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# BWLETIN POLISI CYTÛN

## CYTÛN POLICY BULLETIN



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### LATEST NEWS ON INTERNET DOMAIN NAMES FOR WALES WELCOMED

Welsh First Minister Carwyn Jones and Business Minister Edwina Hart have welcomed the news that top level internet domain names for Wales -.wales and .cymru – are now on the internet authority's official list for consideration.

If successful it will place Wales firmly on the internet map and .wales and .cymru will join other internationally recognised domain names like .co.uk and .com.

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) revealed today which companies, organizations, start-ups, geographical regions and others have applied for generic top level domains and which domain names they are seeking. They received more than 1900 applications and Wales is one of 67 designated geographical names applied for.

### “SHOULD WALES BE A SEPARATE LEGAL JURISDICTION?” – HAVE YOUR SAY

The Welsh Government's Counsel General is urging people to have their say about whether or not Wales should also be a separate legal jurisdiction.

Laws made in Wales, for Wales, still form part of the law of England and Wales. This is not the case in Scotland and Northern Ireland who have separate legal jurisdictions. In March, the Welsh Government launched a public debate on whether Wales should be a separate legal jurisdiction.

The purpose of the consultation is to seek views on the specific aspects of a potential Welsh jurisdiction and the underlying issues beneath the broader questions of:

- What is meant by the term “separate legal jurisdiction”.
- Whether there are any essential features for the existence of a separate legal jurisdiction and, if so, what they might be.
- What the consequences of having a separate Welsh legal jurisdiction might be.
- What the potential advantages and disadvantages of a separate Welsh legal jurisdiction would be.

The Consultation can be found [here](#).

### CONSULTATION BEGINS ON ACTIONS TO DRIVE UP LITERACY AND NUMERACY STANDARDS

**A consultation on new Welsh Government measures to improve literacy and numeracy standards in our schools has begun.**

The consultation, which will run between 11<sup>th</sup> June and 12<sup>th</sup> October, is seeking views on the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) and National Reading and Numeracy tests, both key elements of Wales' National Literacy Programme. The LNF, which will become a statutory curriculum requirement in September 2013, will support curriculum planning and also help teachers to monitor pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy against clear annual expectations for all learners aged 5 to 14.

The Framework is intended to help schools identify how best to challenge and support all of their learners, while giving teachers, parents and carers a clearer and more consistent picture of a pupil's progress and ability. Primary and secondary schools will use the Framework as a curriculum planning tool, embedding the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills into all subjects rather than English, Welsh and Maths lessons alone.

Alongside the LNF reading and numeracy tests are being introduced. All learners in Years 2 to 9, or aged 7 to 14, in maintained schools in Wales will be required to take both tests which will be available in both EngFollowing consultation, the Literacy and Numeracy Framework will be launched in January 2013 and will become a statutory curriculum requirement from September 2013. Reading and numeracy tests will be introduced on a statutory basis in May 2013.

*The consultation can be found [here](#).*

## **VIEWS SOUGHT ON FUTURE OF QUALIFICATIONS IN WALES**

**The Welsh Government is seeking views on the future of qualifications in Wales following the publication of the initial findings of the Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds, which has been launched for consultation.**

Subjects covered and questions raised in the paper include:

- How far should qualifications in Wales diverge from those in England to meet our own needs? And how do we make sure they are rigorous and internationally respected?
- New literacy and numeracy qualifications Do we need new more stretching qualifications which better reflect pupils' literacy and numeracy abilities, especially for potential employers?
- The Welsh Baccalaureate Should this become a general qualification across Wales and if so what changes are needed? Ministers have agreed with the Board's view that it should be graded at Advanced Level to help with higher education admissions - but should it be graded at other levels?
- Despite some recent negative comments in the media the Board found that GCSEs are well understood and valued in Wales. But how can GCSEs be improved to maintain their value? Should we adopt changes as they emerge from England or develop Wales-only, high quality and rigorous GCSEs to reflect the curriculum in Wales?
- The Board thinks the vocational qualification system needs to be simplified. But what should be the criteria for approving vocational qualifications, and how can we make sure that they are rigorous and relevant?

*Following this consultation and further evidence gathering, the Board will submit its final report and recommendations to the Deputy Minister by the end of the year. The consultation paper and further details can be found [here](#). The closing date for responses is 1 September 2012.*

## **LEGISLATION TO MAKE COSMETIC PIERCING SAFER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

**Under-16s in Wales will not be allowed to receive a cosmetic piercing without their parent or guardian's consent, if proposed Welsh Government legislation goes ahead.**

Welsh Health Minister Lesley Griffiths said that the legislation would also include an outright ban on intimate cosmetic piercings for under-18s. A recent public consultation asking for views on how to make cosmetic piercing safer for young people in Wales showed strong support for legislation.

Currently, there is no age restriction for cosmetic piercing. As long as a young person can demonstrate they understand what they are having done, and the risks involved, they do not need their parent or guardian's permission. Although a cosmetic piercing can generally be easily reversed, problems such as swelling, infection, bleeding, allergies, tearing or injury are common. Sometimes having a cosmetic piercing can also cause nerve damage and scarring and there is a very small risk of blood viruses such as hepatitis.

Of the 228 respondents to the Welsh Government consultation, 89% agreed a young person should need a parent or guardian's permission to have a cosmetic piercing and 65% were of the opinion that a young person should be 16 years old before they are able to make this decision on their own. 77% of respondents felt that a young person should not be allowed an intimate cosmetic piercing.

*Further details of the proposals can be found [here](#).*

## **WELSH RECIPIENTS OF QUEEN'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE CONGRATULATED**

**Welsh Local Government and Communities Minister Carl Sargeant has congratulated the four Welsh organisations that have been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service for 2012.**

The award was created by HM Queen Elizabeth II during her Golden Jubilee Celebrations in 2002 in recognition of groups and individuals who have demonstrated outstanding commitment and service to their communities. The honour is equivalent to the single MBE honour. The organisations that have been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service for 2012 are:

- Cancer Aid Merthyr Tydfil
- Cruse Bereavement Care Morgannwg
- Rhayader First Responder Scheme
- Student Volunteering Bangor

## **LIFE SAVING SPRINKLERS IN ALL NEW WELSH HOMES FROM 2013**

**Welsh Environment Minister, John Griffiths, has announced plans for all new and converted residential properties in Wales to be fitted with sprinkler systems.**

The Regulations will be introduced in September 2013 and follow the passing of Labour AM Ann Jones' Domestic Fire Safety Measure in the last Assembly. This action will save a predicted 36 lives and prevent an estimated 800 injuries between 2013 and 2022.

The Welsh Government also announced publication of the results of a cost benefit analysis by BRE Global into the proposal. The report has been published on the Welsh Government website [here](#). It concludes that the introduction of sprinklers will reduce the risk of death and injuries and damage to property.

Work is due to begin on the development of regulations and the technical requirements necessary to introduce the Measure which will be subject to public consultation.

According to UK fire statistics (2001 to 2010) there are an average of 2,168 fires, 17 deaths and 503 injuries in fires in residential premises in Wales every year.

## **POLICY GROUP TO EXPLORE LIVING WAGE FOR WALES**

**Welsh Minister for Local Government and Communities, Carl Sargeant has announced he is setting up a Policy Group to explore a living wage for Wales.**

The living wage is calculated by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at £7.20 per hour for the UK outside London, as a minimum level of pay to ensure an acceptable standard of living. The Minister will invite stakeholders with an interest in the living wage, including the CBI, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Wales TUC and Save the Children to consider this issue.

The Welsh Government civil service and those who work for the NHS in Wales are some of the public service employees in Wales already being paid the £7.20 rate or above.

The Policy Group will explore this issue in further detail and look at the benefits of a living wage for Wales.

## **WELSH GOVERNMENT PUBLISHES INAUGURAL PROGRESS REPORT**

**Investment in growth, quicker access to NHS services, success rates of apprentices and greater support for small businesses are among the progress outlined in the Welsh Government's first comprehensive annual report released today.**

The *Programme for Government* annual report - the most comprehensive record of Welsh Government progress ever produced - tracks progress on over 300 indicators of government work. It delivers on a pledge made by the First Minister in September 2011 to be transparent and give access to statistics and analysis on the progress Wales is making as a country.

Actions taken by the Welsh Government since September to deliver on the *Programme for Government* include:

- A £40 million Wales SME Investment Fund to provide loans for small businesses to help them expand.
- A successful pilot of a £75 million Jobs Growth Wales pilot which will now roll out to create 4000 opportunities annually for 16 – 24 year olds.
- A Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan outlining how more than £3.5 billion will be spent on capital projects ranging from hospitals to schools to roads.

- Support to 4,000 individuals between April 2011 and March 2012 through our Business Start Up Service resulting in the creation of 660 enterprises and 1,752 jobs.
- Five Enterprise Zones operational across Wales and a further two announced.
- An 80% success rate in the number of apprentices who complete each step of their training with companies compared to 54% five years ago.
- Improving waiting times for patients by over 68% since March 2011 for those waiting over 36 weeks. 94% of patients are now waiting fewer than 26 weeks for treatment.
- Circulatory disease in under-75s continuing to fall.
- Municipal waste recycling is up and the highest in the UK.
- Realising its ambition of creating an 870-mile path that runs right around the coast line of Wales that's expected to attract an extra 100,000 visitors a year.
- Deploying or training 165 extra police community support officers with the target of all 500 being recruited, trained and deployed by September 2013.
- Awarding £100 million to a Welsh Life Science Fund and £50 million star scientists programme – a dedicated equity fund and high level recruitment programme investing into sciences businesses located in Wales.
- Progress in implementing a comprehensive 20-point School Improvement Action Plan to deliver the necessary rise in attainment in our education system.
- Turning many of the 22,000 empty private sector properties in Wales into homes through the £10 million Houses to Homes' Recyclable Loans Fund.
- Being the first in Britain to bring in specific equality duties to help public authorities eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

The Welsh Government is also currently providing more than 650,000 over 60s and those with disabilities and their carers with concessionary bus passes. More than 1,000 schools receive free breakfasts for their school children and children had 460,000 free swimming sessions in 2011.

Wales is also the first UK country to introduce a charge for single use carrier bags. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Welsh consumers are already using dramatically less bags and that some retailers have seen a reduction in bag use of up to 90%.

*The Programme for Government annual report can be found [here](#).*

## **NEW FUNDING TO WARM HOMES AND BOOST BUSINESS**

**Welsh Environment Minister, John Griffiths has launched the second phase of the Welsh Government's energy investment scheme "arbed."**

This second phase of arbed, which is part funded through the European Regional Development fund, will see £45m being invested to improve the energy efficiency of around 4,800 homes in some of Wales' most deprived areas. It follows the success of arbed phase one which saw more than £66 million being spent on measures to improve the energy efficiency of around 7500 Welsh homes.

Under phase one of arbed, 70% of installed products were manufactured in Wales and more than 80% of the installers were primarily or solely based in Wales. The second phase of arbed would be delivered by two scheme managers; Melin Homes in the south Wales and Wilmott Dixon in north and mid Wales.

You can find out more about Arbed [here](#).

**GERAINT HOPKINS,**

**SWYDDOG POLISI,**

**CYTŪN – EGLWYSI YNGHYD YNG NGHYMRU**