



**Y Pwyllgor Cynllunio, Trwyddedu Tacsis a  
Hawliau Tramwy / Planning, Taxi Licensing  
& Rights of Way Committee**

County Councillor Karl Lewis, Cadeirydd /  
Chair

Lesley Griffiths MS  
Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales and  
Trefnydd  
Welsh Government  
5th Floor  
Tŷ Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

**Atebwch os gwelwch yn dda /Please reply to:  
Gwasanaethau Democraidd / Democratic  
Services**

**Cyngor Sir Powys/Powys County Council  
Neuadd y Sir/County Hall  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys LD1 5LG**

**Tel / Ffôn:** 01597 826206

**Fax / Ffacs:**

**Mobile / Ffon symudol:**

**Email / Llythyru electronig:** carol.johnson@powys.gov.uk

**Your ref / Eich cyf:**

**Our ref / Ein cyf:** 2023/01 PTLRW

**Date / Dyddiad:** 5 January 2023

Dear Minister,

I am writing on behalf of Powys County Council's Planning, Taxi Licensing and Rights of Way Committee, to highlight our concerns around the funding for countryside access work and particularly, public rights of way and common land legal work.

This Committee has a role in decision making around Definitive Map, common land and village green legal casework. We also receive officer reports around policy matters related to this casework, for example where significant changes to workload prioritisation or charges are being considered.

Over many years, reports to the Committee have highlighted increasing resource challenges in progressing this statutory and non-statutory legal casework. This has resulted in increasing backlogs and frustration for the public. This is despite officers seeking other ways to address demand and ensure that costs are recovered from applicants where appropriate. It is set against a backdrop of increasing need for access to greenspace to walk and cycle, as low cost, low carbon recreation with environmental, social and health benefits.

A report was presented to us for consultation on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022 which starkly highlighted the scale of the challenges. Between 2010 and 2022, the core revenue funding and staff time available for Definitive Map and Commons Registration legal casework has reduced by 60%. This has resulted in a backlog of over 200 public path Order applications and a further 14 pending Definitive Map Modification Order applications.

[www.powys.gov.uk](http://www.powys.gov.uk)

Croeso i chi gysylltu â ni yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ymateb yn Gymraeg, heb oedi.  
You are welcome to contact us in Welsh. We will respond in Welsh, without delay.





The Countryside Access and Recreation team is now being very heavily reliant on grant funding to deliver work on public rights of way. The Welsh Government Access Improvement Grant capital funding that has been made available for access enhancements between 2022 and 2025 is very welcome and key to being able to support our residents in being able to access our rights of way network. However, as you will appreciate, this cannot be used for core statutory day to day work, which is reliant on revenue funds. With the well-publicised pressures on Council budgets, it seems unlikely that the Authority would be able to increase its allocation of funds to this work, in view of the many other services also needing funding.

We are writing to highlight this for your consideration, in view of the Access Reform programme which could, at the very least, reduce some of the process-related burdens on progressing Definitive Map casework. If it were also possible to look at revenue funding for this work with greater flexibility of use, that could allow for the Council to be able to address backlogs of casework in the short term.

Yours sincerely,

Karl Lewis

Councillor Karl Lewis, Cadeirydd / Chair  
Y Pwyllgor Cynllunio, Trwyddedu Tacsis a Hawliau Tramwy  
Planning, Taxi Licensing & Rights of Way Committee

cc

County Councillor Jackie Charlton, Cabinet Member for a Greener Powys  
Sian Barnes, Professional Lead, Countryside Access and Recreation