sort of ‘home international’ analysis is useful, as it not only avoids many of the technical difficulties associated with PISA, but also depends on qualifications which schools, teachers and pupils undoubtedly take seriously. Indeed, this sort of evidence

has been used to question the quality of Welsh schools and to criticise particular policies, such as the abolition of Standard Assessment Tests.

It is true that, since the early part of the present decade, there has been a progressive widening of the shortfall between Wales and England in terms of the standard measure of attainment at the minimum school-leaving age, now known as the Level 2 Threshold. The latter is frequently described as the achievement



Presently, the danger is that simplistic readings of PISA and other external bench-marking of Welsh educational performance are serving to close off debate, rather than open up new avenues for educational development.

An apprenticeship scheme for building work in south Wales

of 5 A* to C grade GCSEs. In fact, its full definition is 5 A* to C grade GCSEs or *equivalents*. That is to say, the measure includes not only GCSEs, but also a wide range of vocational qualifications, the best known of which are BTECs.

This detail is significant because if we look at GCSEs *alone* then, on the basis of the Welsh Government's data, the proportion of young people in Wales achieving the Level 2 Threshold is almost exactly equivalent to that in England. In 2009-10 it was 56 per cent in Wales compared with 56.3 per cent in England. Whilst there is an *overall* shortfall between Wales and England of some 12 percentage points, this is wholly accounted for by the fact that more young people in England attain the Level 2 Threshold through vocational qualifications.

These statistics put the performance of Welsh schools in a somewhat different light. On this evidence, it would appear that there is a problem of educational attainment in Wales. But it is a problem which relates very specifically to the provision of opportunities to pursue vocational qualifications. That this should be so is not entirely surprising.

Historically, as access to secondary education has been widened – right back to the Intermediate Schools established in the 1890s – Welsh schools have been far more effective in providing an academic curriculum than they have in making available opportunities to pursue vocational options. Currently, it may well be that the lower levels of funding that go to Welsh schools compared with those in England are accentuating difficulties here, as vocational provision is more expensive than the academic equivalent.

This relative failure of vocational provision is likely to have the greatest impact on pupils from more educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, who are far less likely to be motivated by the academic curriculum. Indeed, it may be that this goes some way towards explaining the significant under-performance in Wales's PISA scores at the lower end of the attainment range that was recorded in 2006, and again in 2009.

In this context, too, improving motivation through the imaginative development of vocational options may contribute significantly to the Welsh Government's objective of improving the

basic reading and mathematical literacy of young people. Moreover, reducing the numbers of low-achievers should not be seen as somehow restricting the development of high-achievers. Indeed, as societies as diverse as Finland and South Korea demonstrate, achieving the highest attainment levels is wholly consistent with relatively weak relationships between social background and educational achievement.

Public concern about Wales's education system is entirely legitimate. However, evidence and analysis need to be approached in an open and enquiring way. Presently, the danger is that simplistic readings of PISA and other external bench-marking of Welsh educational performance are serving to close off debate, rather than open up new avenues for educational development.

Gareth Rees is a Professor in the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University and Director of the Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD).

Y Coleg Cymraeg provides critical mass for intellectual engagement

Merfyn Jones argues we need to be able to write, reason and calculate in Welsh as well as simply speaking it

The result of years of campaigning and debate the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, a commitment in the *One Wales* coalition agreement, was finally established in April this year. It is important to understand that the Coleg is not an institution of bricks and mortar like other higher education bodies – although it has a small number of core staff based in Carmarthen. Its purpose is to work through existing institutions to achieve a national framework and growth for Welsh-medium higher education.

The Coleg is a company limited by guarantee and will also register as a charity. It therefore has a Board of Directors, which I chair, and which has so far met twice to plan for the Coleg becoming fully operational at the start of the new academic year in September. The Board consists of six directors representing the higher education sector in Wales and five independent members (including the Chair). In addition there is a member representing all the staff who teach through the medium of Welsh in our universities and another representing that most important of groups, the students. The Chief Executive, responsible for the operation of the Coleg is Dr Ioan Matthews. The Coleg is funded by the Welsh Government through the Higher Education Funding Council although it will also seek additional sources of revenue.

The Coleg has hit the ground running in the last few months and its plans are ambitious. Perhaps the most significant development has been the investment in new academic staff. £1 million a year will become available every year for the next five years for universities to employ Welsh-medium academics. Twenty seven new staff are presently being appointed and we envisage that number rising to at least 60 new academic posts within three years, and to at least 100 in five years. Such an investment

has the potential to transform the extent and quality of Welsh-medium higher education.

Hand in hand with this investment the Coleg will continue with its research scholarship scheme which has so far enabled over fifty young scholars to complete Ph.D. programmes, thus equipping them with the research and academic skills necessary for a career in higher education. Ten new scholarships will continue to be available annually.

Key to the success of these developments will be the attitude of students, both part-time and full-time. Student choice is critical and the Coleg is very aware of the challenge it faces in this regard. But we are confident of meeting it by ensuring that the quality of Welsh-medium higher education is of the highest possible and that the student experience is rich and fulfilling. *Mantais* (Advantage) has been established as a campaign to excite future students about the promise and potential of Welsh-medium study. Scholarships for undergraduates studying a required number of Welsh modules are also available and *Y Porth* (Gateway www.porth.ac.uk) is an innovative platform for sharing resources and facilitating joint provision across institutions.

The Coleg does not over-estimate the demand nor underestimate the challenge of stimulating student interest. Potential students need to be encouraged and developed. Welsh-speaking students will sometimes choose to study in English and post-16 Welsh-medium provision in our schools and Further Education Colleges is much more patchy than is sometimes assumed. Increasing the number of students studying in Welsh is a key strategic target for the Coleg.

The Coleg is active therefore in appointing new staff, encouraging Welsh-medium research and

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Meistrolï gwleidyddiaeth a datganoli

Hoffech chi gael lefel uwch o ddealltwriaeth o lywodraeth ddatganoledig yng Nghymru?

Mae Gradd Feistr Prifysgol Caerdydd mewn **Gwleidyddiaeth a Llywodraeth Cymru** yn astudio llywodreath ddatganolig yng Nghymru er 1999; cyfundrefn sydd wedi'i seilio ar ffactorau hanesyddol a diwylliannol neilltuol, trefniant cyfansoddiadol sy'n esblygu'n gyflym, prosesau newydd o lunio polisiau, a chyfraniad cymdeithas sifil sydd wedi datblygu'n anwastad.

Gyda goblygiadau cyd-sofraniaeth a llywodraethiant aml-lefel yn ganolog i drafodaethau gwleidyddol cyfoes, mae'r rhaglen hon yn agor ffenestr ddiddorol ar dueddiadau ehangach mewn llywodraethiant Ewropeaidd a byd-eang.

Caiff y cwrs ei gynnig ar sail amser llawn neu ran-amser drwy Ysgol Astudiaethau Ewropeaidd ac Ysgol y Gyfraith, Prifysgol Caerdydd.

I gael mwy o wybodaeth am y rhaglen, cysylltwch â:

Yr Athro Richard Wyn Jones, Cydlynnydd y Rhaglen:
WynJonesR@caerdydd.ac.uk
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scholarship and in working with students to provide the best quality education. The Coleg is also funding a whole range of Strategic Development projects across Wales. All this will be achieved by working with institutions to an agreed national strategy and by the careful monitoring of performance and achievement. Following consultation the Coleg's first Strategic Plan will be published in the Autumn.

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol is a highly significant development on the Welsh Higher Education scene and a major development for the Welsh language. It exists primarily because many students over the years have expressed dissatisfaction with the extent and availability of Welsh-medium courses. In turn this led to the campaign for a Coleg Ffederal.

The growth in Welsh-medium primary and secondary education is one of the more spectacular developments in recent Welsh history. There was a need for higher education institutions to ensure that progression to

Speaking a language is a valuable skill. It is even more valuable should an individual be able to read, write, reason and calculate in that language.

undergraduate courses was available to students whose education to that point had been largely or entirely in Welsh. The sector had responded by creating the Centre for Welsh Medium Higher Education. However, it remained true that Welsh-medium courses were largely restricted to a few academic specialisms and that provision was largely restricted to three institutions. A national plan and focussed funding was necessary.

These developments are critical for the future of the Welsh language. Provision will continue to be extensive in those institutions located in areas where the Welsh language remains strong allowing students to nurture the language in their communities whilst also studying at university. The planned growth of Welsh-medium courses in

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universities with little present provision and located in areas where the language is not prevalent will allow students who choose those institutions to continue their usage of the language.

Speaking a language is a valuable skill. It is even more valuable should an individual be able to read, write, reason and calculate in that language. It is clear that in the job market in Wales expertise in Welsh will prove to be a valuable asset for job-seekers. That should encourage much greater use of the language in the public sector and in commerce and industry. Welsh-medium higher education across a range of subjects will therefore meet employer need and at the same time lead to new fields for the language.

All these are important considerations. But for me perhaps the most valuable contribution which the Coleg can make is to provide the intellectual critical mass which can allow the Welsh language to flourish as a language not only of literature but of those intellectual concerns which span and transcend academic disciplines. If the Welsh language is to survive it cannot concede its ability to conduct reasoned debate and discussion to another language. Welsh needs intellectuals and those who will read, listen and interact with them. In

many science subjects (and increasingly in the social sciences) across the world English has become the international language for scholarly publication. That has to be acknowledged, but that is no reason why Welsh should abandon this terrain entirely.

There was a time when the churches and chapels fulfilled the role of sustaining Welsh-medium intellectual discourse. The media has succeeded in continuing that to some degree but in a diluted and increasingly marginal fashion. Our auto-didacts and organic intellectuals are disappearing with their generation. Ensuring that there is a critical mass of academics – across a wide field of disciplines – who are able to teach and debate in Welsh and moreover that there is a substantial number of students graduating every year with the skills to reason and express themselves in Welsh should surely guarantee that people will continue to be able to conduct the necessary national conversation in Welsh. We cannot allow the language to abandon this critical domain.

Merfyn Jones, former vice chancellor of Bangor University is Chair of Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.

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Social Policy

Articles

Regeneration and the economy

City region strategy needed to integrate policy

Regeneration and the economy

Mark Lang and David Leech argue that the successor programme to Communities First will need to engage more actively with local businesses

The Welsh Government's decade-long flagship regeneration programme, Communities First, is due to end in 2012. Following a short consultation through the summer the Government will announce a successor programme in the Autumn.

When Communities First was launched in 2001 there was great optimism that it represented a new approach to regeneration. Wales' most deprived communities would be empowered to provide local solutions to the challenges facing their area, whether this meant tackling environmental degradation, strengthening social cohesion, or improving residents' ability to engage with the local and regional economy. Most Communities First partnerships have proved quite adept at improving environmental quality. Some have begun to tackle the challenge of social exclusion, particularly through their work with young groups and the elderly.

However, partnerships have been less effective in addressing local economic development. The successor to Communities First needs to actively encourage communities to grapple with the biggest challenge that most of them currently face, the challenge of sustainable local economic development. To be successful it will need to engage with local businesses in a far more effective ways than has been the case over the past ten years

The recent recession has served as a potent reminder of the susceptibility of deprived communities to global economic events. One of the most common economic problems facing deprived communities is an over-reliance on a single major employer. During economic downturns there is always a risk that such employers will downsize or relocate their operations, devastating the local labour

market in the process.

This does not mean that communities have no power over their economic future. Action can be taken at community level to stimulate a diverse and vibrant business base, which interacts with and reflects the community in which it is located. Proactive community-led economic development should seek to develop stronger connections between the business community, local residents, and regional and local political actors.

Stronger links with the business community should be particularly encouraged. As commercial organisations, businesses can offer valuable advice to community partnerships as well as being key drivers of local economies. The sharing of their skills, knowledge and best practice can help other local entrepreneurs overcome the barriers inhibiting their establishment or growth. By supporting local economic development in this way, existing businesses will benefit from a stronger market for local goods and services and a better skilled workforce.

Communities First partnerships should have been well placed to deliver this institutional environment. According to their philosophy, the entire community – residents, the public sector, and local business organisations – should be involved in developing and delivering solutions in partnership. In practice, community partnerships have not always developed in line with the aspirations of policy-makers despite investment to strengthen the 'capacity' of partnerships. Capacity building has encouraged more residents to become involved in community regeneration, and that in itself is a highly positive result. Yet Communities First partnerships have not tended to prioritise engagement with the

business sector. The successor to the Communities First programme will need to appeal to, and engage with, the “community” in its broadest sense. This will require a larger role for local business communities.

One of the reasons why Communities First partnerships have struggled to engage with the business community is their limited success in creating a strong local brand identity. In the commercial environment time is an invaluable resource. Businesses need to see that they can engage with a partnership in a relatively simple, purposeful way and that their involvement will yield results.

Each local Partnership needs to develop a coherent brand, one which emphasises the Partnership as a single entity with its own independent strategic vision, rather than as a loosely connected coalition of interests, in which each member has their own priorities. Partnerships need to convey this vision to local businesses through effective external communications. Only

by presenting themselves as a united and consistent organisation, will it be possible to galvanise support from the business community.

There should also be an opportunity to engage larger businesses at a regional level. Measures should be put in place to facilitate the integration of larger businesses into the successor community-led economic development programme. One potential mechanism might be the development of the Communities First Network. At present, the Network exists as a forum for sharing good practice. However, with an expanded remit it might also provide an opportunity for Partnerships to engage businesses at the regional level.

At the end of the ten-year Communities First Programme there are undoubted successes, particularly in community capacity building and community integration. But to take forward community-led economic development, there needs to be a far

more inclusive role for local businesses than has been the case with Communities First Partnerships to date. To achieve this they need to strengthen their brand identity and disseminate their message clearly and effectively.

The progression from community capacity building to a much fuller role in local economic development should be a seamless one. The broadening of local partnerships to include local business communities should be seen as a logical and highly beneficial development.

Mark Lang is Chief Executive of *Mark Lang Communications*. He is a former member of the Welsh Labour Executive and former political advisor to Jane Hutt AM in the National Assembly. **David Leech** is Director of Business Development at *Mark Lang Communications* and was a researcher with Julie Morgan when she was MP for Cardiff North.

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City region strategy needed to integrate policy

Roger Tanner calls for a unified regeneration programme to tackle poverty

The Welsh Government faces a huge challenge in regenerating our poorer communities in the wake of the recession and the 41 per cent cut in its capital budget over the next three years. It needs to co-ordinate its existing programmes for economic, social and environmental renewal more effectively so that they complement each other rather than pulling in different directions. It should also seek to integrate these programmes with spatial planning and housing policies to create the most effective use of the Government's limited resources. In short, the Welsh Government needs a unified regeneration programme.

In the past, regeneration initiatives in Wales have suffered from being sponsored by separate ministries with different spatial priorities. Alas this looks set to continue. First Minister Carwyn Jones' new ministerial portfolios split responsibility for regeneration policy between no less than seven Ministers:

- **Huw Lewis** – Housing, Regeneration and Heritage.
- **Carl Sargeant** – Local Government and Communities.
- **Edwina Hart** – Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science.
- **John Griffiths** – Environment
- **Leighton Andrews** – Education and Skills.
- **Alun Davies** – Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and European Programmes (which, bizarrely, includes the administration of European structural funds in urban areas).
- **Jane Hutt** – Finance.

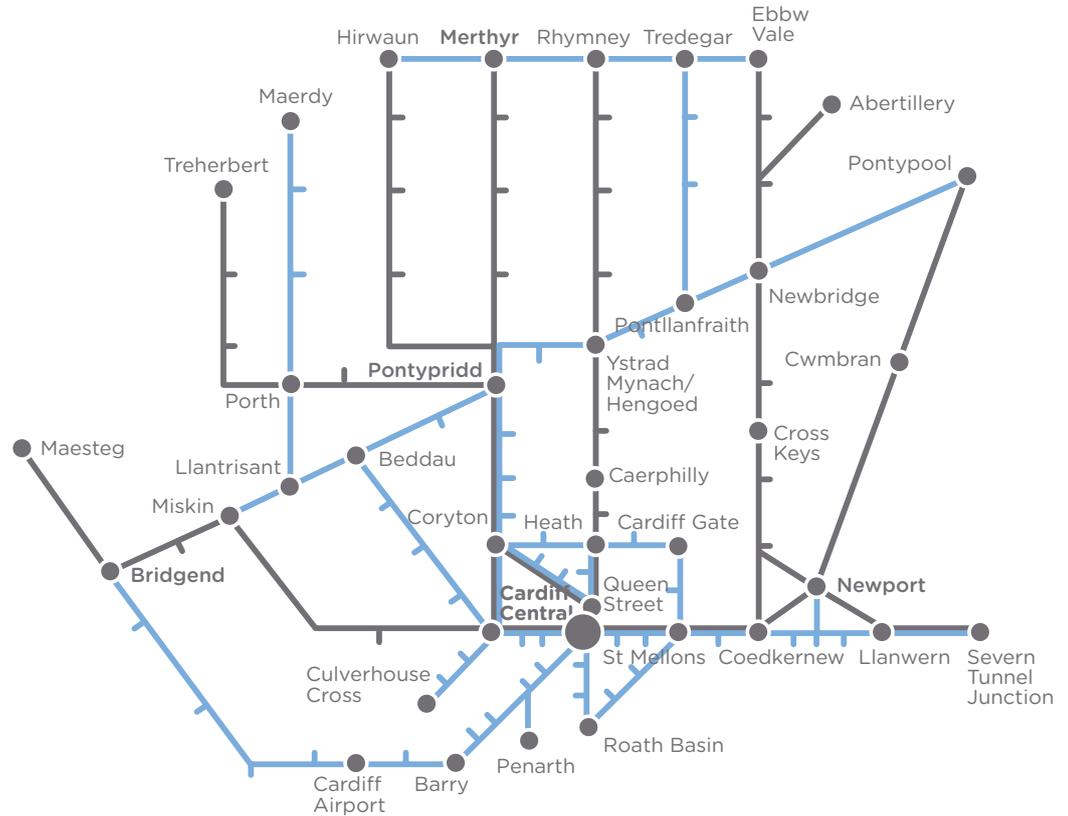
This means that a typical town centre improvement scheme may have to apply separately to the Minister for Agriculture for European grant aid, the Minister for Finance for funding, and the Minister for Housing for additional match funding if it is fortunate enough to be in a Regeneration Area. All of these have their

own different spatial priorities, grant funding criteria and bureaucratic procedures.

Moreover, there are a plethora of ad hoc regeneration programmes, sponsored by different ministries and created at different times with scant co-ordination between them, including:

- **Communities First**, Local Government and Communities – based on empowering the most deprived 10 per cent of Welsh communities identified originally in the 2001 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. These initiatives are at ward level or smaller. In many areas they exist alongside **Community Councils** with similar objectives.
- **Regeneration Areas**, formerly Strategic Regeneration Areas, following the model of the Heads of the Valleys programme initiated in 2005. There are now eight Regeneration Areas divided into two distinct types – large sub-regional initiatives such as the Heads of the Valleys area (population 250,000), and much smaller single town target areas such as Barry and Aberystwyth.
- **The European Union's Convergence Programme** identifies 44 priority deprived areas, varying in size from Swansea to small villages. The basis for assessing their deprivation is different from that used for Communities First and the Regeneration Areas, even though all three use the flawed Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation data. Most physical Convergence projects also have to obtain match funding from the Finance Ministry's **Targetted Match Funding** pot, whose panel has different criteria to those used by Wales European Funding Office.

These three initiatives are all targetted at areas believed to be of greatest deprivation. However,



The IWA's detailed plan for a rapid transit 'Metro' system, outlined in its 2011 report *A Metro for Wales' Capital City Region – Connecting, Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys*, could form the starting point for real regional planning in south-east Wales.

the **Wales Spatial Plan** identifies a different set of 'key settlements' that could be centres for economic growth. Here there is further confusion since the hierarchies of key settlements used in South East Wales and Pembrokeshire regions identified in the Spatial Plan differ from those in the four other regions. In practice the Spatial Plan is largely ignored by Welsh Government ministries. Rumours abound that it will be superseded by a proposed National Infrastructure Strategy.

Meanwhile, there are a raft of further initiatives, all of which have some purchase on implementing regeneration policy. These include:

- **Newport Unlimited** which is Wales' only Urban Regeneration Company -there are several dozen in England.
- **Visit Wales** the remnants of the Wales Tourist Board, with its own spatial agenda.
- The **Regeneration Investment Fund**

for Wales, which recently emerged from the EU's Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas (JESSICA). This has the potential for an innovative public/private sector approach to development opportunities across Wales. However, it offers loans rather than grants, and there are doubts about its relevance in regeneration areas characterised by low land and property prices.

- The **Strategic Capital Investment Fund** established in 2008. This has been anything but strategic, since it has had to make sense of the disparate spatial strategies listed above. It has ended up pepper potting considerable sums of money into a wide variety of schemes of questionable regeneration value. Since 2010 it has had no fresh funds to distribute.
- Of largely unrecognised importance in the regeneration field is the

emerging set of unitary authority **Local Development Plans**. Yet these are of great importance in that they identify areas where private sector development will be encouraged.

- Directly contradicting each other are the **Regional Transport Plans** which generally seek to promote public transport improvements and discourage the growth of trips by private car and the now dated **Wales Property Strategy** which clung to the idea of promoting business parks at motorway junctions.
- In the background is the **Stock Transfer** process, which has created powerful new municipal mutual housing associations which have great potential as regeneration agencies, for example in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen.

How could this plethora of initiatives be better co-ordinated? Despite the almost universal derision that has been heaped



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“Cardiff, Swansea, Newport and Wrexham should be prioritised in city-region strategies as locations for employment growth. In south Wales associated new housing developments should be concentrated in the increasingly attractive Valley communities to the north of the coastal cities, the two linked by enhanced public transport.”

upon it, the Wales Spatial Plan has the potential to be an overarching and truly strategic document. Among other things, it could ensure that the many initiatives in train could fit together in a complementary and mutually supportive way. However, it would need to be re-written with specific, joined up proposals rather than its present vague wish list of unconnected desirables.

For example, the potential for Swansea, Cardiff and Newport to generate jobs should be recognised and linked to regeneration initiatives in more deprived areas. One of the planning tragedies of the past decade has been the squandering of the vast public investment in Cardiff Bay in the 1990s. At a cost of £500 million plus, the Bay was transformed into what could have been a uniquely attractive business environment. Instead, it was overrun in the subsequent decade by retail sheds and speculative apartment developments. Wales abounds with expensive infrastructure projects that fail to exploit their regeneration potential.

In February 2011 the IWA organised a conference to launch a new report by Mark Barry *A Metro for Wales' Capital City Region – Connecting, Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys*. This detailed plan for a rapid transit 'Metro' system could form the starting point for real regional planning in south-east Wales. Similar proposals for a rapid transit system to serve the Swansea city-region were put forward by Mike Smith in the Spring 2011 edition of *Agenda*.

The Welsh Government's new

legislative powers should be used to create a Welsh Planning Act that would provide for an effective regional planning system to give a context for local authority Local Development Plans. In turn this could be used to promote city-region initiatives such as the Metro proposal.

Scotland provides a precedent for this approach. Above their system of local authority plans the Scots have regional plans centred on the country's four main cities - Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee. Whether or not regional planning would also be desirable in the more rural areas is a debate to be had in both countries. However, the case for integrated planning in the urban areas of Wales, including north-east Wales, should be self-evident

Cardiff, Swansea, Newport and Wrexham should be prioritised in city-region strategies as locations for employment growth. In south Wales new housing developments should be concentrated in the increasingly attractive Valley communities to the north of the coastal cities, the two linked by enhanced public transport.

At the other end of the spectrum there are pressures to respond to the 'Localism' agenda being pursued in England by the UK coalition government. In Wales it could be argued that we already have a surfeit of localism, some would say parochialism. For example, do we need Community Councils and Communities First Partnerships in the same areas? Community Councils are elected and therefore have some legitimacy to speak

for the communities they represent. Yet as presently organised they are largely irrelevant to people's lives. Meanwhile, the Communities First Partnerships are self-selected but are charged with creating and implementing regeneration plans. It would make sense to merge the two into partly elected, partly co-opted local bodies, with the power to levy a local rate but only if they have an approved improvement plan in place.

Crucially, the interconnectedness between housing, employment and transport needs to be identified at a strategic level. Areas of deprivation should be identified in the Wales Spatial Plan, linked to potential growth points and areas of opportunity, with relevant public transport links specified. The boundaries of Regeneration Areas should acknowledge these requirements. They should include areas of opportunity that serve areas of deprivation, so that investment can be targeted in the most efficient and effective way.

In all of this planning and policy interventions should be at the most appropriate level. So Communities First Partnerships should focus on building the self-confidence of deprived areas, tackling local community safety and environmental issues. Transport plans will usually have a regional focus and concentrate on linking areas of housing and employment growth. Major challenges such as addressing child poverty and economic inactivity should be tackled at the all-Wales level.

Above all, we need a new sense of urgency in moving this agenda forward at a time when, in the face of severely constrained budgets, the need for an effective regeneration strategy is more pressing than ever.

Roger Tanner is Strategic Planning and Urban Renewal Manager with Caerphilly County Borough Council.

6

Environment

Articles

Two wheels good
Small is still
beautiful

Cycling along National Cycle Route 8, the Taff Trail, in central Cardiff with the Millennium Stadium in the background.

Two wheels good

Jane Lorimer reports that 60,000 Cardiff households are being contacted in an effort to change their travel habits

Dealing with road congestion has been vexing policy makers for decades. The traditional approach, new roads and by-passes, have been the staple feature of transport strategies since the 1960s. However, significant cuts to capital spending budgets allied to new carbon reduction targets mean these are increasingly off limits for transport planners.

The new fashion is to 'manage demand' using infrastructure and technology. In the face of increasing number of cars on the road, park and ride, closing off junctions and variable speed limits have been the favoured alternatives to road building. Now for the first time in Wales a new approach is being trialled.

Instead of simply managing demand the Welsh Government will try to reduce demand by influencing travel behaviour. With some two-thirds of all journeys being under five miles, there is significant potential to ease pressure on the road network by encouraging drivers to replace some of their local car journeys

with alternatives.

Using the 'smarter choices' approach to transport planning that has been gaining currency in recent years, a range of 'soft' interventions will be promoted, such as car sharing, car clubs, travel planning, tele-working, cycling and walking.

A large trial in English towns has provided a robust evidence base of the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of this approach. For every £1 spent on 'smarter choices' interventions, there are savings of £4 from falling congestion. This figure becomes much higher if you take into account health benefits, and compares favourably with road spending which often fails to show a return of £1 for every £1 invested.

From September the UK's largest programme of Smarter Choices is being rolled out in Cardiff, building on the work already underway as part of the Sustainable Travel Centre project. Co-ordinated by the sustainable transport charity Sustrans Cymru, the ambitious £4 million programme will target schools, workplaces and households. Working with a consortium of organisations including public transport operators, the Welsh Government, and Cardiff Council, it will organise a range of interventions to raise awareness of the alternatives to using the car for everyday journeys.

The research which underpins this approach shows that people are swayed in their travel choice by a lack of information about alternatives to the car. For example, the study of three large English towns published by the Department of Transport found that in around half of journeys a viable public transport alternative already existed for a local journey made by car, but people did not know about it.

The research showed that a further barrier to people leaving their car at home





was a severe misperception about relative travel times. For example, in Darlington, Peterborough and Worcester people on average over-estimated travel time by public transport by around two thirds, and for cars they under-estimated travel time by one fifth. In other words because of habitual car use and lack of familiarity with public transport, people think jumping in the car, rather than going by bus or bike, is quicker than it actually is.

Increasing awareness and encouraging people to change their habits has the potential to change travel behaviour. Personalised Travel Planning works by targeting information at people who are interested in using their car less. Over the next two years Sustrans will be using this approach with 60,000 households in Cardiff – the largest project of its kind in the UK to date.

The project works directly with people in their homes, offering free advice, incentives, and motivation on walking, cycling and using public transport for more of their local, everyday journeys. Households will be given a menu of options, including sessions with a travel advisor and maps of local walking and cycling routes, bus and train timetables.

Following a model used extensively in Australia, Personalised Travel Planning has been delivered in more than 20 towns and cities in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. More than 250,000 households have been encouraged to change their travel behaviour.

The results have been remarkable.

Last year Sustrans projects in Exeter, Lowestoft and Watford helped cut the number of car trips by around 13 per cent across targeted populations. At the same time the number of trips on foot, bike and public transport increased by 33 per cent, 37 per cent and 33 per cent respectively.

The project will be rolled out in three phases in Cardiff, starting in the north of the city before progressing to the west and Penarth in early spring 2012, and then to east Cardiff, coinciding with investment in the cycling network into the capital along Newport Road. The approach works particularly well when delivered alongside visible improvements to services, although it is not dependent on new infrastructure. Indeed, the entire premise of Personalised Travel Planning is that improvements in infrastructure on their own are not enough. People need information and motivation to change their travel habits too.

For the first time in the UK the Personalised Travel Planning element is being delivered alongside travel planning assistance for some of the greatest trip generators. As well as having detailed conversations with households we will be assisting workplaces and schools to improve the support they give employees and parents around travel decision making. Often a householder may tell us that they would try cycling to work if their employer had secure cycle parking facilities. With this project we can close the loop by working with employers to improve facilities.

We will be helping employers

recognise the business benefits of their staff travelling to work and within the working day by sustainable travel modes. The University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, is an example of an employer that has cut car use amongst its staff and students by promoting public transport, walking and cycling. By promoting greater levels of physical activity the University has succeeded in reducing the number of days lost to sickness by 32 per cent as a direct result of implementing an ambitious travel plan.

Our experience in Cardiff will allow us to trial new approaches and consolidate best practice which can then be applied across Wales. After delivering Personalised Travel Planning in the capital we will then tackle the areas of greatest commuter inflow into Cardiff. Over the next four years the project will extend to Pontypridd, Caerphilly, Barry, Bangor and Ynys Mon, Haverfordwest, Carmarthen and Aberystwyth.

The work will provide invaluable data about the way we travel and, crucially, to enable us to better understand transport patterns in Welsh towns and cities. Above all, the project will allow us to demonstrate that change is possible, not through coercion but simply by giving people information about the choices that they have.

Jane Lorimer is deputy director of Sustrans Cymru, and is co-ordinating the Smarter Choices work in Wales.

Small is still beautiful

Virginia Isaac reflects on the legacy of Fritz Schumacher

2011 sees the centenary of the birth of E. F. (Fritz) Schumacher (1911-1977). Often seen as 'a prophet who stood against the tide' Schumacher pioneered the ideas of environmental awareness, sustainable development, and human scale organisation and technology in the 1960s and 1970s. He was an economist and philosopher who rose to fame with his ground breaking 1973 publication *Small is Beautiful – a study of economics as if people mattered*. Schumacher's warnings regarding rampant consumerism and the ever increasing rate of global consumption made a strong impression on world leaders and counter culture activists alike. However, despite widespread acclaim at the time, his thinking never became part of the mainstream or was translated into significant political action.

In the first instance Schumacher was mainly known for his philosophy – encapsulated in a piece that he wrote called *Buddhist Economics* – on helping developing nations. A key interest was how to help developing countries 'help themselves' rather than being massively reliant on overseas aid. Influenced by Leopold Kohr, a professor at the University of Aberystwyth (known for his publication *The Breakdown of Nations*), Schumacher promoted the concept of human scale and appropriate technology as both healthy and viable economic alternatives to the aid philosophy of the time. He set up a world-wide charity – *The Intermediate Technology Development Group*, now named *Practical Action*, and argued that simply transferring large scale western technology to poorer nations stifled local initiative and participation.

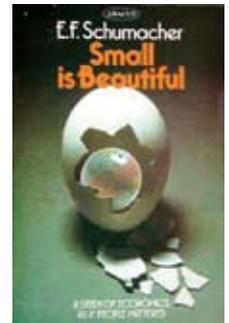
While not against 'large scale as such, Schumacher was against the assumption of 'big is better'. He advocated that large organisations often needed to be broken down into smaller, human scale units, in order to function in the most effective way. He argued, quite simply, that when political, economic or social organisations were too large,

they often became inefficient as a result of being impersonal and unresponsive to human needs and aspirations. Individuals who feel alienated and powerless become less engaged and less productive, with direct economic consequences.

As Schumacher advanced his ideas on development economics he saw that this thinking applied as much, if not more so, to western economies. He questioned the obsession with GDP and the logic - and sustainability - of the continuous pursuit of growth not least in a world of finite resources. He supported the diminution of centralised political and economic structures in favour of local responsibility and control.

If Schumacher was at all political he leaned, certainly in his early years, towards democratic socialism. But as his thinking developed he took a far more holistic approach. In his view big government was not the answer. Equally, the pursuit of greed and private profit encouraged by free market capitalism was not necessarily the most economic way of doing things. Certainly, it did little to contribute to the sum of human happiness or well being. Schumacher recognised the vital importance of putting people first and that it was not only activity that could be measured in financial terms that had a value. As he wrote in *Small is Beautiful*:

"The modern economist is used to measuring the standard of living by the amount of annual consumption, assuming all the time that a man who consumes more is 'better off' than a man who consumes less ... [But] it is now reasonable to believe that despite the abundance of man made goods produced by continued economic growth, its net effect on human health and happiness could be adverse and possibly disastrous".





Schumacher's "ideas are taking on a new resonance"

A new focus is being given to the importance of valuing things that cannot be measured in financial terms, for instance the input of 'stay at home' parents, the importance of education and skills, and of family and friends.

As we approach the much heralded 'age of austerity', Schumacher's ideas are taking on a new resonance and are more relevant than ever. Global warming, the recent financial crash and the recognition that oil (upon which so much of modern civilisation depends) is a finite resource, have made people, many for the first time, question the way society is organising itself.

It may seem ironic to many on the left, that much of Schumacher's thinking – on localism, employee ownership, the importance of non-renewable resources, alternative energy and micro-generation – now appears to form part of the UK government's 'Big Society' and 'Wellbeing' agendas. It is important, though, to consider these initiatives for what they are, what they are trying to achieve, and to assess them without party political prejudice.

A new focus is being given to the importance of valuing things that cannot be measured in financial terms, for instance the input of 'stay at home' parents, the importance of education and skills, and of family and friends. It is recognised that far more credit should be given for involvement in the community as well as the whole host of activities and hobbies that do not feature in GDP but that nevertheless improve the quality of life. For the first time sectors of society are beginning to explore the concept of 'enoughness' – recognising that we do not continually need more and that there are limits on what money can deliver and the ultimate satisfaction it can bring.

Initiatives that are taking place in Wales both reflect this philosophy and are ahead of the curve. Smaller structures enable greater ownership and self-determination with demonstrable rewards

in terms of satisfaction and wellbeing as a result. The decision to continue to help fund students embarking on university life underlines the belief that matters such as the education of young people are too important to be left to market forces. Developments in higher and further education – not least the imaginative dual sector approach (bringing together the vocational and the academic) now being pioneered by the new Trinity Saint David University – are indicating a far more holistic approach to post-secondary learning. It is hoped that activities planned around Schumacher's centenary year will help to give a greater focus to the importance of the ideas promulgated all those years ago but which now seem more pertinent than ever. His books, including *A Guide for the Perplexed*, are being republished with updated forewords referencing the modern context. Events and conferences celebrating his thinking are being planned by many organisations throughout the UK and overseas. Above all, it is hoped that young people across the globe are made aware of Schumacher's ideas and that they can have the opportunity to reflect and incorporate them in the world in which we live today.

Virginia Isaac is the second daughter of E. F. Schumacher. Until recently she was a Director of the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service UCAS. She now runs Alter Via Ltd, a company that promotes public sector entrepreneurship. She spends half her time in Wales and is a governor of Trinity Saint David University.

7

Science

Articles

Going back
in time 13.5
billion years

High
performance
computing

Lyn Evans, pictured alongside his life's work, the Large Hadron Collider at the Cern international physics laboratory.

Going back in time 13.5 billion years

Rhys David
meets the
Welshman
behind the
17-mile
nuclei Collider
at Cern

When the £6 billion Large Hadron Collider at the Cern international physics laboratory in Geneva was switched on in the autumn of 2008, the unmistakable Aberdare tones of its director, Dr Lyn Evans, were heard around the world. Over the next few years the Collider, the world's biggest scientific experiment, is set to answer some of the most fundamental questions about the nature of the universe (or the multiverse, if the theory of multiple universes is correct).

Lyn Evans, who had spent most of his life at Cern, retired two years later. Meanwhile, his project did not result in a meltdown of planet Earth as some scientists forewarned. And it survived an embarrassing month long shutdown, nine days after it was turned on when a short circuit blew a hole in the 17 mile long, five mile diameter vacuum pipe buried up to 600 feet underground. Today it is running at high power and turning out an estimated 100,000 DVDs worth of data a year.

For Lyn Evans the project represents the crowning achievement of a career which started in the science laboratories at Aberdare Grammar School in the 1950s. The teaching of science there was good, he recalls, and the teachers were highly respected. "The school offered a level of education you would

only get nowadays in public schools,” he said.

University College, Swansea, where he did his first degree followed by a PhD in plasma physics cultivated his interest in a scientific career. The college was an early collaborator among British universities with Cern, sending a stream of talented graduates and post-grads to Geneva, starting with the late Eifonydd Jones, to co-operate on experiments there. Indeed, Swansea scientists have played a big role in Cern experiments into anti-matter, one of the constituent elements in the universe.

The Large Hadron Collider was built to send two simultaneous accelerated beams of hydrogen nuclei in opposite directions around the 17 miles. They are then directed by magnets to crash into each other. The resultant explosions recreate conditions a pica second – one hundredth of a billionth of a second to be precise - after the earth’s creation 13.5 billion years ago. The debris from these can then be analysed. In contrast optical systems – high powered telescopes and the like - can only take us back 1 billion years.

The outcome is not going to be a sudden ‘find’ in the middle of all this activity. Instead the scientists at Cern will be looking through all those DVDs worth of data for statistical patterns that current physics knowledge cannot explain. The prize that has been most publicly identified is the Higgs Boson – a hypothetical particle of existence - which Lyn Evans believes could take two years to recognise. At present scientists only really understand atoms which account for roughly 4 per cent of matter. Dark energy, which comprises 73 per cent, and dark matter, about 25 per cent, are still a mystery. If and when it is proved to exist, Higgs Boson could explain how matter acquires mass.

Another important scientific theory the Collider could help verify is supersymmetry, the idea that for every fundamental particle a far heavier super particle can exist. This is the main candidate to make up most of dark matter.

Though no longer officially in charge, Lyn Evans has continued to live near Cern and takes part in two important research exercises there. He has also found more time to involve himself in educational activities. A visiting professor at Imperial College, London, he is passionate about getting more young people interested in science as a career. Lack of interest is not just a British problem, he observes. In Europe generally the number of young people interested in science is going down. As he says:

“Europe needs more scientifically trained people or it will be in trouble in 20 years time. Not everyone can be a research scientist but modern industry needs scientifically educated people. This applies particularly in Wales because we have to attract high technology industries.”

Visits to India and a number of other developing countries have convinced him their levels of education

The resultant explosion recreates conditions a pica second – one hundredth of a billionth of a second to be precise – after the earth’s creation 13.5 billion years ago.

are increasingly high. Wales, he says must have a highly educated population to match. In this respect he sees the Welsh Government’s recognition of the importance of scientific education and its appointment of a Science Adviser as important steps.

These days much of his work is in encouraging young people in Welsh schools. He is involved in a major educational project in Bangor and, through video-conferencing in which he has found the Welsh education system to be well-equipped, he has been able to talk to as many as 30 schools at a time. Much of his focus is on how to motivate teachers, whom he sees as the key to inculcate in pupils a love of science. Another educational project will explore the frontiers between physics and biology.

Cern itself is an expensive operation. As one of the founder members, Britain contributes 12-13 per cent to the £1 billion annual running costs. Can this be justified when cuts are being made across virtually all areas of Government spending? Dr Evans is, understandably, in no doubt. He points to important spin-offs, especially medical advances. The University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff is one of a number of hospitals across the world that has a Positron Emission Tomography scanner (costing £16 million) that arose from Cern’s work. It enables doctors to see regions

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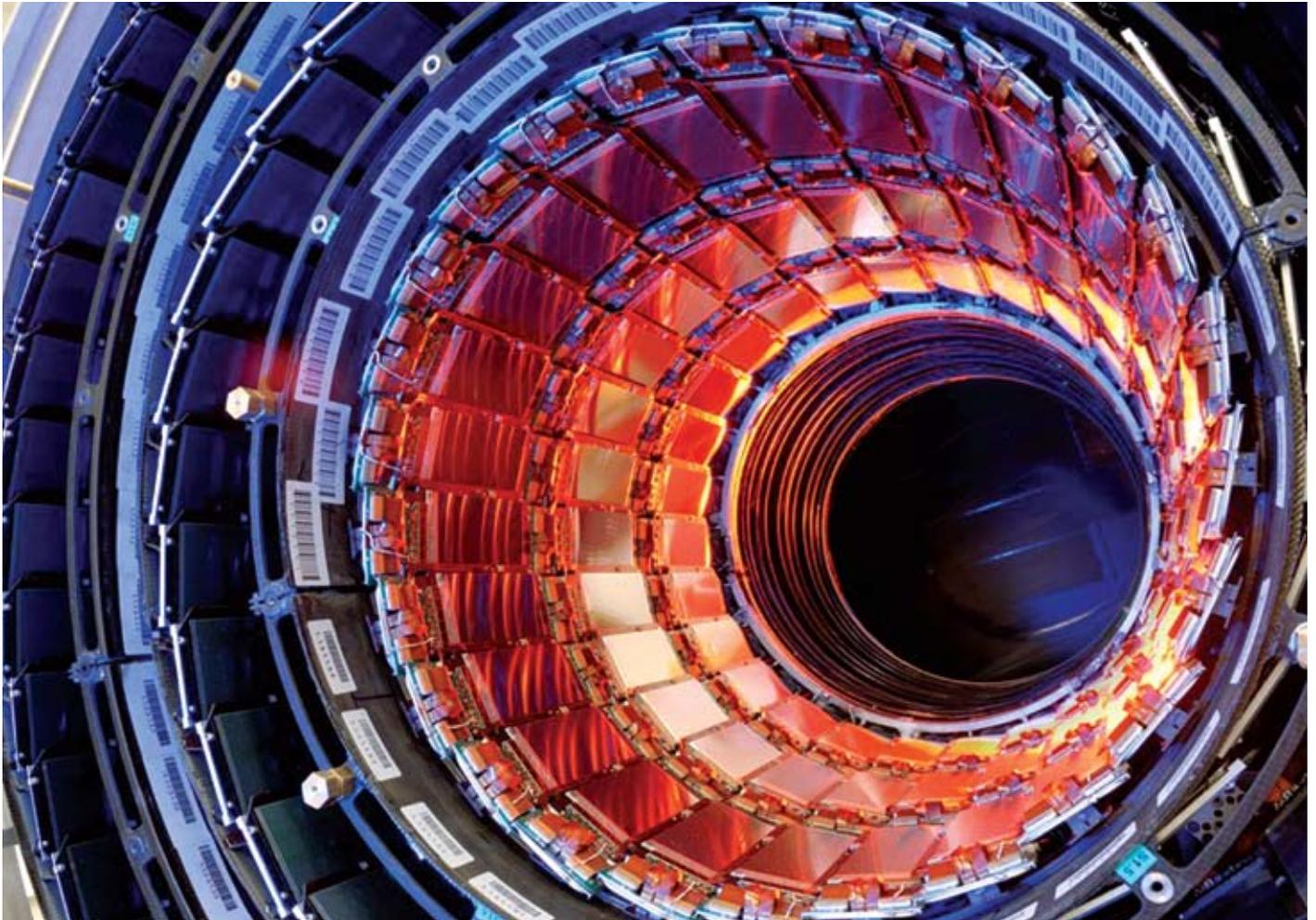
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On 30 March 2010 the Large Hadron Collider successfully smashed two proton particle beams travelling with 3.5 TeV (trillion electron volts) of energy, resulting in a 7 TeV event, described as like “firing two needles from either side of the Atlantic and getting them to hit each other”. However this was just the start of a long road towards the expected discovery of the Higgs boson, a hypothetical elementary particle, a form of matter we never knew existed...

of high metabolic activity in the body, helping to establish the malignancy or otherwise of tumours. Cern, which was crucial to the original development of the world wide web is also behind a more advanced grid for sharing data.

“It is becoming much more difficult to prise out the last secrets of nature... that’s why we have to co-operate.”

Beyond these direct benefits there is a wider educational role. Cern has 2,300 staff, 783 fellows and 9,534 users – mainly post doctoral students, learning to work at the frontiers of knowledge. Not all of them

end up in particle physics. Many take up other high-powered careers where the analytical skills they have honed at Cern can be put to good use. Cern itself shares its results with collaborating institutions around the world, which help to analyse the data. “It is becoming much more difficult to prise out the last secrets of nature,” Lyn Evans says. “That’s why we have to co-operate”.

His passion for collaboration may be a distinctively Welsh contribution to the UK’s leading role in the Cern project. “That is one of my attributes,” Lyn Evans agrees. “I have been good at getting people to work together”. It is an ability he hopes he can now bring to giving science a higher profile in Welsh education.

.....
Rhys David is a trustee of the IWA.

Pwllheli firm Motion Blur uses high performance computers to produce animation sequences, including these images for the BBC's online Dr Who comicmaker www.bbc.co.uk/doctorwho/comicmaker



High performance computing

David Craddock on a £40 million project which will provide Wales with a world-class super computing network

So what is a social scientist and businessman from the chemical industry doing running a high technology computing organisation? What attracted me to High Performance Computing Wales a couple of years ago was the desire of our University researchers to transfer their knowledge and intellectual property into the market place where it might do some good. High performance computing would help them speed up knowledge transfer.

High Performance Computing Wales is about innovation and getting new products and services to the market quicker, and training researchers in getting the most out of computing to achieve this. The project is now in a key phase following the announcement that global technology giant Fujitsu is partnering the universities in Wales to create the project.

The contract is worth £15 million over four years to Fujitsu, which will provide infrastructure and services along with subcontractors Microsoft and Intel. High Performance Computing Wales will give us the most advanced and evolving computing technology available.

We're not just a big black box. High performance computing refers to any computational activity requiring more than a single computer to execute a task. Supercomputers and computer clusters are used to solve advanced computation problems and are employed for specialised applications. These include

- Data storage and analysis
- Data mining
- Simulations
- Modelling
- Software development
- Visualisation of complex data
- Rapid mathematical calculations

For example, weather forecasting requires a supercomputer. Other uses include animated graphics, fluid dynamic calculations, nuclear energy research, petroleum exploration, wheel chair crash simulations, modelling silt

build up in estuaries or airflows over aircraft wings. We have already identified more than 100 projects in Wales which need high performance computing. Of these projects, more than 80 per cent have business partners or potential commercial applications.

A growing number of Welsh examples illustrate how high performance computing technology can make a vital contribution:

- In Swansea, we have Calon Cardio-Technology Ltd developing the next generation of implantable micro-pumps for the treatment of heart failure.
- In Pwllheli Alan Moul, director of Motion Blur, needs the firepower of high performance computers to supply the creative industries with digital art and computer 2D and 3D animation.
- At the University of Glamorgan in Pontypridd, Steven Wilcox, the University's Professor of Intelligent Systems Engineering, is using high

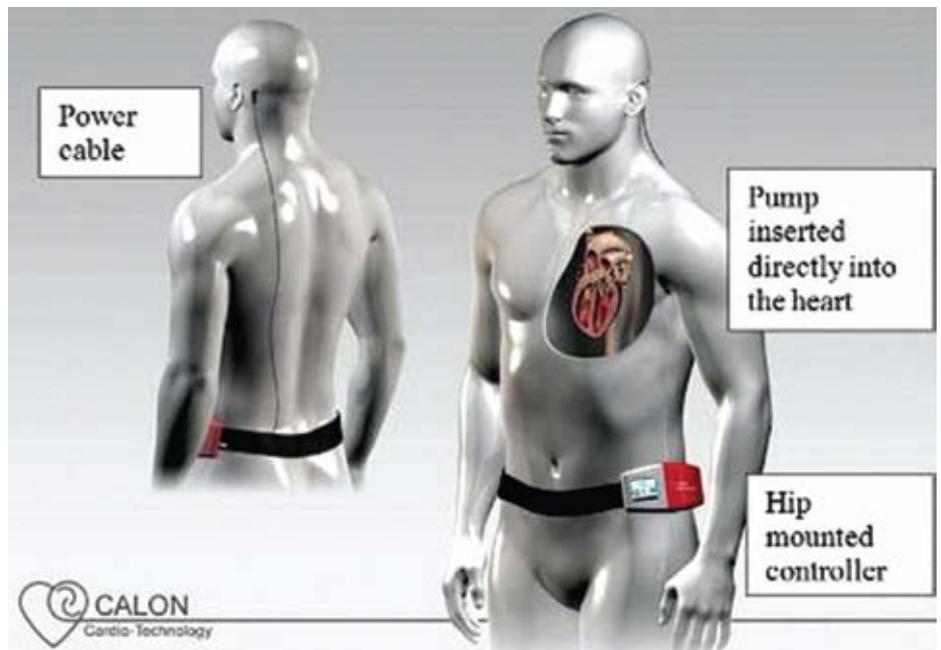
performance computers to study industrial furnaces and boilers in collaboration with industrial partners such as Tata Steel and EDF Energy.

- At Bangor University, Dr Simon Neill sees great potential in using high performance computers to enable the modelling of the long-term impact of the construction of marine tidal turbines.
- Meanwhile, at the OpTIC Glyndŵr business innovation centre in St Asaph, Professor David Walker, an expert in Ultra-Precision Optical Polishing Technology, is working on developing state-of-the-art mirrors for the European Southern Observatory. This will be the biggest optical telescope in the world.

We are building on expertise at Cardiff and Swansea universities to take Wales into the global Premier League when it comes to supercomputing firepower. High Performance Computing Wales is a unique collaborative venture. The universities, with support from the Welsh Government, Welsh European Funding Office and UK Government, have joined forces to establish a charitable company that will deliver the project over the next four years.

The challenge over that period will be to deliver economic and skills benefits, and to establish a sustainability plan that takes us beyond the funding period. High Performance Computing Wales will provide an interface between academic research and business development by:

- Providing a fully distributed, open access computing facility which will be available to researchers, product and service developers across Wales.
- Investing heavily in training, skills and outreach programmes which will enable the take up and use of our facilities.
- Building on previous investments



Swansea-based Calon Cardio-Technology is developing the next generation of implantable micro-pumps for the treatment of heart failure. The aim is to make heart assist pumps the routine method of treating heart failure. "We make extensive use of computer modelling in our research, which is significantly reducing our product development phase," says managing director Kevin Fernquest. "Access to high performance computing is a major boost for a business like ours."

made by the Welsh Government and the university sector in Wales-wide research institutes.

- Supporting research and development, fitting in with the priorities of the Welsh Government and capitalising on other relevant European-funded initiatives.

If we can do this successfully, we will make Welsh businesses more competitive in global markets and, hopefully, help to grow the knowledge economy. There are three main strands to the work:

1. Investing in new equipment, accessible from centres around Wales.
2. Establishing a training academy to develop high performance computing skills among researchers.
3. Creating an institute to provide high level technical services to support research and economic activities.

The main computer hubs will be in Cardiff and Pembroke Dock, linked to spokes at Swansea, Aberystwyth, Bangor and the University of Glamorgan. There will be further links to University of Wales Alliance Universities and business innovation centres throughout Wales.

We are now in the process of recruiting our management and service team, establishing our customer processes and installing the kit. We are already engaging with businesses to get their input and ideas. We aim to be open for business by the end of 2012.

.....
David Craddock is Chief Executive Officer of High Performance Computing Wales: www.hpcwales.co.uk

*Fishlock's File*

Memories are made of this

Trevor Fishlock says we should have more stories about Welsh lives

Articles

Fishlock's File:

Memories are made of this

Joining a thousand literary flowers together

Lighting up the nations

Book reviews:

Everything was better after a few drinks

An intertwining of Welsh and British politics

Nine Centuries of Welsh Contact with Islam

My mother's devotion to television history programmes is easily explained. Most of them deal with events that were part of her experience. Two world wars, the talkies, the jazz age, the wireless, the great depression, votes for women, the abdication, the blitz, air travel, mass motoring, space travel, television itself, computers, four monarchs and twenty-three prime ministers - she was there. An appetite for the morning papers complements her enjoyment of history television.

As it happens she falls within the scope of a proposition made by an editor I once worked for. He used to say that "Nobody born after 1914 is worth listening to".

That was some years ago and he liked to provoke. But his point was that the lives of others are a raw material of journalism and that the stories and recollections of the elderly are invaluable. As a reporter by trade I would have failed in my duty had I not interviewed my mother about her life. We spent absorbing hours going through the albums and her reminiscences. I wrote a words-and-pictures booklet of twenty-eight pages and a designer and printer made it presentable, so that when she turned a hundred recently there were copies for her family and friends and especially for her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The journalists who taught me reporting on a busy evening newspaper were always clear about the importance of human stories. People came first. I overcame nervousness about talking to the bereaved families of servicemen because the relatives themselves saw me as

part of the process of according dignity and respect to a life.

I liked talking to veterans of all kinds for the humanity they added to history. The gunner who fired the first shell at the battle of Jutland enthralled me with his story. Bertrand Russell, in his eighties and CND heyday, gave me tea at his holiday hideaway and talked of the pleasure of dipping deeply into the distant past through the memories of the elderly: his grandmother told him of her friendship with the widow of Bonnie Prince Charlie.

One of my regrets is that I did not talk to my father in greater depth, though he did leave me with an image of my grandfather, a Rhondda miner, who in 1914 marched off to war from Pontypridd. His children watched him eat his farewell breakfast, so special it had two eggs not one. His death in Flanders a few weeks later cast a shadow of which I was well aware as I grew up. My maternal grandfather survived the war, though wounded, and I remember him standing by the mantelpiece - standing, my mother explained, because of the shrapnel in his backside.

More than seventy years after the war I went to the battlefields of Ypres and Passchendaele in the company of the last of the old boys who had fought there, men of ninety-nine and a hundred. It was the last chance to hear their stories. Their eyes had once looked through rifle-sights across the swamps. They were thin and bony. Their medals shone. In an immense cemetery one of them picked out the names on the white stones of men he had known. Remembrance, he said, did not necessarily

mean mourning. He thought of his friends as they were, "young, full of life and laughter".

In Wales, Saunders Lewis, a veteran of the trenches, talked to me of his nationalism, having hospitably poured us a morning sherry. Around that time I interviewed a woman in Llŷn, a nonagenarian remnant of another time, who spoke no English. The poet Michael Burn, who lived in north Wales, was in his nineties when I got to know him. He once met Hitler in Munich, fought in the raid on Saint Nazaire and endured Colditz.

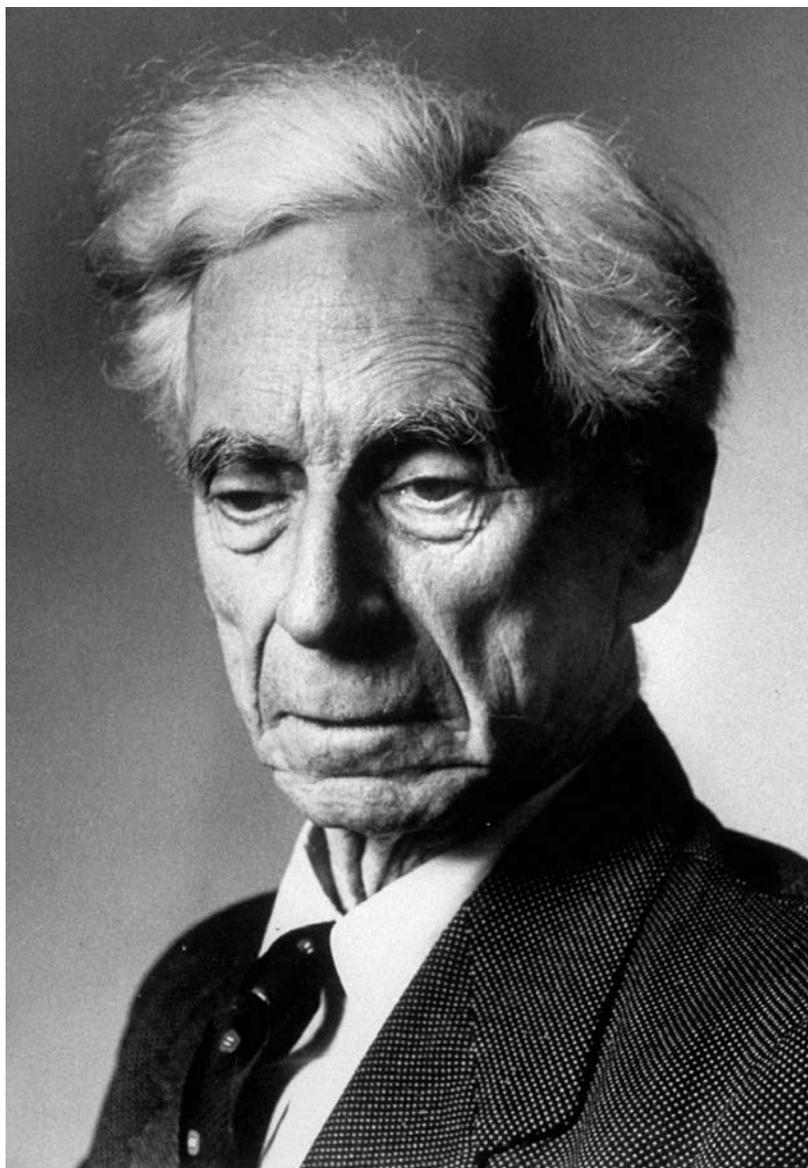
On the north-west frontier of Pakistan I went to the home of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, then almost ninety, who had been for half a century the outstanding leader of the Pathans. He was still an imposing figure. The British jailed him for his part in the struggle for Indian independence, and Pakistan jailed him after Partition. He always tried to knit the Pathans together and told me, "I wish I could have done more".

Mrs Bhandari was in her nineties, too. I used to stay at her oasis of peace, Mrs Bhandari's guest house, in Amritsar. She had witnessed most of the city's 20th Century history and as a schoolgirl in 1919 heard the roar of gunfire as General Dyer ruthlessly slaughtered hundreds of people gathered in a walled garden.

Ada, a Russian I met in Moscow, was also ninety. She married an Englishman and lived in London before returning to Moscow to teach English. One of her pupils was Nikita Khrushchev. He couldn't remember the difference between lower-case b and d in the English alphabet, she said, and would put his hand on his hip and stick out his elbow as an aide-memoire. Stalin's police arrested her in 1938 and she spent nine years in the Siberian gulag, cutting wood. She spent another seven years in Siberian exile. One thing she remembered about England was the politeness of schoolboys offering her their seat on a bus.

In Hiroshima I talked with survivors of the atomic bomb who related their extraordinary and harrowing experiences without bitterness. In Papua New Guinea a tribal chief showed me his arrow scars and told me that the first white man he saw was the pilot of a plane that reached his remote home in 1933. The first wheels he saw were the aircraft's undercarriage.

Wherever possible I have drawn on human stories to illustrate and give meaning to my work as a



reporter, foreign correspondent and television writer. Stories show us constantly what we have in common and how extraordinary life can be. Obituaries, too, are stories that reveal the remarkable. I wish we published more of them in Wales. Something is missing from our hinterland and our reading.

It is a pity that there is no counterpart in Wales to the obituary columns of *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian* and *The Independent*. They dominate this particular market in stories of interesting and sometimes amazing lives. They often include a welcome portion of humour. The modern habit of readers adding piquant footnotes to obituaries is commendable. More and more-rounded accounts of Welsh lives, not just of the great and good, should be written and published in Wales. We like stories.

Bertrand Russell: "His grandmother told him of her friendship with the widow of Bonnie Prince Charlie."

Joining a thousand literary flowers together

Peter Finch describes the emergence of Literature Wales, a new agency for the word

How do you merge three organisations? Two up for total merger and with the third semi-detached? Do you bang heads, bribe, threaten, cajole, insist, plead, persevere, finally agree, or bury your head in the sand? All of those, as it turns out. Although maybe not the last one. We have reputations to uphold.

In its Investment Review wisdom the Arts Council of Wales came to the conclusion that its arrangements for the funding of literature were, to quote the document, untidy. Its major client, the national player, Academi, literature promotion agency par excellence, deliverer of schemes and activity the length and breadth of the country, needed to be formally combined with the Council's other literary clients: Tŷ Newydd, the writers centre in Gwynedd, and Welsh Literature Exchange, the international provider. Neither of those two descriptors are quite accurate. Tŷ Newydd is more than just a centre for writers, while Welsh Literature Exchange engages in a plethora of activity beyond simple provision.

When I thought about it, *untidy* was a difficult word to precisely understand. The Arts Council's Investment Review recommendations did little to

clarify the term. The Academi was simply instructed to take the lead. The train was leaving the station and literature needed to be on it, said Chairman Dai Smith. Press ahead, instructed chief executive Nick Capaldi. But against a background of rumour and bureaucratic fog it was not easy. It took the Arts Council a full six months to get round to formally instructing its clients to merge.

Academi was given the task of leading on the creation of the new organisation. I would become Chief Executive. There would be a new apparatus of governance. Loose ends would be tied together. Literature in Wales would become whole. Providers, producers and public would be wrapped in literary joy and the sky would become full of cultural sparks. That was certainly a future worth having.

Significantly the Hay Festival was to be excluded from the new arrangements. Given its substantial increase in funding for 2011-2012, from £40,000 to more than £100,000, it is hard to see why. But that elephantine anomaly is for others to argue about. And given a fair wind and a deal of co-operation there may end up being nothing to argue about at all.

In the late 1990s when Academi, the Literature Promoter, was created out of a reformed Welsh Academy/Yr Academi Gymreig, the society for writers, its trading name was chosen because it could shape shift. *Academi*: a word that is easy to say, has resonance in two languages and, moreover, comes early in any listing. Its precise meaning depends on where you stand. The Welsh Academy trading as Academi. Yr Academi Gymreig dan yr faner. At an early giving of evidence to the Assembly's Culture Committee then AM Cynog Dafis had it in one. "Great work Academi", he said. "But your name is dreadful. No one knows what it means."

I considered this. He might be right. It took more than a decade for the opportunity to arise but the Arts Council's Investment Review provided it. Academi put it in its business plan. All arts organisations have these now. This is a professional 21st Century world. Academi would rebrand. We would become *Literature Wales / Llenyddiaeth Cymru*. Says what we do. Easy to understand.

In the event the whole deal has turned out to be considerably more than a simple name change. A new and much larger organisation has emerged. Literature Wales is a true literature development agency with national status and support to match. The Welsh Academy and Tŷ Newydd inside, Welsh Literature Exchange at arm's length.





National Poet Gillian Clarke, who has published 14 collections since 1971, the latest *A Recipe for Water* in 2009. She says: "Poets write instinctively, and don't always see every possible meaning in the words they choose. If you find something, and prove it with quotations, then it's there, and you're right, and don't believe anyone who tells you otherwise."

Writers write, don't they? And readers read. Do they really need support? They do. Were support to be withdrawn in a bi-lingual country such as ours then literature as we know it would all but collapse. Without aid there'd be scant Welsh-medium publishing, no school author visits, few festivals or readings, fewer courses or workshops or prizes, little book razzmatazz, negligible writing in prisons, no work with the health service, no literary engagement with the disadvantaged nor the deprived. There would be very little opportunity, for anyone. Welsh cultural life would fade.

The situation for Welsh writing in English, pretty invisible at the best of times, would be worse. It would be totally compromised by the noise coming from over the border. Wales would vanish. We would be depleted. Totally. When we read, if we read at all, it would be about America or England. Marvellous, say a small minority but I don't think the rest of us would agree.

Ever since I was appointed to lead it in 1997, the Academi has pressed for the professionalisation of writers. Given the opportunity, and paid appropriately, they would deliver the goods. Amateurs in Wales have a very real place but

they need something against which to be measured. This need to make our authors professional continues to be at the centre of Literature Wales. Rates may not have gone up much in a decade but opportunity and perception certainly have. Those among us who get by on income derived from their skill with words – Gwyneth Lewis, Owen Sheers, Menna Elfyn, Nigel Jenkins, Robert Minhinnick, and Gillian Clarke among them – struggled in the nineties. I'm sure that they still struggle today. No Rolls Royces. No pension schemes. Hard, still, to get from one month to the next. But better than it once was.

Literature Wales will put writers into schools, run competitions for fiction, verse and the art of poetry performance, offer bursaries for authors to take time out from other employment in order to write. It will manage festivals, organise tours, run courses for writers at the truly splendid former Lloyd George mansion of Tŷ Newydd in Gwynedd, and in co-operation with partners across Wales take literature to places it rarely visits. It will work with the Health Service, local authorities, the Prison Service, and social services to increase the number of ways in which literature can help our

society, heal it, remove its conflicts and its devastations.

How did the Academi evolve into Literature Wales? The answer depends on precisely where you begin. For me it was a 1997 conversation in a quiet corner of the Friary-sited Oriol Bookshop. It was owned at that time by The Stationery Office, a group of venture capitalist backed operators who were later to abandon the shop's Welsh-cultural content and then close it as a loss maker. Twenty years of building culture down the pan. I was the manager. The conversation was with John Pikoulis who, with the backing of M Wynn Thomas, Gerwyn Wiliam, John Osmond, Ned Thomas and Harri Pritchard Jones, wanted to save the threatened Welsh Academy by bidding for the Arts Council franchise to run a new literature promotion agency. Would I like to front it? Too right I would. In the face of at least 14 other credible bids we won.

What I discovered inside the run-down, carpetless Mount Stuart Square offices was not *One Wales*. Far from it. The Welsh and English sections of the august Society for Writers (founded 1959) might have shared a kettle but that was pretty much all. They ran unconnected

phone systems, had separate financial accounts, used different banks, kept different hours, and sat on unmatching chairs in separate offices. Even their computers did not communicate – Macs on one side, PCs on the other. The internet then was just being born.

Down the road at Crickhowell House (later to become today's Tŷ Hywel) the brand new National Assembly was getting into gear. Companies across the country were rebranding themselves with Wales in mind: Dragon Cabs, Dragon Security, Dragon Couriers, Dragon Rescue, even Dragon Pies. Shirley Bassey was ironing her red dragon dress. Make Wales one. Show it as it is. End the linguistic, social, economic, and cultural divisions. That's what the new Academi would do. Bring our literature together in one place and make it swing.



Owen Sheers, among a handful of Welsh writers "who get by on income derived from their skill with words".

"What do you think I should do first?" I asked John Osmond, IWA director and at that time an Academi Board member. "Make a lot of noise", he replied. "I've done my best."

Where are the enemies? Not everyone loves you, even with something as all-embracing and ultimately satisfying as literature. There are writers out there who are forever uncovering conspiracies to keep them away from success. There are those who, in the face of uncontroversial evidence to the contrary, still insist that they've been ignored. Those who cannot understand that where more people live there is often a greater occurrence of activity. Those who think that despite us pouring £100s into their literary activities that at bottom we really doubt their talent. Those who imagine others are stealing their plot ideas and masquerading them as their own. And those who somehow just don't like what we do because, perhaps, it is us that's doing it and not them. It's an unfair world. Although I have spent these past thirteen or so years desperately trying to iron out the bumps.

Perhaps the biggest problem is not the writers nor their audience but the bureaucracy that surrounds them. We

live in a world obsessed with the collection of data, action plans, compacts, targets, visions, memos of understanding and tabulated projections. In my time behind the wheel I've seen, year on year, that vociferous data monster grow and grow.

I estimate a tenfold increase in ten years. For arts administrators the coalface moves ever further back. File your returns quarterly rather than annually. Provide attendance data on increasingly obscure population demographics. Demonstrate adherence to regulation. Prove that you have policies on everything including policies themselves. As I write the Welsh Government has told its Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies to reduce their running costs by 12 per cent over three years. Do more for less.

In response it seems as if the burden is merely being passed down the line. Forget the quality of the activity and what it does. Instead tell us the ages of all those in the audience, how far they have travelled, the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation analysis for their postcode, if they used public transport, how many were vegetarians and how many of them wore a dress. I'm inventing some of this but you get the general idea.

Funding bodies should believe more in their clients and allow them to take risks. Regulate them less and trust them to deliver. Let them spend more on arts and less on filing. When I suggested this at a conference a few years ago everyone applauded. But that was then and to date, despite decreasing financial waistlines, little has changed.

What next? Set things on fire. What Literature Wales isn't going to do is merely continue the existing programmes of Tŷ Newydd and Academi with a new logo on top and some economies of scale underneath. It will do that, of course, but there will a whole lot more.

What makes up Wales is its separate parts. What Literature Wales is now going to do is join them together. Writers are intimately connected with the places they occupy and the places they originally came from. Expect to see cross media literary ventures that wrap writers and readers together in co-operation with our heritage infrastructure: Cadw, The National Trust, The National Museum, the National Parks, and that often overlooked resource, the Church in Wales.

Work with young people will increase. They are the future. There'll be more

festivals, peripatetic ones, roaming the country to reach places we never knew we had. Expect to see a lot more glitter as writers the non-literary world recognises appear at venues not known for their cultural values. There will be endless opportunity to take part, as amateur writer, as newcomer, as interested party, as someone who simply wants to have a go. People who never thought about it before will be in action turning out verses and finding that it's uplifting, fulfilling, and fun. And where you don't expect to encounter writing – in hospitals, sports grounds, train stations, and supermarkets – take note because soon you will. Internationally expect Rio to come here and for there again to be a Welsh feel to LA. Wales will make its mark.

As for me, I've now been with my head in an administrative bucket for rather too long. When I joined the Academi as Chief Executive in 1998 I had this vague idea that after five years of changing the landscape I might reduce my office hours

and spend some extra time writing. In the event that has proved impossible. Politics, policy, provision, vision, risk analysis, administration and dealing with the difficult rapidly fill any space you give them. I did manage a series of appropriately tiny poems, *Haiku for the Academi*, which are included in my collection *Food* (Seren Books, 2001):

Annwyl Syr, my last book appeared
in 1965
but I have a backyard full of cherry
blossom
can I join?

looked up cherry blossom in
the dictionary
not there

big new Wales a thousand flowers
hope and money
still as hard as ever

But now I need space to create something a little longer. I leave Literature Wales in landscape-changing form. John Pikoulis and Harri Pritchard Jones are joint chairs. Lleucu Siencyn is Acting Chief Executive and Sally Baker is at the helm in Tŷ Newydd. There is a great staff team, north and south. In Wales the A470 is no longer the only thing that joins us together.

.....
Peter Finch, chief executive of Academi, now Literature Wales, since 1997, is currently on a writing sabbatical and leaves his post at the end of the year.

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Lord Richard of Ammanford
Chairman of the Richard Commission

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Professor of Palliative Medicine,
Cardiff University

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Lord (Kenneth) Morgan
One of Wales's leading historians

Join the IWA and support our work.

The work of the IWA depends on the support and contribution of individual members across Wales and beyond who share our determination to mobilise the nation's human and social resources in order to face the challenges ahead. By bringing together partners in business, academia, and the public and voluntary sectors, the IWA is helping to shape economic, social, educational, environmental and cultural policy across Wales.

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Lighting up the nations

Mari Beynon Owen reports from the Venice Art Biennale

IllumiNations – IllumiNazioni is the theme of this year's 54th Venice Art Biennale, showing between June and November and orchestrated by the internationally renowned Zurich curator Bice Curiger. As she puts it:

"The exhibition aspires literally to shed light on the institution itself, drawing attention to dormant and unrecognised opportunities, as well as to conventions that need to be challenged."

This also explained her rationale for including three paintings by the old master Tintoretto in the Central Pavilion:

"Tintoretto is the painter of light. In many respects his art is unorthodox and experimental, but instead of seeking to trace superficial formal analogies between Tintoretto and the art of the present, the aim is to concern a form of pictorial energy that is altogether 'anticlassical'."

Yet, in continuing to provide sumptuous permanent pavilions for the 'old' nation-states, the Biennale administration ignores many emerging nations. Those that are not recognised by the Italian Government are relegated to the Collateral Events section, as is the case with Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Meanwhile, Britain continues to occupy the imposing classical porticoed pavilion atop a prominent hill in the main Giardini site. The continuing expression of a confined

world view hardly plays well with this other declaration from the curator:

"Far removed from culturally conservative constructs of 'nation', art offers the potential to explore new forms of community and negotiate differences and affinities that might serve as models for the future".

Behind the rather too clever word combination are ensconced some fundamental arguments. Can there be art which is simply pure creative expression? Can the artist exist in isolation from current events and political realities? What is the role of the artist - *Zeitgeist* or political activist? And will there be new 'old masters' in the 21st Century?

While artists selected to represent their nations for the Biennale often go for the 'brash new, iconoclastic option', this time, several chose to re-master previous works and re-present work, re-framing their reflections on universal themes. They remind us of the importance of rigour, and the diligent refinement of skills and ideas. Even though they work in very different media, in their constant search for intense perfection they are following in the tradition of the 'old masters'.

In *Chance* the French artist Christian Boltanski re-creates an industrial-scale photo printing plant to reveal the timeless themes of death and absence. The constant repetition of the industrial process, with images whizzing along a production line, re-inforce the inevitability of death.

English artist Mike Nelson has re-configured *Magazin*:



Queuing for the British pavilion



Tim Davies' Wales in Venice location

Büyük Valide Han, a work previously created for the Istanbul Biennale in 2008, within the walls of the British Pavilion. Given the confines of the space, the sculptural installation is a triumph of construction. It is interesting that the artist chose to re-build and re-imagine the original work. He is revisiting his artistic practice within a completely different physical context and re-realising his relationship with the work.

Likewise Welsh artist Tim Davies chose to re-present two of his 2010 films, *Cadet (Parade at Cardiff)*, and *Cadet (Running at Cardiff)*, a 2006 film *Cadet (Standing at Aberystwyth)*, with his series of 2009-11 *Bridges* drawings, and two new films shot in Venice, *Drift* and *Frari*. One gets a sense that the artist is using this unique opportunity to re-hone his ideas through meditation and reflect upon the important themes which run through his work which provides a commentary on current events. The *Cadet* films are a reflection on the futility of war and loss of life. However, there is no sense here of the artist as political campaigner.

The context in which work is viewed at the Venice Art Biennale is quite different from any other. The opening Vernissage days are totally frenetic and overwhelming, a critical whirl in which

the world's curators, museum directors, gallerists and art critics speed from one show to another.

Within this pressurised environment it is extremely difficult to have time to simply stand and view the work as a pure art experience. Of the many shows I saw, one stood out for its sensory and emotional intensity. Hans op de Beeck's *Location 7* is a 'total' sculptural installation, an immersive environment made of grey concrete. It is part of the *One of a Thousand Ways to Beat Entropy* exhibition, featuring four artists. In curator Alexander Ponomarev words, they are allowed to sail:

"...in the expanding cosmos of the imagination... leaving behind works in space that allow us... to doubt the inevitable domination of entropy".

The context in which such work is presented is particularly relevant in view of the recent opening of the new contemporary art galleries at National Museum Cardiff. Until Llandudno's Mostyn gallery re-opened last year, the lack of large scale exhibition space dedicated to contemporary art denied many artists the opportunity to show their work and receive the critical status

they deserve.

This has resulted in a huge gap in the art history of Wales available to the public. Hopefully, the newly created National Museum of Art will provide a much needed platform for contemporary artists. It should be possible to host major international contemporary art shows, allowing artists more opportunities to engage with international art practice. It should also contribute to the debate in Wales about contemporary art and the role of artists in shaping the new Wales – and even beat entropy!

As at this year's Biennale, now is the right time to shed light on our art institutions and challenge the conventions of our museums and collections. As Bice Curiger puts it:

"If one trusts in art it indeed has the capacity to stimulate our horizon with far-sightedness and complexity beyond the stupefying redundancy usually attendant on current events".

Mari Beynon Owen is Creative Director of the rural art space Melin Inc., and Co-Chair, of the Rhôd Artists' Group. She organized *RHODIO*, an intervention during the opening week of the Venice Art Biennale.

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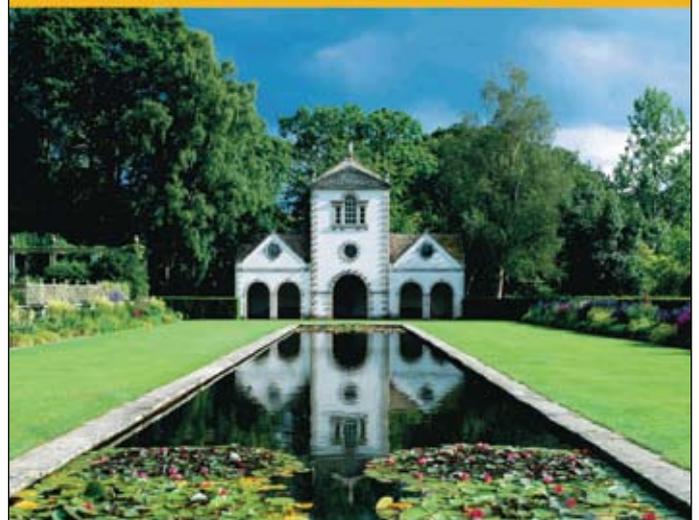
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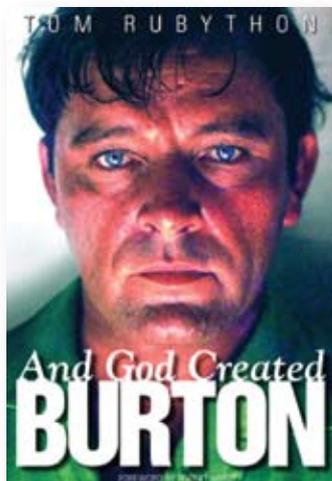
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Reviews

Everything was better after a few drinks

Peter Stead



And God Created Burton
Tom Rubythron
The Myrtle Press, £20.00

Richard Burton died in 1984 but you would be excused if that fact has eluded you. It could be argued that the actor is playing a fuller role in Welsh life than at any other time since his birth in Pontrhydyfen in 1925. Most weeks we hear his name in news bulletins and our national daily paper regularly likes to remind us of what he looked like. It is almost impossible to avoid him.

A bust is unveiled, a theatre is named, a research centre is established, lectures are given, actors attempt to convey his charisma and imitate his voice, campaigns are launched to secure further commemoration, *Where Eagles Dare* is given another airing, yet another disc of his *Fernhill* is sent to the Desert Island and in Port Talbot (which will probably become Burtonville in time for the centenary)

there is a Burton cycle path. His great friend Robert Hardy suggests that there is a fair chance that Burton will haunt the new theatre at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff that bears his name. All we want now are rumours of miraculous healings by people who have taken the Afon waters and the Burton legend will be secure.

Of course, in Wales we like to look after our own and the legendary mode is a favoured option. 'Milk it for all its worth' is an established Welsh commandment. But as it happens we do not have to face any charge of parochialism as far as Burton is concerned, for the fascination with the legend seems to be a global phenomenon every bit as much as a Welsh one. The Burton-Taylor affair, veritably a modern playing out of the ancient Marc Antony and Cleopatra story was used in the 1960s by the gossip columnists and the paparazzi to launch a new celebrity culture.

Although every year brings new stars and scandals, the international media have retained their affection for their founding couple. Their great drama involving arguments, fights, marriages, betrayals, divorces, family conventions, diamonds, tragedies, clinics, private jets, presidents, royalty and endless parties still provides excellent posthumous copy. There always seem to be new letters, diaries, albums, recollections and, indeed, photographs - all confirming that there was inherently more drama, much of it almost Shakespearean, and vitality in their private and public lives than in anything they were actually paid to do on stage or screen.

Every week the international press brings news that there are more Burton/Taylor books and revelations on the way. For those of us who, almost in spite of ourselves, are interested in the Burton phenomenon, our only response is to wonder yet again whether the new material will merely be an embellishment of what is undoubtedly a good story. Or will there be some attempt to explain

what all that glitter, jetting to-and-fro and champagne actually meant.

This is precisely the question that Tom Rubythron's latest mammoth biography of Burton raises. The book comes to us with the publishers, the Myrtle Press, firing on all cylinders. Forget for the moment Edith and Dick Jenkins of Pontrhydyfen, for the title directly declares *And God Created Burton*. Staring out at us is a swarthy, slightly unrealistically blue-eyed face that belongs either to a criminal on death row or a saint exhausted by forty days and nights of communicating with his maker in the wilderness. But then comes the dust-jacket blurb that henceforth should be a compulsory extract for analysis in every examination set by the Media and Cultural Studies departments in Welsh Universities. Comment on the following, time allowed: three hours.

A sweeping saga spanning 1898 to 1984, stretching from the mining fields of South Wales to the film sets of Hollywood, and from the playhouses of Cardiff to the grand theatres of Broadway - this new and far reaching biography rakes over the coals of the life of Britain's greatest ever actor, Richard Burton. *And God Created Burton* is the first complete biography of the greatest Welshman who ever lived.

These are enormous claims and, of course, they are not true. Scattered throughout his 61 chapters Rubythron has quotations aplenty from both critics and biographers that illustrate that there were always reservations about nearly all of Burton's stage and screen performances. Burton himself was well aware that he was an untrained stage actor with a limited range who relied on his voice and animal magnetism to carry him through. He was also aware that his formality and stiffness was unsuited to film. The Hollywood moguls hired him for his name and paid him millions, but those who understood

the movies knew he was not a natural. Burton's contempt for the movies has never been forgiven by those who treasure the greatness of Hollywood.

The excessive claims made in that cover blurb need to be analysed in a cultural context. Remarkably, given the initial rhetoric, this is something Rubythron never attempts. He is happy to leave that task to the other biographers; we are listed and thanked. His aim is to tell the story of Burton and to tell it in great detail. Almost inevitably much of the detail pertains to sex. Readers will be exhausted both by the effort of holding this 800 page blockbuster and by the sheer contemplation of our hero's athleticism: his true greatness could only have been recognised in some Sexual Olympics. In a chapter entitled *Blazing Magnetism* we read

"Of all the men that have ever walked the planet, it is probably true to say that Richard Burton, between the years of 1948 and 1962, was the most attractive. Burton's success rate with women in his younger years was around 95 per cent. In his heyday, between 1947 and 1975, on average he slept with at least one new woman every other day. It's hard to estimate the number of women he slept with, but the best guess is 2,500."

Research like this puts Welsh universities to shame. One hopes that the *New Welsh Encyclopaedia* is at this very moment being amended. Rubythron could well argue that, with a story like this to tell, cultural considerations could best be left to others. And he does have a point for once again we are reminded of how just enthralling the Burton saga was. Rubythron has read all the books and diaries, spoken to some surviving friends and received particular help from Burton's niece Rhianon Trowell. He then sets out to tell the story year by year. He settles a score by criticising Swansea University, both for refusing access to a document and for their general handling of their Burton material. He puts his best interpretation on events

knowing full-well that individual family members will not always agree or accept his version. Inevitably, in time there will be refutations and even some corrections. But meanwhile it must be confessed that many of these chapters make for compelling reading.

If nothing else one should read the first and last chapters that deal with Burton's death and funeral at Celigny. This is family drama of Ibsenesque proportions, crying out for a movie directed by Robert Altman. Go on then to read of how Richard Jenkins became Richard Burton. Did his father ask for and receive £50? I would not be surprised: that kind of deal was not unusual in the Depression when Welsh working-class families often improvised arrangements for dealing with large families at a time of hardship. Read about Burton and Baker, two Welsh lads on the loose in the big city, of Susan Strasberg coming to Stratford to see her lover Richard at a time when he was already sleeping with three other women. Crisis follows crisis, and in all honesty



Burton and Taylor – "a global phenomenon".

it is difficult to put down this weighty tome as marriages fall apart and above all as brother Ivor is injured and dies. Undeniably this is a life lived as no other Welsh life has ever been lived.

But does it all matter? The man went off into a stratosphere well beyond our ken

and then eventually became a sad figure. Clare Bloom, one of his great loves, sharply commented on how in his booze he had become both a rogue and a bore. And yet in Wales we are reluctant to give up on him. With a passion for theatre and film I once set out to discover whether Burton had taken something of Wales into his professional work. I was disappointed in that respect and yet I continued to cherish both the voice and the degree to which he had transported a Welsh confidence and style into a wider cosmopolitan world. In recent months I have listened to Chris Williams of Swansea University, who is editing the Burton Diaries, admiring the way in which he is ignoring the hullabaloo and just concentrating on what is best in Burton's reflections on the cultures in which he operated.

Williams has focussed on a wartime diary in which Burton recorded his everyday life in Port Talbot, a routine of work, cafes, chapel, Hollywood movies, rugby and friends. It evokes a culture that was familiar to all of us who grew up in Welsh towns and villages in the 1950s, before the coming of television and suburbia. Perhaps it was the last time that Wales felt really comfortable with itself. There was no pathetic identity crisis as experienced by a subsequent Port Talbot product, and there were schools, chapels and youth clubs specifically groomed to allow talented individuals to fulfil themselves. This was the world of Dylan Thomas, Bleddyn Williams, Cliff Morgan, Aneurin Bevan and Gwyn Thomas. We cherish the memory of Burton primarily because his every world takes us straight back to that world with all its possibilities.

Of course, Burton walked away from it, just as he was to walk away from Oxford University, Stratford and the Old Vic, Broadway and Hollywood. He walked away in the sense of never fully accepting their cultural obligations and disciplines. He always worked (for huge amounts of money) but invariably regularly retreated into his own world. The anecdotes were better than the texts, the friends gathered around at lunch or late at night were better company than the paying

audiences, and everything was better after a few drinks. He could always slip into a Hamlet or Dylan recital or talk about playing for Wales. In the company of the Kennedys or Tito he could reflect on how he should perhaps have progressed from playing Prince Hal to being President, or rather Generalissimo, of Wales. He was a Prince of a Kingdom from which he had moved away and which was in the process of moving away from itself.

Burton's charisma was real enough as thousands of women and men could testify. But our Welsh fascination with him and use of him as a cultural reference point are rooted in what has become a fantasy. In exile he talked himself out and we will talk ourselves out if we think of him as a great figure in the history of the theatre, the movies or of Wales itself. He was both fascinating and unfulfilled. Therefore we must now look elsewhere for heroes if we want to create a culture that will allow fulfilment for a new and very different generation.

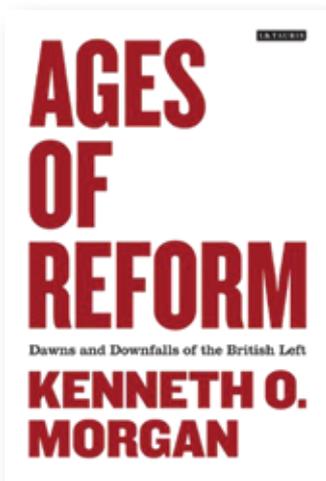
Let's leave our Rich in Sardinia where he was filming *Boom*, a version of a Tennessee Williams play that inevitably the critics hated but which I rather enjoy. This was the time of the Red Brigade scares and Rubython conjures up an image which will always stay with me, not least because of its strange familiarity:

"One night Burton disappeared and the worst was feared. The police were called in and an island-wide search was mounted. At 10 o'clock, he was found with Bob Wilson, his valet, outside a bar, standing on a table reciting Shakespeare. He was apparently holding a competition for an audience of bemused Italians, with the prize of a drink to the person who could tell him which of Shakespeare's plays his recitals came from."

Peter Stead is the author of *Richard Burton: So Much, So Little* (1991) and *Acting Wales* (2002)

An intertwining of Welsh and British politics

J. Graham Jones



Ages of Reform: Dawns and Downfalls of the British Left

Kenneth O. Morgan

I.B. Tauris, £27.50

Kenneth O. Morgan is one of our most distinguished and prolific modern political historians, the author of some thirty scholarly monographs and an array of contributions to various academic journals and edited collections. His publishing career began with the groundbreaking, pioneering work *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922* (Cardiff, 1963), now in its fourth edition, and extends to the well received biography *Michael Foot: a Life* (London, 2007).

The present volume is Morgan's third collection of historical essays, following on from his *Labour People* (London, 1987) and *Modern Wales: Politics, Places and People* (Cardiff, 1995), which he published on his retirement as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. The present volume comprises 19 essays, 15 of them previously published in various volumes and journals. Some have been revised by their author somewhat prior to their re-publication within this volume.

A quick glance at the references reveals at once the rich array of sources employed by the author. The book is divided into

two distinct sections: eight contributions on the Whigs or the Liberals, followed by eleven on Socialism and the Labour Party, Morgan's forté in more recent years. Although discrete and disparate, the pieces hang together quite well within a single volume with a long time-span. It is unfortunate, however, that whereas most contributions have full endnote references, a few have none at all.

The contents ranges from an analysis of the importance of the Great Reform Act of 1832 to a consideration of Tony Blair and the Iraq War. In a compelling discussion of the 1832 act (which really represents pre-history in the Morgan chronology), the author rightly points up its severe limitations and its importance mainly as a prequel to the further, much more far-reaching enactments of 1867 and 1884 which brought about a much more extensive increase in the British male electorate (women, of course, remained excluded until 1918 and 1928).

The volume then jumps to Gladstone and Keir Hardie on both of whom Morgan is an acknowledged authority. Predictably, there is much to savour here on Lloyd George. Especially stimulating is the compelling analysis of LG's developing attitudes towards Germany, including during the First World War and some consideration of the famous (or infamous) visits to take tea with Hitler at his mountain retreat at Berchtesgaden in the Bavarian Alps in September 1936. Here the former prime minister was accompanied by "a highly selective and national grouping" which included his son Gwilym and his daughter Megan, the latter apparently most reluctant to meet the Fuehrer.

Equally compelling is the study of the complex relationship between Lloyd George and his near contemporary French leader Georges Clemenceau. Although their lengthy inter-relationship was generally one of mutual antagonism, the two leaders apparently respected and admired one another's qualities and virtues as well. It is unfortunate that this essay has no footnote references to guide the interested reader to further related material.

As for the essays on Socialism and the

Labour Party, especially thought-provoking is one on the attitudes of the Labour Party, and its successive leaders, towards republicanism and the monarchy, a piece which includes some interesting reflections on the role of the monarchy more generally. Other essays underline Kenneth Morgan's intimate knowledge of the minutiae of the political careers of Aneurin Bevan, Hugh Gaitskell and Michael Foot. The case for a new revisionist biography of Bevan comes through strongly here, while the article on Foot was written very shortly after his death, at the age of 96 years, in March 2010. Curiously, the introduction to the book is dated several months earlier in October 2009.

Kenneth Morgan really has it in for Tony Blair for the end of whose premiership he yearned with increasing desperation in 2006-07.

There is a strong personal dimension to many of the more recent articles. We are told of the author's only meeting with the present Queen in 1981 when both were apparently stunned into near-silence by Morgan's confession that he had toured the country to deliver a series of lectures on 'Socialism'. The Queen nobly observed that Britain's early Socialist fathers "must have been highly motivated", a curious remark to which Morgan responded by underlining "the strong Christian beliefs of the founding fathers".

Kenneth Morgan really has it in for Tony Blair for the end of whose premiership he yearned with increasing desperation in 2006-07. The invasion of Iraq in 2003 was "undertaken amazingly by a Labour government", he remarks. Indeed, it was clear as early as 1994 that Blair was "manifestly non-Socialist", the first such Labour leader. Morgan admits to finding Blair "harder to assess, so

pragmatic a politician was he". On the final page of the book the author observes, "It grieves me to see the haemorrhaging of good members from our party" at the beginning of the 21st Century.

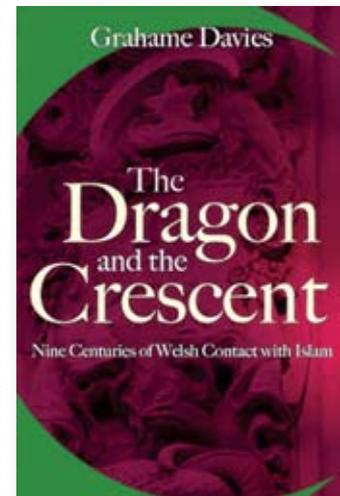
The author's personal hobby-horses are much apparent. Witness the bold assertion that David Lloyd George was "almost single-handedly responsible for the progressive social thrust of the New Liberalism". Provision for the introduction of old age pensions, for example, had been devised by Asquith before LG took over as Chancellor of the Exchequer in April 1908. Is there any firm evidence, rather than hearsay, for the assertion that "Elizabeth II had by far her worst relationship with a Conservative Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher"? Morgan further speculates that the Queen's relationship with Thatcher's notorious *bête noir* Edward Heath "cannot have been the greatest of fun".

Not everyone would agree that the contentious decision to hold the Investiture ceremony of Charles, Prince of Wales at Caernarfon castle in July 1969 "had the effect of helping to stifle the growing nationalist movement in Wales" in the late 1960s, or that the Queen made "a bland response" to the fire at Windsor Castle in 1992 and reacted initially "coldly" to the death of Princess Diana five years later. Was the Labour Party really considered 'unelectable' from 1951 right through to the 1990s when the impact of 'New Labour', we are informed, apparently reversed the trend for good. After all, between October 1964 and October 1974 the party won no fewer than four out of five general elections!

But these are minor, carping criticisms. Overall the volume is a stimulating, absorbing read, certain to add to its author's very well-deserved reputation as one of the most respected authors on the left-wing tradition in British and Welsh political life.

Dr J. Graham Jones is Senior Archivist and Head of the Welsh Political Archive at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Nine Centuries of Welsh Contact with Islam Harri Pritchard Jones



The Dragon and the Crescent
Grahame Davies
Seren, £12.99

Grahame Davies has already written a ground-breaking study of Welsh contact with Judaism. Now he turns to our relationship with Islam for over nearly a millennium. As the author says, "To involve oneself with the study of Islam and Western society in the early 21st Century is to enter a field charged with tension, preconception and unease."

There is nothing in this erudite volume which can offend any disciple of Islam, any Western religion or philosophy or, indeed, any ism. It is an excellently researched, academic and objective contribution to the history of Wales, and raises parallels for the Islamic reader with other situations he can identify with. In Davies's words:

"It seeks to inform the wider contemporary debate about Islam and the West by taking as its field the literature of one small European nation, one whose own relationship with the dominant culture and language of the West has itself been complex and ambivalent."

Grahame Davies asserts that the Welsh were generally in favour of the missions but more specifically used them to further Welsh national aspirations whilst the enemy, the English Crown forces were otherwise engaged. The golden age of Welsh independence ended with the closure of the Crusades.

The first chapter deals with the notorious crusades, though there are references to Islam in Welsh sources before that period. One of the finest resources for historians of that period in Welsh and European history is Geraldus Cambrensis' *Journey through Wales* in 1191. He was accompanying Archbishop Baldwin recruiting for the Third Crusade. Grahame Davies asserts that the Welsh were generally in favour of the missions but more specifically used them to further Welsh national aspirations whilst the enemy, the English Crown forces were otherwise engaged. The golden age of Welsh independence ended with the closure of the Crusades.

In the following chapter we have a review of the often fascinating beliefs and attitudes of the Welsh towards Islam. The consensus among medieval Christendom which inspired the Crusades is shattered by the Protestant Reformation. Welsh Protestants were somewhat favourable to Judaism. The return of the Jews to Palestine was seen as a requirement for the salvation of the world, but Islam and Roman Catholicism were henceforward the anti-Christ forces in the world.

Charles Edwards (c.1628-91), the Puritan Denbighshire author, who had studied at Oxford, wrote a history of the Christian faith, *Y Ffydd-Ddi-Ffuant*, in which he also commented on the Islamic faith. He had studied the Qur'an and summarises it in his book. He notes some good features about it, but is fairly dismissive of it in general. He concludes:

“And now, reader, you can see that the true religion was among men long before this bungler stitched together his patchwork of deception and led himself astray in many of his principles.”

The common name for Islamists in this period was ‘Turks’. Edwards’ remarks about them explain the erroneous assumptions which were the motivation for the previous crusades:

“God allowed them [the ‘Turks’] to be a constant scourge to his disobedient people. Scarcely is there a city or town in Asia, Africa and a large part of Europe that these rough infidels have not made flow with the blood of Christians. And those who are spared the sword are sold like animals from market to market, to pull in place of oxen, or to carry out some other hardships.”

Famous authors such as Ellis Wynne (1671-1734) and William Williams, Pantycelyn (1717-91), the hymn-writer and commentator on religious themes, have a deal to say about Islam, again noting some favourable features, but generally being condemnatory. And, as usual, the negativity is largely based on ignorance.

One turns with relief to the work of Sir William Jones (1746-94), a renowned mathematician and orientalist from Anglesey. A gifted polyglot and translator, widely-travelled in Asia, and who spoke Arabic, he introduced the English-speaking world to Indian literature, was dedicated to comparative religious studies and founded the Asiatic Society. He was known as Persian Jones and as ‘the greatest oriental scholar in Europe’. He asserted that if the doctrines of different faiths could be represented objectively, then it would be possible to achieve widespread agreement as to their essentials.

Alas, the old prejudices came back to the fore in the work of 18th Century Calvinistic Methodists such as Thomas

Charles and his friend Simon Lloyd.

It must be also said that amongst the educated Nonconformist ministers, sheer ignorance of Islam was quite rare, though aversion to it was very common. An exemption was Samuel Evans (1859-1935), who lived in Alexandria. He wrote a long article *Y Gwr o Fecca a'i Grefydd* in which he attempted to refute the prejudices of his fellow Christians towards Islam:

‘Virtually everything vile and unpleasant that Christian writers could devise has been said about him [Muhammad]’.

Davies adds that Evans, “goes on to list the libels of Muhammad from writers as diverse as Martin Luther (who called Muhammad “first-born of Satan”) ... and Charles Wesley (who called him “that Arab thief”).” Indeed, Evans asserts that

“... since the day of Jesus of Nazareth no-one greater has arisen among the children of men than Mahommed the founder of Islam... The Moslems beat the whole world in this [alms-giving] without exception.

Two important figures in the last half of the 19th Century and the first half of the 20th Century were Sir John Morris-Jones, poet and professor of Welsh in the university in Bangor and Owen Morgan Edwards, academic, educator and first Chief Inspector of Schools in Wales.

Morris-Jones translated the famous Persian poem by Omar Khayyám *The Rubáiyát*, seemingly using it to counterpoint the sensuous world of the poem with the philistine sanctimony of Welsh language literature of the period. The poem reveals a Khayyám who is a rebel against the stricter versions of Islam which were prevalent, and was trustful of God’s ultimate mercy to all creatures. Edwards, on the other hand wrote warmly about Islam:

“To these Arabs belonged a love of learning and invention. From them came governors like Harun al Rasschid, the patron of science,

and the learned Al Mamun. It was they who preserved the learning of Ancient Greece for the new world; it was they who were the teachers of the new dawn of science, mathematics and geometry.”

The chapter on Welsh seafarers in their encounters with Islam is more anecdotal, spanning the centuries after the crusades, through piracy and the slave trade, to shared experiences of being part of crews who were of different faiths on the same side in times of war. Though there were exceptions, the general picture is akin to that of British-Islamist contacts.

Another group of Welsh men and women who encountered Islam were the Christian missionaries. They were more learned and attuned to theological arguments. We are given an amazing amount of material which includes insights and blind spots as to the nature of Islam.

Modern authors such as the poet Gwenallt and Wiliam Owen Roberts

feature Islam in their work. Gwenallt tends to see the Muhammadans with Western eyes, as to their “utility to the project of European enlightenment”. Roberts, a Marxist, set his remarkable novel *Y Pla* (translated as *The Pestilence*) during the Black Death, in the aftermath of the Crusades. A Muslim assassin is sent from Cairo to kill the King of France in revenge. The novel challenges European preconceptions, depicting Christian conventions as hollow and corrupt, whilst the assassin is representative of a humane, learned, inquisitive society. The assiduous courses of study and preparation in Cairo, a centre of Islamic learning, is described in detail and extolled. This was a society which had a duty to send missionaries to the semi-heathen Europeans.

Lloyd George was a key figure in the relationship of Wales and Islam, as he favoured the Jews and a Jewish homeland in the Balfour Declaration, which discriminated against the mainly Muslim Palestinians. And there have been

frequent encounters during the wars, and in Cardiff’s Tiger Bay.

Grahame Davies’ book is a treasury of knowledge about its subject. The final chapter has a fascinating listing of Dragon-Crescent encounters within Wales, with mixed consequences. One omission, I feel, is the contribution of the late Archbishop David Mathews, who was from an old Radyr family but had served as a missionary in Ethiopia, Mombasa, Sudan and Somalia, and had spent a deal of time in Africa. His novel *The Prince of Wales’s Feathers* (1953) contains an anatomy of the old Tiger Bay, and has detailed descriptions of Moslem practice in prayer and the keeping of Ramadan. It should be reprinted in the Library of Wales series.

But Grahame Davies has certainly given us a priceless tome.

.....
Harri Pritchard Jones is co-Chair of Literature Wales.



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Our history should catch up with the present

Peter Stead

The spring and early summer of 2011 saw a curious lull in the public life of Wales. We had our new powers, Labour was in sole control but not rushing into any barnstorming reforms, Plaid were clearly in need of a sabbatical, and the general air was one of waiting apprehensively to see whether a real winter of discontent lay ahead. It was in this context that BBC Wales announced the details of their new six-part History of Wales to be made in conjunction with Green Bay.

Ever since the BBC had indicated that they were commissioning such a series there had been a buzz of excitement in media and academic circles in expectation that our age, in which the economy flags, education struggles to escape mediocrity and political ideologies gather dust, was about to be given some guidance. In favoured watering holes there was perceptible nostalgia for the days of Wynford Vaughan Thomas, Gwyn Alf Williams and Dai Smith. Could history once again provide inspiration?

This time of waiting for Huw Edwards (yes, you guessed correctly) to appear, launching us into six hours of bold claims, helicopter shots, stunning landscapes, talking heads and of men and women being plucked out of anonymity, is a good time to take stock of what history and historians have done for us in recent decades. There is a case for arguing that, as with literature, film and possibly even television itself, the hype has far exceeded the level of achievement. We have had a generation of excellent history teachers and of hard-working varsity scholars but, stifled by political correctness and academic bureaucracy, I'm not sure whether they

have claimed that central place in the culture that beckoned. They have opted to fight easily won skirmishes rather than going for the great battle.

It seems to me that the basic elements of Welsh history are very simple. We are the people of the Western hills. It is our singular and stunning landscape that dictated so much of our history, including our age-old poverty compared with the affluence of southern England. People fought for control of these hills and that makes for a grand story. The wonderful narrative of those early centuries should be told in broad strokes and then, of course, put into the movies.

The Welsh language is a great gift and its miraculous survival owes much to the hills and to the Bible-based faith which prospered and lingered in the Valleys. Then, of course, it was saved by the coming of industry. Industry was the making of modern Wales but I'm afraid that our historians have not begun to explain its importance. All too often the Welsh have been encouraged to see themselves as victims of industry whereas it was the best thing that ever happened to us.

Where are the books that will explain to today's readers why Merthyr, Swansea and Cardiff were once amongst the most important places in the world? Can we explain to the Valleys that they were once as vibrant and modern as anywhere in Europe and the USA? Are there handy books that will explain to the young and visitors why there are statues of Lloyd George, Nye Bevan and Dylan Thomas in our cities? And why, of course did our industries disappear? All too often historians write inside mythologies and for themselves. However, their first

obligation has to be to us.

In recent years there have been some noteworthy developments in terms of public history as academics have worked with museums, digital experts and local authorities to make the past more vivid. But the Americans are streets ahead in terms of signposting and presenting the past. Visitors to Merthyr, Swansea and the Rhondda need to be swept off their feet, or at least told where to walk.

In his novel *Ilustrado* the Filipino writer Miguel Syjuco contemplates his own culture and reflects that,

“... as a nation we're overly concerned with the past. Even engaged in the present we lean slightly backward as time forces us forward. Before saying anything, we form in our heads the things we're sure we've learned in class. We've written one book, and it's been rebound again and again. Perhaps we have stopped ourselves from being invented, from self-realisation, by blaming others for our wordlessness.”

Syjuco would fully appreciate the extent to which Welsh historians have been cramped by academic and cultural conventions and actually held back the progress of Welsh people towards political adulthood. As I'm sure the talent at the BBC and Green Bay appreciate, there is more to the telling of history than taking out old family snaps, even if you've found a few new ones of some aunts in a back draw. All history is really about the present. So why take five programmes to get there? True surprises come from within: not from the past.

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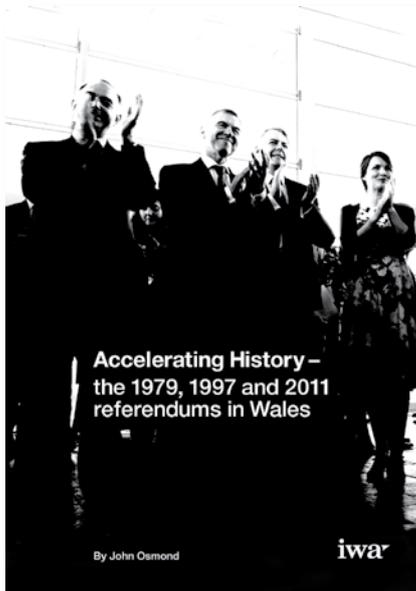


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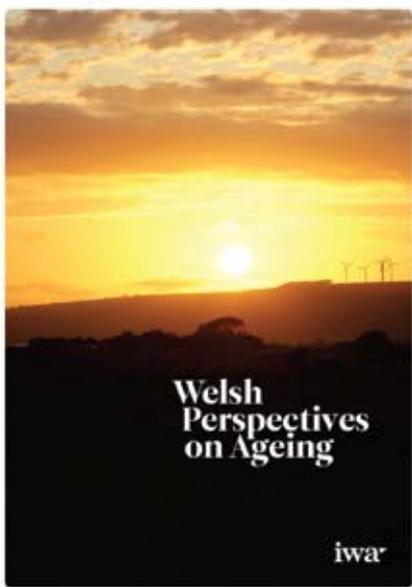
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By John Osmond

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Referendums are often regarded as conservative devices designed to frustrate progressive initiatives, especially where constitutional change is concerned. In the case of Wales, however, this essay argues that the three referendums of 1979, 1997 and 2011 had the opposite effect. The experience of living through them had a galvanising impact on the Welsh people. It changed their view of themselves and their country. It made them more Welsh in outlook and identity and more willing to contemplate radical constitutional options. The referendums have accelerated Welsh progress towards autonomy. For example, the tiny 6,721 vote majority in the 1997 referendum had the effect of concentrating the minds of the people of Wales. There is no doubt that their attitudes to possible constitutional futures for their country underwent profound changes as a direct result of living through the 1997 referendum.

Less than a decade later the 2006 Wales Act accepted that the National Assembly could become a fully-fledged legislature, but only following a referendum. Further, the referendum could only be put into effect following a two-thirds majority vote by Assembly Members and subsequent approval by the Westminster Parliament. These hurdles were obstacles placed in the path of the Assembly's development to mollify Welsh MPs hostile to the devolution process. In the event they had the opposite effect. The holding of the referendum, and the experience of the campaign in the early months of 2011, only served to whet the electorate's appetite for even more powers. Once again, the experience of a constitutional referendum proved an accelerator in Welsh political history



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