

ERP Carms 049- [REDACTED] Member of the public

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**ERP Carms 063– Arfon Davies, Llanelli Town Council**

Dear all

Many thanks for your consultation on the above mentioned review of the Electoral Arrangements for Carmarthenshire.

The matter has been considered by the members of the Llanelli Town Council, Planning, Licensing and Consultation Committee at their meeting last evening. It was agreed to note that the Town Council would not support the change proposed to the naming of the Tyisha Ward. It is felt that while the suggestion may be correct in the Welsh Language, that the proposed name would not resonate with residents who know the area as Tyisha.

We would request that the current name be retained.

We hope that you will take this into account as part of your consideration of the matter.

Best wishes

Arfon

Arfon Davies  
Clerc y Dref / Town Clerk  
Cyngor Tref Llanelli Town Council  
The Old Vicarage  
Town Hall Square  
Llanelli  
SA15 3DD

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I am able to answer your message in Welsh or English

**ERP Carms 064– Jon Tregenna, Laugharne Township Community Council**

Dear DBCC,

The Laugharne is called '**Talacharn**' in Welsh, rather than Lacharn.

This is on the the signs coming into town - picture attached.

And these...

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laugharne>

<https://cadw.llyw.cymru/ymweld/lleoedd-i-ymweld/castell-talacharn>

'The existing Electoral ward of Laugharne Township has the existing Welsh Language name of Lacharn, and the existing English Language name of Laugharne Township. The Commission proposes to retain the Welsh Language name of Lacharn, and the English Language name of Laugharne Township for the electoral ward. The Welsh Language Commissioner agrees the proposed names.'

So this is wrong...

Regards,

Jon

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Jon Tregenna - Clerk  
**Laugharne Township Community Council**

Email: [clerk@ltcc.wales](mailto:clerk@ltcc.wales)

Website: [www.laugharne.org](http://www.laugharne.org)

Dear Cher,

The LTCC held the meeting on Tuesday. The councillors said that **Talacharn** was the Welsh name for Laugharne.

I am the Clerk for the LTCC, so I emailed you.

Regards,

Jon

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Jon Tregenna - Clerk  
**Laugharne Township Community Council**

Email: [clerk@ltcc.wales](mailto:clerk@ltcc.wales)

Website: [www.laugharne.org](http://www.laugharne.org)



**ERP Carms 066– Cllr Michael Thomas, Pembrey Ward**

Please see attached letter

16<sup>th</sup> October 2025

The Chief Executive  
Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru  
4th Floor  
Welsh Government Building  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

**Re: Retention of Both the Ward Placenames for “Pembrey” and “Pen-bre”.**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the proposal regarding the naming of Pembrey/Penbre, to strongly urge the Commission to **retain both names** rather than adopting only the Welsh form *Penbre*.

This matter is not simply one of a spelling preference, but also of a deep cultural, historical, and administrative significance. In my role as one of the Pembrey/ *Pen-bre* ward councillors I have been contacted by many residents who have expressed severe concerns and worry in respect of this proposal.

Whilst it would be fair to say many, if not most of the conversations I have had fully support the continued use of both placenames, they have been totally against using just one placename, be that Pembrey or Pen-bre. The consensus is quite clearly in favour of retaining both.

**1. Historical Continuity.**

The English form *Pembrey* is deeply rooted in historical record. It appears in the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of Pope Nicholas IV in 1291 as “Pembrey”<sup>1</sup>, and has been consistently used in parish registers, legal records, and maps ever since.

Earlier still, the Welsh form *Penbre*, meanwhile, is attested in the *Liber Landavensis* (Book of Llandaff) circa 1066, where the form *Inpennbre* is used as well as other subsequent forms such as *Penbrey*, *Penbre*, etc.<sup>2</sup>

Both names therefore carry centuries of legitimacy and demonstrate a long tradition of dual usage.

The Welsh *Penbre*/Pen-bre and the Anglicised *Pembrey* have coexisted for many centuries. Cutting out “Pembrey” would break a continuity going back several hundred years.

I would strongly suggest that to discard either would sever that long established continuity.

## **2. Etymology and Local Identity.**

The Welsh form derives from *Pen* ("head, summit") and *bre* (an old Celtic/Welsh word meaning "ridge, promontory or hill").<sup>3</sup>, describing the village's position at the head of the ridge overlooking Carmarthen Bay. Thus *Penbre* (or *Pen-bre*) literally means "head of the ridge / promontory".

The geographical features reflect this: the village/settlement lies at the foot of a promontory/ridge (Pembrey Mountain / *Mynydd Penbre*), overlooking Carmarthen Bay. The topography is intrinsic to the name, with the ridge or headland being a defining landmark.

The Anglicised form *Pembrey* is a faithful adaptation that has itself acquired historical identity. Together, the names reflect both the geographical features of the area and the layered cultural history of the community.

## **3. Wartime Heritage and National Significance.**

The English name *Pembrey* has specific resonance in Britain's 20th-century history. During the Second World War, *Pembrey Airfield* was a vital RAF station, operational from 1939 and later used for pilot training, air defence, and coastal patrols<sup>4</sup>.

Alongside this, the *Royal Ordnance Factory*, also called the *Pembrey Royal Ordnance Factory* was one of the few major munitions works, producing explosives such as TNT and RDX for the war effort from 1938 until 1965<sup>5</sup>. In every military and government record of the time, the site was referred to as "Pembrey".

During the wartime periods this site also employed thousands of people who would have identified with the *Pembrey* name and not that of *Penbre*. In addition to this, due to the nature of the work that was being carried out at the site and the use of a wide range of chemicals many of the people who worked at this site developed illnesses that led to debilitating illnesses and death.

To erase the English name would therefore risk obscuring this nationally important heritage. War memorials, veterans' recollections, and official archives consistently use *Pembrey*. Retaining the English form alongside *Penbre* preserves these historical links and honours the community's contribution to the nation's defence.

## **4. Tourism and Contemporary Recognition.**

Today, *Pembrey Country Park* is one of Wales's best-known visitor attractions, drawing tourists from across the UK and abroad<sup>6</sup>.

Likewise, *Pembrey Circuit* is a premier motorsport venue, used by British Touring Cars, Formula 3, and major racing events<sup>7</sup>.

Both sites are nationally branded under the English form “Pembrey”, which is widely recognised outside Wales. Visitors unfamiliar with Welsh spelling would be disadvantaged if only *Penbre* were used. Retaining both names ensures clarity, supports the tourism economy, and maintains consistency with existing branding and publicity.

## **5. Legal / administrative and social recognition**

The English form *Pembrey* has been in formal administrative use, in maps, property deeds, legal documents, parish records for many centuries and is firmly embedded in local governance, electoral wards, property deeds, postal services, and legal documents.

The Welsh form *Penbre* is equally important, especially for those who speak Welsh, or who wish to assert their cultural / linguistic heritage. Maintaining both names honours bilingualism and the constitutional / cultural designations that Wales uses (Welsh / English dual names in many cases).

To erase it would introduce uncertainty and possible difficulties in reconciling historical references with present usage. Retaining both names ensures continuity in administration, mapping, and community recognition.

## **6. Cultural identity, inclusion and language rights**

Wales has a proud bilingual heritage, and it is now standard practice to reflect this in place-naming. Using *Pembrey* / *Penbre* side by side accords equal respect to Welsh and English speakers, supports the promotion of the Welsh language, and reflects modern principles of inclusivity without disenfranchising those who know the community by its long-standing English name.

Therefore, using both names simultaneously supports the Welsh language and culture. It gives recognition to the original language of placenames and helps maintain awareness of Welsh heritage.

If only *Penbre* (Welsh) were used, non-Welsh speakers might lose the connection to the historical English references, which could cause confusion, especially for older documents, property titles, maps, museums or heritage references. Conversely, omitting *Penbre* could be seen as erasing or marginalising Welsh identity in the locality.

## **7. Practical Considerations**

Many residents, businesses, and visitors know the village as “Pembrey”. Removing this familiar name risks confusion in signage, postal delivery, navigation, and even emergency services. Maintaining both names avoids disruption and preserves clarity for all stakeholders.

Maps, tourist information, signage, etc., often use both forms (or have historically), meaning shifting to only one would require widespread rework. Keeping both ensures smoother continuity.

## **8. Consistent Approach**

It should also be a matter of consistency.

I note that neighbouring wards have been permitted to retain both their English and Welsh placenames.

For instance, the neighbouring ward of **Kidwelly and St Ishmael** has the existing Welsh Language name of **Cydweli a Llanismel** and the English name of **Kidwelly and St Ishmael**. But both have been maintained.

One of the other neighbouring wards, that of **Burry Port/Porth Twyn** is to maintain both the English version of **Burry Port** and the Welsh version of **Porth Twyn**.

There are many other examples included within the draft document that supports the view that most of the dual named wards are managing to maintain both their English and Welsh version

### **Conclusion.**

The Electoral Commission has an important responsibility to balance cultural, historical, and practical considerations in its decisions. In this case, the evidence strongly favours the retention of both “Pembrey” and “Penbre”.

While simplicity is valuable, it should not come at the cost of historical accuracy or cultural sensitivity. Dual-name usage is common in Wales (and elsewhere) and can be managed with existing signage and documents.

Whilst it could be argued historically that “**Pen-bre**” is the older linguistic form, the name of **Pembrey** is not incorrect, it too is historically valid, as it is clearly in widespread past use, and already entrenched in many legal and administrative records as the official English form.

To drop it entirely would lose valuable historical continuity and could damage legal/heritage links. The dual names have centuries of documented coexistence. The English form Pembrey is not merely a later adaptation; it has its own heritage value.

The Welsh form Pen-bre connects to the original etymology, geography, and linguistic heritage. Using both respects bilingual principles, aids clarity, maintains legal / administrative consistency, and supports local identity.

The Electoral Commission has an important responsibility to balance cultural, historical, and practical considerations in its decisions. In this case, the evidence strongly favours the retention of both “Pembrey” and “Penbre”. Doing so acknowledges the community’s bilingual heritage, honours centuries of historical usage, preserves Britain’s wartime heritage, and safeguards practical clarity for the present and future for residents and visitors alike.

I respectfully urge the Commission to reconsider the proposal and to maintain the bilingual form *Pembrey / Penbre* in all official contexts.

Yours faithfully,  
**Michael Thomas**  
Cllr. Michael Thomas

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## Footnotes

1. *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae Auctoritate P. Nicholai IV*, 1291, where the form “Pembrey” is recorded for the parish. [←](#)
2. *Liber Landavensis* (Book of Llandaff), entry c.1066, referring to the place as *Inpennbre*. [←](#)
3. “Bre” as an element meaning “hill” or “ridge” occurs in multiple Celtic toponyms; see Thomas Morgan, *The Place-Names of Wales* (1887). [←](#)
4. RAF Pembrey opened in 1939 and later became a key training base for Spitfire and Hurricane pilots; see Royal Air Force historical records, The National Archives (AIR 28/662). [←](#)
5. Royal Ordnance Factory Pembrey (1938–1965) produced TNT and RDX during the Second World War and Cold War; see Ministry of Supply reports, The National Archives (SUPP 5 series). [←](#)
6. Pembrey Country Park, Carmarthenshire County Council visitor website (accessed 2025). [←](#)
7. Pembrey Circuit, official website of the British Automobile Racing Club (BARC). [←](#)

**ERP Carms 074– Joy Waters, Dyffryn Cennen Community Council**

Following a meeting of Dyffryn Cennen Community Council, this proposal was discussed and the Council would prefer that the electoral wards remain as they are at the moment. County councillor E. Thomas is responsible for Llandeilo area, he knows the boundaries, his constituents, therefore we dont require any new proposals to the present.

**ERP Carms 078 – Cllr Deryk Cundy & Michelle Donaghue, Pembrey and Bynea Wards**

I have attached the reasons why this proposal misses essential points including high levels of deprivation, over average number of children and an expanding number of houses over both of the wards and a greater than average number of residents in the changed ward that does not allow for the 12 year window

Dear Sir / Madam

We are writing to you with regards to your proposal to merge the two County Council Wards of Bynea and Llwynhendy in that we strongly oppose the proposed merger and the reduction in County Councillors from four to three.

The current system works very well as these two wards are divided on historic village lines and developments and have evolved in different ways with distinct support needs which have to be treated differently.

Yours

Councillor Michelle Donaghue (Bynea Ward)

Councillor Deryk Cundy (Bynea Ward)

### **Executive Summary – Bynea & Llwynhendy Wards Representation**

The recommendation would damage effective and convenient local government, undermine community identity, and remove representation precisely where need, deprivation and growth pressures are highest.

#### **1. Llwynhendy's deep deprivation and health crisis demand full representation**

Llwynhendy contains some of Carmarthenshire's most deprived neighbourhoods, with Llwynhendy 3 ranked among the 10% most deprived in Wales and Llwynhendy 2 in the 20% most deprived.

These communities face entrenched hardship across income, housing, education, and health. The ward was also recently the centre of a tuberculosis (TB) outbreak, requiring national-level intervention from Public Health Wales.

This starkly illustrates how concentrated disadvantage translates directly into health inequality. By contrast, the average Carmarthenshire ward sits near the middle of national deprivation rankings — highlighting how exceptional Llwynhendy's social and health pressures are.

Reducing councillor numbers here would directly weaken local capacity to coordinate welfare, health, and housing support where it is needed most.

## **2. A young, expanding population increases workload and service demand**

Together, Bynea and Llwynhendy have 23% of residents under 18, compared with a county average of 18%. Families and children generate high volumes of casework in areas such as schools, transport, youth services, and housing.

Both wards are also undergoing major new housing development identified in Carmarthenshire's Local Development Plan (2023–2028) — including estates at Bynea (Loughor Bridge corridor) and Llwynhendy (Pemberton/A484). These schemes will add hundreds of new homes, further expanding the electorate and intensifying councillor workloads.

Population and casework are rising, not falling — reducing representation now would be regressive and short-sighted.

## **3. The Commission's own logic supports retaining four councillors**

The Commission previously recognised Bynea's under-representation and awarded it two councillors. A merger with Llwynhendy while cutting total councillors to three reverses that correction.

The merged ward would have 2,969 residents per councillor, compared with the county average of 2,505, but with far greater social complexity and growth pressures. The qualitative intensity of casework in these communities only adds to the increased pressures on the County Councillors.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

- Do not merge Bynea and Llwynhendy; retain them as separate wards.
- Maintain four councillors, reflecting deprivation, health inequality, and rapid population growth.
- If adjustments are required, use minor boundary refinements rather than a merger.
- The Commission must weight public-health evidence (TB outbreak), WIMD deprivation scores, and planned housing growth when judging representational fairness.

Reducing councillors in Bynea and Llwynhendy would weaken local democracy in one of Carmarthenshire's most socially and health-challenged areas — precisely the opposite of the Commission's duty to ensure effective and convenient local government.

## Detail

### **1) Llwynhendy includes some of Carmarthenshire's most deprived neighbourhoods**

- The Council's own progress report lists "Llwynhendy 3" among the small areas (LSOAs) that are highly deprived across income, employment, health, education and housing, and notes that since 2011 the number of Carmarthenshire areas in the 30% most deprived in Wales has increased by 25%. (Carmarthenshire County Council)
- WIMD (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation) identifies health deprivation as a key component. Llwynhendy has been directly affected by a recent tuberculosis (TB) outbreak, which attracted national attention and required extensive public-health intervention by Public Health Wales. This outbreak underlines persistent inequalities in health outcomes and access to healthcare services within the ward.
- Earlier summaries also flagged Llwynhendy 3 in the 10% most deprived and Llwynhendy 2 in the 20% most deprived in Carmarthenshire. Persistent deprivation of this depth—coupled with measurable public-health risk—argues for, not against, dedicated representation. (Carmarthenshire County Council; Public Health Wales)

**Comparator:** Across Carmarthenshire's 51 wards, most do not contain LSOAs in the bottom 20% nationally. The average ward falls near the 50% (mid-range) mark, making Llwynhendy's deprivation—and the presence of a recorded TB cluster—a clear outlier demanding stronger councillor focus.

**Implication:** Reducing councillor capacity while expecting one larger, merged ward to absorb communities with entrenched deprivation and documented public-health challenges would dilute attention to precisely those residents who depend most on council services and health-agency coordination.

### **2) Child population is high — workloads tied to schools & families will rise, not fall**

#### **Using 2021 Census ward totals:**

- Llwynhendy: 1,101 children aged 0–17 (25.1%) and 805 aged 65+ (18.3%) out of 4,389.
- Bynea: 964 children aged 0–17 (21.3%) and 764 aged 65+ (16.9%) out of 4,519.
- Combined merged ward (if created): 2,065 children (≈23.2%) and 1,569 residents 65+ (≈17.6%) out of 8,908 people.

**Comparator (Carmarthenshire averages):** Children (0–17)  $\approx$ 18.2% of population; Older residents (65+)  $\approx$ 24.1% of population.

Bynea + Llwynhendy therefore have a child population about 5 points above the county average and a retired population 6–7 points below, implying intensive education, transport and family-service demand rather than elderly-care predominance.

#### **Planned housing growth**

Both Bynea and Llwynhendy are also experiencing significant new housing development, confirmed in the Carmarthenshire County Council planning register and the Local Development Plan (LDP 2023–2028):

- In Bynea, new residential allocations near the Loughor Bridge corridor and the former industrial land east of the railway are expected to add hundreds of homes.
- In Llwynhendy, approved and proposed estates north of Pemberton and along the A484 corridor are projected to bring substantial population growth, particularly among young families.

These developments will increase both population and casework, generating additional demands on education, highways, and local amenities well before the next boundary review.

#### **3) The Commission's own recent logic for Bynea recognised under-representation**

In its previous Carmarthenshire review, the Commission found Bynea was 64% above the county average electors-per-member and recommended increasing Bynea to a two-member ward to correct under-representation.

Moving now to a merged three-member arrangement for the larger Bynea + Llwynhendy area reverses that corrective logic and recreates pressure on electoral parity and councillor workload.

**Comparator:** The average Carmarthenshire ward currently elects  $\approx$ 1 councillor per 2505 residents ( $187,900 \div 75$ ). Under the proposed merger, Bynea + Llwynhendy would have  $\approx$ 2,969 residents per councillor—a 20% heavier caseload than the county norm, despite higher social complexity.

Bynea's electors were previously under-represented, justifying its two-member status. A merged ward would therefore intensify workloads and reduce accessibility for residents in deprived and growing communities.

### Key Comparators (2021 Census & Commission Data)

Indicator	Bynea	Llwynhendy	Combined	Carmarthenshire Average (51 wards – 75 Cllrs)
Total population	4,519	4,389	8,908	187,900 (total)
Residents per councillor (proposed)	—	—	2,969	2,505
Children (0–17 yrs)	21.3%	25.1%	23.2%	18.2%
Older people (65+ yrs)	16.9%	18.3%	17.6%	24.1%
WIMD status	Average	10–20% most deprived + TB health cluster	—	Mid-range (≈50%)
Councillors (current)	2	2	4	—
Councillors (proposed)	—	—	3	—

### Sources (key extracts)

- Welsh Government / StatsWales – WIMD methodology and purpose.
- Carmarthenshire County Council (2024 Progress Report) – Llwynhendy 3 listed among most deprived LSOAs.
- Public Health Wales (2023) – TB cluster in Llwynhendy and response actions.
- Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales – Final Recommendations (“Bynea” section).
- Census 2021 – Population totals and age profiles (Bynea & Llwynhendy).
- Carmarthenshire County Council Planning Portal & LDP (2023–2028) – housing allocations and approved developments in Bynea and Llwynhendy.

**ERP Carms 079 - [REDACTED] Member of the Public**

Suggest Llannon is renamed Llan-Non, Cross Hands & Tumble to make clearer the main areas included in this ward.

**ERP Carms 081 – [REDACTED] Member of the Public**

The proposed merger of Llandeilo with a large rural ward Llanfinagel Aberycyth will make it difficult for the councillors to manage the ward . Also why is Llandeilo the mayor town being relegated in the ward name illogical

**ERP Carms 085 – Tina Roberts, Llansteffan and Llanybri CC**

Llansteffan & Llanybri CC resolved to request continuation of both St Clears and Llansteffan and Sanclêr a Llansteffan alongside the continuation of bilingual status of many other electoral wards in the County. A significant number of people within the ward speak only English and would benefit from a continuation of use of both names.

Minutes attached: Item 20

It was resolved to request continuation of both St Clears and Llansteffan and Sanclêr a Llansteffan alongside the continuation of bilingual status of many other electoral wards in the County. A significant 408 number of people within the ward speak only English and would benefit from a continuation of use of both names. Proposed: Cllr Roberts Seconded: Cllr Worrell For: All

**ERP Carms 101 – Cllr Dai Thomas, Pen-y-groes**

Attached

Dai Thomas

## Response to Boundary Commission

I would support the merger of Penygroes ward with Llanfihangel Aberbythych ward, rather than Penygroes with Llandybie.

1. In 2025 Penygroes has 2446 voters and Llanfihangel Aberbythych has 1544. This gives a total of 3990 voters with two councillors i.e 1995 per councillor, which is only 26 voters short of the average per councillor. (1% overrepresentation) For the predicted 2030 figures the ratio is 2217 which is 3% above the target. Merging Penygroes with Llandybie gives a figure of voters per councillor of only 1973 on 2025 figures (2% overrepresentation) and a prediction of 2130 by 2030.

### Conclusion

Merging Penygroes with Llanfihangel Aberbythych generates ratios much closer to the target than merging Penygroes with Llandybie. Predictions of population can be unreliable.

2. I now turn to the figures for merging Llandeilo with Llanfihangel Aberbythych. This proposal would result in overrepresentation of 2% on 2025 figures and 5% on predicted 2030 figures.
3. At present the settlement on Gate Road is split between Llanfihangel Aberbythych and Penygroes. There are examples of a house being in one ward and the garden in another ward. Merging the wards would do away with any confusion and unify the settlement. On the other hand there is a clear division between any properties in Penygroes ward and those in Llandybie.
4. Both wards consist of villages and are largely similar in character, whereas Llandybie is practically a town.
5. There are historic links between Penygroes and villages such as Carmel, Milo, Castell-y-Rhingyll.
6. This proposal would create a two member ward. In rural areas and villages residents like to know who their councillors are, a two member ward enables this as opposed to a three member ward.
7. This proposal unites three Community Councils (Llanfihangel Aberbythych, Llangathen and Llandybie) into one County Council ward and will enable more efficient community councils. It has no effect on existing community council boundaries.
8. Changing the boundary of the new ward to transfer the part of the Penygroes ward to the north of the Cross Hands Economic link road to Gorslas would mean

that the new ward would be on target in 2030. The area includes Grove Hill park and part of Penygroes Road. Most residents in this area have a much closer affiliation with Gorslas. There are approximately 100 voters involved.

9. There are no natural boundaries between Penygroes and Llanfihangel Aberbythych.
10. There is an expectation that County Councilors community council meetings to report and to receive reports on issues of concern in their respective areas. This is easily managed by combining Llanfihangel Aberbythych and Penygroes.
11. The data on Welsh language proficiency, carers, disability etc are very similar for the two wards.

**ERP Carms 104 – Sharon Morgan, Mayor Llandelio TC**

I agree with the new ward area but am not sure the name reflects it very well. It excludes everywhere east of Ffairfach.

It's also confusing as Llanfihangel Aberbythych is an area whereas as Llandeilo is a place. Excluding the Dyffryn Cennen area from the name suggests that area is of a lesser importance. I believe a completely new name is needed rather than half merging them.

**ERP Carms 108- [REDACTED] Member of the public**

Trying to make sense out of all these maps/documents is impossible. I can't work out if some councils are getting more or less councillors - where are the comparable figures? I wonder if your intention is to bury everything in a report that says nothing and this whole thing is a tick-box exercise, the decisions have already been made.

I attach the rest of this message in a word document as there isn't enough room here.

( No attachment, she was contacted via email but no reply has been received to date).

**ERP Carms 110 – Cllr Carys Jones, Sanclêr Llansteffan Ward**

I agree with the new name for the St Clears Llansteffan ward. The ward only needs one name, and that name should be in Welsh.

**ERP Carms 111 – Cllrs Hefin Jones & Edward Thomas, Llanfinagel Aberbythych and Llandeilo Wards**

The attached represents the joint views of Cllr Hefin Jones representing Llanfinagel Aberbythych and Cllr Edward Thomas Representing Llandeilo & Dyffryn Cennen The document has been shared with the Town & Community Councils and discussion have been held with them

**FAO: Officers and Members of Llandeilo Town Council, Llanfihangel Aberbythych Community Council, Dyffryn Cennen Community Council and Llangathen Community Council.**

Dear Clerk and members,

On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, the body known as the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru published draft proposals for consultation in relation to the merger and/or name changes in Carmarthenshire.

It is recommended that the two single member County Council wards known currently as Llanfihangel Aberbythych (that includes Llanfihangel Aberbythych and Llangathen Community Councils) and Llandeilo (that includes Llandeilo Town Councils and Dyffryn Cennen Community Council) would merge to form a new two-member ward under the proposed name of 'Llanfihangel Aberbythych Llandeilo'.

As members representing both wards, we have grave concerns in relation to the recommended merger and the consequences.

- 1) The geographical expanse of the proposed county council ward. Whilst Llandeilo town ward is relatively compact, Llanfihangel Aberbythych, in contrast, is a large area. The amalgamation of both wards would result in an unpractically large geographical area to cover and suitably represent. Whilst incumbent members, given their familiarity with their respective wards, could manage such a situation between them by focusing on their current areas of representation, this would not necessarily be the situation for future members who potentially would not have that local knowledge.
- 2) Given that the voter base in Llandeilo county council ward is greater than in Llanfihangel Aberbythych County Council ward, there is a very real potential for distortion in representation to occur as outlined above.
- 3) As incumbent members, we feel that even within the current county council ward arrangements, it takes time to get acquainted with all issues and areas of concern in a ward. This would be exasperated should local knowledge be weakened. The quality of representation for residents would be detrimentally impacted as a consequence. Although there are differing challenges in terms of population density in Llandeilo ward and the geographical expanse of Llanfihangel Aberbythych ward, both incumbent members feel that the current

arrangements are manageable. They are not problematic and do not have a detrimental impact on representation for the electorate.

- 4) It is clear that the nature of the communities included in the newly proposed ward differ significantly in nature. There are concerns around the potential for the requirements of a more densely populated part of the new ward to command greater time and resources from both elected members, having a detrimental impact on the interests of those in a larger rural part of the proposed two-member ward.
- 5) There is a concern in relation to the name of the proposed new merged County Council Ward. As Llandeilo would be the more populated part of the new ward, there is a case to be made that the name 'Llandeilo' should be afforded greater prominence by being the first part of the new County Council Ward's name as opposed to the current proposal of 'Llanfihangel Aberbythych Llandeilo'.
- 6) There is an expectation that County Councilors attend town and community council meetings to report and to receive reports on issues of concern in their respective areas. As it stands, the two existing county council wards include two community council areas. If the existing County Council under consideration should merge, there will be a likely expectation for the County Councilors to attend four community council meetings (at least) each month. This has the potential to be difficult because of clashing dates, again potentially reducing engagement with County Councilors.

We have, as incumbent members, taken time to consider the potential consequences and implications of the proposals as they stand, and wished to jointly convey our concerns to the Town and Community Council areas that would be impacted.

Please find the attached link to the consultation documents. We encourage you as councils to consider the proposals and to respond by the consultation deadline on November 12<sup>th</sup> 2025.

Sincerely,

Edward Thomas (County Councillor - Llandeilo Ward)

Hefin Jones (County Councillor - Llanfihangel Aberbythych Ward.

**ERP Carms 129 – Fiona Wilkins, Llanedi CC**

Please see attached letter detailing Llanedi Community Councils view on the proposed boundary changes as outlined in the report.



## **Cyngor Cymuned LLANEDI Community Council**

Tycroes Village Hall, Tycroes, Ammanford SA18 3QJ.

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10<sup>th</sup> November 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

The Commission's consultation proposes to combine the Hendy and Tycroes wards in order to address the level of variance from the proposed county average for electors per councillor in Hendy. Their aim is to improve electoral parity across the county. Llanedi Community Council acknowledges the importance of equitable representation but also wishes to ensure that local community ties, effective representation, and manageable ward sizes are maintained.

Llanedi Community Council members have reviewed the projected electoral figures provided in the report and have considered the proposal made by the Commission. The members are in full agreement that they do not wish to see the wards of Tycroes and Hendy merged. The Council has therefore set out the following three possible proposals, in order of preference, to be considered as alternatives to the Commission's proposal. The projected impacts and supporting reasons are set out below.

Llanedi Community Council members have considered the following three options in order of preference:

1. Maintain existing wards without change.
2. Transfer the area of Tal Y Clun (currently in Hendy) to the Llangennech ward.
3. Merge the Hendy and Llanedi wards and appoint an additional county councillor.

For each option, we have reviewed projected elector numbers (as provided in the report), assessed the impact on variation from the county average, and set out the pros and cons from the Community Council's perspective.

The Commission's report for Carmarthenshire shows a current county average of 1994 electors per councillor moving to 2,102 by 2030. The report states that Hendy currently has 2,602 electors, placing it approximately +31% above the county average and that Tycroes, which also includes Llanedi ward, is smaller and is closer to the average, at just +13% over.

### **Proposal 1 – Maintain Existing Wards (Most Favoured)**

Electorate estimate for 2030:

- Hendy: 2,633 electors, 1 councillor → electors per councillor = 2,633 (+25% above the predicted county average of 1,915)



- Tycroes: 2,267 electors, 1 councillor → electors per councillor = 2,267 (+8% above predicted county average)

#### Impact:

- Hendy remains above the ideal average.
- Tycroes remains slightly above the ideal average.
- No boundary disruption; local ties remain intact; community identity preserved.

#### Pros:

- Maintains continuity for local residents and councillors with existing boundaries and relationships.
- Avoids confusion and administrative burden of redrawing the boundary or introducing a new councillor.
- Supports effective and convenient local government by retaining well-known, established wards with clear identities.
- Minimises change and cost.

#### Considerations:

- Does not correct the electoral imbalance in Hendy, which remains above the ideal average. The Council acknowledges this but views the variance (+25%) as within an acceptable tolerance band for effective representation, given local community factors.

#### Council's Position:

The Council prefers this option as it preserves community identity, avoids unnecessary disruption, and recognises that the degree of over-representation in Hendy is not so large as to severely undermine electoral fairness or effective representation.

#### Proposal 2 – Transfer Tal Y Clun from Hendy to Llangennech (3-Member Ward)

##### Electorate estimate for 2030 (post-change):

- Hendy (after removal of Tal Y Clun, approx. 300 electors): 2,333 electors, 1 councillor → electors per councillor = 2,333 (+11% above average)
- Tycroes: 2,267 electors, 1 councillor → electors per councillor = 2,267 (+8% above average)

#### Impact:

- Hendy's variance improves significantly, from +25% to +11%, a more acceptable level.
- Tycroes remains slightly over at +8%, still acceptable.
- Llangennech benefits from an additional member, improving representation.



#### Pros:

- Addresses over-representation of Hendy, bringing it close to parity.
- Minimally disruptive: only a small area changes ward, so most residents remain in their current ward with their current councillor.
- Retains Hendy and Tycroes as single-member wards, maintaining simplicity of representation.
- Improves fairness and aligns closely with the Commission's objective of electoral parity.

#### Considerations:

- Moves part of Hendy's electorate into Llangennech, possibly affecting community identity for those residents in Tal Y Clun.
- Creates potential imbalance in Llangennech unless an additional member is added.
- Requires boundary changes and administrative reorganisation (registers, poll cards, communications).
- Some residents may perceive it as diluting Hendy's representation or shifting responsibilities.

#### Council's Position:

This is considered a viable second preference, substantially improving electoral parity for Hendy while limiting disruption. Any transfer should be carefully reviewed to avoid creating new imbalances.

### Proposal 3 – Merge Hendy and Llanedi, Appoint an Additional County Councillor

#### Electorate estimate for 2030 (merged ward):

- Hendy (2,633) + Llanedi (approx. 250) = 2,883 electors
- 2 councillors → electors per councillor = 1,442 (-31% below average of 2,102)
- Tycroes remains unchanged (2,017 electors, 1 councillor → 4% below average)

#### Impact:

- Strong improvement for Hendy's over-representation.
- Provides two councillors, increasing capacity for representation and constituent service.
- Maintains Tycroes ward at near-average, preserving community identity.

#### Pros:

- Merged ward allows a shared resource of two councillors, spreading workload and improving accessibility.
- Preserves a two-ward structure with Tycroes separate, maintaining community identity.



- Meets the Commission's objective of achieving effective and convenient local government while respecting local ties.

#### Considerations:

- Significant change compared to Options 1 or 2; merging two wards and appointing an extra councillor alters the status quo.
- Residents in Hendy or Llanedi may feel local identity is diluted.
- Additional councillor implies increased cost/responsibility and potential resource reallocation.
- Implementation complexity is higher: merging administration, communications, election logistics, and councillor electoral base.

#### Council's Position:

As a third preference, this is an effective way to address over-representation. If adopted, sufficient resource and community consultation must accompany the merger to maintain effective representation and local identity.

The Council therefore recommends that Option 1 be adopted; however, if change is deemed necessary, Option 2 is preferred. Option 3 is acceptable if the Commission and community consider a merger worthwhile and accept the administrative changes.

Option 1 retains the status quo; minimal disruption but does not fully address Hendy's variance.

- Option 2 transfers a small area out of Hendy, significantly improving parity with limited change and is the Community Council's preferred second option.
- Option 3 merges Hendy with Llanedi and introduces an additional councillor; provides good representation but is most change intensive.

We appreciate the Commission's objective of aligning elector-to-councillor ratios and welcome collaborative work to ensure the outcome is fair, effective, and recognises local community ties.

We trust this response provides the Commission with a clear view of the Council's stance, the projected impacts of each option, and the reasoning behind our preferences. We are happy to discuss further or provide supplementary data if required.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Byron Evans

Chairperson  
Llanedi Community Council 2025/26

**ERP Carms 135 – Dai Nicholas , Llandybie CC**

'Our preferred option is Penygroes Llandybie as it fits our current boundary and Llandybie and Penygroes have a closer natural relationship with one another as a Parish and a cluster of villages that encompass Caerbrynn and Blaenau, whilst Llandeilo is a town and its centre some 5 miles away.'

**ERP Carms 139 – Dai Nicholas , Llanlanfihangel Aberbythych CC**

see attached document

## Response to Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru Draft Proposals

As clerk to Llanfihangel Aberbythych Community Council, I am responding to your draft proposals, which were discussed at our meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

Your draft proposals recommend the merger of the Llanfihangel Aberbythych county council ward with that of Llandeilo, forming the new ward of Llanfihagnel Aberbythych Llandeilo, which will be represented by two county councillors. The two wards have significant geographical differences, Llanfihangel Aberbythych is a sparsely populated, large, geographical area, with small scattered communities, Llandeilo, in contrast, is a more urban and densely populated ward. Llanfihangel Aberbythych Community Council members expressed grave concern about the proposed merger, believing that it presents the risk of the needs of Llanfihangel Aberbythych residents being diluted by those of the more populous ward represented by Llandeilo. Councillors were unanimous in their view that Llanfihangel Aberbythych would be better served through its merger with Penygroes ward. This view was based on a number of factors, firstly, communities within Llanfihangel Aberbythych Community Council ward have very strong links with Penygroes ,this is particularly true of the communities of Castell Rhingyll, Carmel, Milo and Maesybont . The ward boundary between Llanfihangel Aberbythych and Penygroes also lies along a local road which requires close joint working between the respective county councillors.

Furthermore, and significantly, the 2025 voting population figures of both Llanfihangel Aberbythych and Penygroes would suggest that the merger of both wards would result in a lower over representation than that arising from a merger of Llanfihangel Aberbythych and Llandeilo. The figures for 2025 suggest that Penygroes has 2446 votes and Llanfihangel Aberbythych 1544, leaving a total of 3990, which, with two councillors, is a 1% over representation. The respective 2025 figures for Llanfihangel Aberbythych merged with Llandeilo , represented by two councillors, would constitute a 2% over representation.

I hope you will give serious consideration to our response.

**ERP Carms 145 –Cyngor Cymued Gorslas CC**

This Community Council does not support the renaming of Gorslas to Gors-las as identified in this consultation. The Council understands this change has been initiated by the Welsh Language Commissioner but is unaware of any formal consultation with Gorslas Community Council or local residents on this matter.

**ERP Carms 147 – Cllr Tina Higgins, Tycroes**

Tycroes/Hendy wards - The current arrangement of separate wards should be kept for the following reasons.

If a candidate does not drive, there is no public transport direct from one end of Tycroes ward to Hendy ward. The ward would be too big. This would also be a disadvantage to any disabled person who may wish to stand for council.

As the population in Hendy is bigger than Tycroes, there is the potential that both elected Councillors irrespective of party, would always be from Hendy leaving residents in Tycroes without equitable representation.

As the variance of Tycroes is only slightly above the average representation tolerance, I do not think that there is a need to merge the ward with Hendy but for Hendy ward to be looked at with a view to reducing the numbers there, taking in to account the solutions proposed by Llanedi Community Council.

The timing of the proposed changes this side of the next Council election does not give candidates time to get to know the other areas that would be in a bigger ward. I would ask that this would be postponed if there is a move to join the wards together.

To leave Hendy and Tycroes as separate wards would retain the uniqueness of each ward.

### **ERP Carms 148 –Mark Bleasdale, Llandeilo Fawr TC**

The proposals were discussed in Llandeilo Fawr Town council last meeting and there were mixed views and all councillors were encouraged to submit their own individual responses. There were some views that through use of technology and being able to attend meetings remotely that the work of two councillors would be shared better. On the contrary there were views that the name of the new ward for the area minimises that the is a town with a population at the centre of it and though it may well have been respectful to the Welsh Language it is overly complicated. Also, by having two councillors there will less direct interest from each councillor and their work load is geographically very spread out. Further consultation with the public is important

**ERP Carms 149 – Cllr Hazel Evans, Cenarth and Llangeler**

I am writing as a Local Member for Cenarth and Llangeler ward who went through a reorganisation of ward change five years ago. All of my Community Councils were opposed to the change due to the vast geographical area which was being covered with the new ward which I believe takes you further away from the public you serve. Re organisation should start with the Community and Town Councils and then the County wards.

With this reorganisation I would like to urge you to take on board local Members comments and merge Gorslas with Llanfihangel Aberbythych as they know their local community.

## **ERP Carms 150 – Cllr Callum Higgins, Tycroes**

I write to object to this proposed new Ward, on the grounds that it does not achieve the stated aims of the commission's boundary reviews, and will make a material difference to the electoral outcomes at the next election, breaching the principle that proposals should be neutral in their outcomes.

The electorate within the proposed Hendy and Tycroes electoral ward will be 4,844, represented by two councillors which is 20% above the projected county average of 2,021. The projected 5-year (2030) statistics for the electoral ward has 4,900 electors represented by three councillors, which is 15% above the projected county average of 2,130. This proposal worsens the projected current arrangement for Tycroes from 8% above the county average, to 15% over, by connecting it to a community that is does not have much in common with.

### **Lack of community links:**

Hendy and Tycroes are very distinct communities. They are represented by one Community Council, which has often expressed a view to separate into two different communities and largely stays as one for financial scale reasons. At a Community level, there are distinct schools, sports clubs, societies, and community groups. Transport between the two communities is sparse, unwalkable, and largely do not overlap.

### **Political impact of this proposal**

The two communities have a history of different election results. Tycroes has been a Labour seat since its inception, and Hendy has been more marginal but largely won by Plaid Cymru. The effect of merging these two seats will likely be that two councillors from Hendy are elected, leaving Tycroes without representation that it has historically experienced. While it's possible for Tycroes to elect 2 members, based on population it's likely to be the former scenario that occurs. This would have a material effect on both communities as one community would be over represented while the other would experience a sudden lack of representation in the eyes of the electorate, negatively impacting on the perception of the local government system as a whole.

### **Suggestions**

In the previous review, Llanedi community ward was moved into Tycroes County Ward, to balance the populations between Tycroes and Hendy. This has served the communities involved well and is popular with the electorate. While we would want this to continue, if needed Llanedi could move back into Hendy Ward.

Hendy and Llangennech are closer in community ties than Hendy and Tycroes, it's possible to look at a 3 member Ward for Hendy and Llanegennech. There is also the possibility of moving the boundaries of Hendy to put some of its population close to Llangennech into that Ward, decreasing the size of Hendy and increasing the size of Llangennech marginally.

While I suspect this decision has largely been taken based on population figures and a desktop exercise, and consultation is a formality, I would urge the commission to realise the difference on the ground for communities that changes like this make. On paper I understand the need to balance population numbers, however the differences in community representation over a few

miles can be significant in a semi rural area such as this. Unfortunately this proposal will undermine the role of local government representatives locally.

## **ERP Carms 152 – Cllr Sharen Davies, Llwynhendy ward**

### **1. Loss of Local Identity and Community Cohesion**

Llwynhendy and Pemberton have distinct historical, social and geographic identities tied to the village, local facilities and community networks. Merging them with Bynea risks diluting those identities and weakening the community ties that residents rely upon for representation and engagement.

The proposed alteration does not sufficiently account for the local sense of place and the existing established relationships between residents and their local councillors.

### **2. Disruption of Effective Representation**

The existing ward arrangements allow councillors to focus on the specific issues, needs and services of the local community (for example, in Llwynhendy/Pemberton). By creating a larger, merged ward, the representative may face a more challenging workload, covering more diverse sub-areas with differing priorities. This risks reducing the effectiveness of democratic accountability and accessibility of the councillor.

The DBCC's own consultation states that one of its objectives is ensuring that "councillors are able to share a more equal workload". However this must be balanced against the practical ability of a councillor to serve distinct communities well a factor that appears under-emphasised in the proposals.

### **3. Weakness in Local Ties and Community Boundaries**

While the statutory criteria for reviewing wards include achieving electoral parity (rough equality of number of electors per councillor), local ties and community identity are also key. The proposal to merge Llwynhendy and Bynea appears to prioritise numerical parity over local community coherence. The DBCC's earlier report noted that a combine of Llwynhendy and Bynea was one option but should consider local representation carefully.

The consultation documents do not sufficiently demonstrate that local ties between these communities justify the merger for example differences in geography, amenities used, travel patterns, and historic connections.

### **4. Insufficient Evidence of Benefit and Risk of Unintended Consequences**

The proposal lacks a clear and compelling case for how merging these wards will materially improve local governance or service delivery. Conversely, there is a risk of unintended consequences: decreased civic engagement, lessening of local voice, confusion among the electorate as to ward identity and representation, and potential for smaller communities to be overshadowed within a larger electoral area.

The opportunity cost of losing the existing ward structure must be weighed more strongly.

### **5. Timing and Consultation Concerns**

The consultation period (ending 12 November 2025) invites residents to have their say. However, there is concern that the proposed change may proceed without adequate local discussion of boundary details, potential community impacts, or transitional arrangements for how residents will be represented. Given the local sensitivities, especially given the disruption many residents feel when boundaries are redrawn, more thorough local engagement would be more appropriate.

### **Proposed Alternative**

Rather than merging Llwynhendy/Pemberton with Bynea into one larger ward, I propose:

- Retain Llwynhendy (and the Pemberton ward) as a distinct electoral ward, with its own councillor(s) reflective of its community size and identity.
- If adjustment is necessary to improve electoral parity, consider minor boundary tweaks within

the Llwynhendy ward (for example adjusting to neighbouring contiguous communities with strong ties) rather than a wholesale merge with a distinct community such as Bynea.

- Ensure that any new ward configuration is supported by comprehensive evidence of shared community identity, common service usage, transport links, school catchments, and local economy and present that publicly in advance of implementation.
- Provide transitional support for residents to understand the change, how their representation will operate, and how local services may be affected.

**ERP Carms 153 – Cllr Hefin Jones, Llanfihangel Aberbythych ward**

In response to the proposals to merge Llanfihangel Aberbythych ward with Llandeilo ward, I have the following concerns:

1) The geographical expanse of the proposed county council ward. Whilst Llandeilo town ward is relatively compact, Llanfihangel Aberbythych, in contrast, is a large area. The amalgamation of both wards would result in an unpractically large geographical area to cover and suitably represent. Whilst incumbent members, given their familiarity with their respective wards, could manage such a situation between them by focusing on their current areas of representation, this would not necessarily be the situation for future members who potentially would not have that local knowledge.

2) Given that the voter base in Llandeilo county council ward is greater than in Llanfihangel Aberbythych County Council ward, there is a very real potential for distortion in representation to occur as outlined above.

3) As incumbent members, we feel that even within the current county council ward arrangements, it takes time to get acquainted with all issues and areas of concern in a ward. This would be exasperated should local knowledge be weakened. The quality of representation for residents would be detrimentally impacted as a consequence. Although there are differing challenges in terms of population density in Llandeilo ward and the geographical expanse of Llanfihangel Aberbythych ward, both incumbent members feel that the current arrangements are manageable. They are not problematic and do not have a detrimental impact on representation for the electorate.

4) It is clear that the nature of the communities included in the newly proposed ward differ significantly in nature. There are concerns around the potential for the requirements of a more densely populated part of the new ward to command greater time and resources from both elected members, having a detrimental impact on the interests of those in a larger rural part of the proposed two-member ward.

5) There is an expectation that County Councilors attend town and community council meetings to report and to receive reports on issues of concern in their respective areas. As it stands, the two existing county council wards include two community council areas. If the existing County Council under consideration should merge, there will be a likely expectation for the County Councilors to attend four community council meetings (at least) each month. This has the potential to be difficult because of clashing dates, again potentially reducing engagement with County Councilors.

As a result, I would support the alternative proposal considered - the merger of Penygroes ward with Llanfihangel Aberbythych ward. The reasons are as follows:

1. In 2025 Penygroes has 2446 voters and Llanfihangel Aberbythych has 1544. This gives a total of 3990 voters with two councillors i.e 1995 per councillor, which is only 26 voters short of the average per councillor.(1% overrepresentation) For the predicted 2030 figures the ratio is 2217 which is 3% above the target. Merging Penygroes with Llandybie gives a figure of voters per

councillor of only 1973 on 2025 figures (2% overrepresentation) and a prediction of 2130 by 2030.

#### Conclusion

Merging Penygroes with Llanfihangel Aberbythych generates ratios much closer to the target than merging Penygroes with Llandybie. Predictions of population can be unreliable.

2. In relation to the figures for merging Llandeilo with Llanfihangel Aberbythych This proposal would result in overrepresentation of 2% on 2025 figures and 5% on predicted 2030 figures.
3. At present the settlement on Gate Road is split between Llanfihangel Aberbythych and Penygroes. There are examples of a house being in one ward and the garden in another ward. Merging the wards would do away with any confusion and unify the settlement. On the other hand there is a clear division between any properties in Penygroes ward and those in Llandybie
4. Both wards consist of villages and are largely similar in character, whereas Llandybie is practically a town.
5. There are historic links between Penygroes and villages such as Carmel, Milo, Castell-y-Rhingyll.
6. This proposal would create a two member ward. In rural areas and villages residents like to know who their councillors are, a two member ward enables this as opposed to a three member ward.
7. This proposal unites three Community Councils ( Llanfihangel Aberbythych, Llangathen and Llandybie) into one County Council ward and will enable more efficient community councils. It has no effect on existing community council boundaries.
8. Changing the boundary of the new ward to transfer the part of the Penygroes ward to the north of the Cross Hands Economic link road to Gorslas would mean that the new ward would be on target in 2030. The area includes Grove Hill park and part of Penygroes Road. Most residents in this area have a much closer affiliation with Gorslas. There are approximately 100 voters involved.
9. There are no natural boundaries between Penygroes and Llanfihangel Aberbythych.
10. There is an expectation that County Councilors community council meetings to report and to receive reports on issues of concern in their respective areas. This is easily managed by combining Llanfihangel Aberbythych and Penygroes.
11. The data on Welsh language proficiency, carers, disability etc are very similar for the two wards.

These views have been compiled following discussions between incumbent county councillors, and after detailed conversations with community councillors. We all believe that while achieving as near to the optimum level of representation is important, I cannot stress the importance of the alignment between the nature and character of merging wards, along with historical connections between those areas.

Hefin Jones  
County Councillor - Llanfigangel Aberbythych

**ERP Carms No Comment Table**

Rep No	Name	Organisation	Agree with DPR
Carms 53	[REDACTED]	Member of the Public	No
Carms 60	Mari Arthur	Community Cllr Trimsaran	Yes
Carms 75	[REDACTED]	Member of the Public	No
Carms 134	[REDACTED]	Member of the Public	Yes