

**National Assembly for Wales
Enterprise and Business Committee**

**Fourth Assembly
Legacy Report**

March 2016

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



The National Assembly for Wales is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people, makes laws for Wales and holds the Welsh Government to account.

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Committee membership

Committee member	Party	Constituency or Region
William Graham AM (Chair)	Welsh Conservatives	South Wales East
Mohammad Asghar	Welsh Conservatives	South Wales East
Keith Davies	Welsh Labour	Llanelli
Rhun ap Iorwerth	Plaid Cymru	Ynys Môn
Dafydd Elis-Thomas	Plaid Cymru	Dwyfor Meirionnydd
Gwenda Thomas	Welsh Labour	Neath
Mick Antoniw	Welsh Labour	Pontypridd
Jeff Cuthbert	Welsh Labour	Caerphilly
Joyce Watson	Welsh Labour	Mid and West Wales
Eluned Parrott	Welsh Liberal Democrats	South Wales Central

Previous members of the Committee

Committee member	Party	Constituency or Region
Byron Davies	Welsh Conservatives	South West Wales
Andrew RT Davies	Welsh Conservatives	South Wales Central
Nick Ramsay (Chair from 2011 – Feb 2014)	Welsh Conservatives	Monmouth
Julie James	Welsh Labour	Swansea West
David Rees	Welsh Labour	Aberafon
Ken Skates	Welsh Labour	Clwyd South
Alun Ffred Jones	Plaid Cymru	Arfon
Leanne Wood	Plaid Cymru	South Wales Central

Committee remit

The Committee's role is to scrutinise legislation and to hold the Welsh Government to account in the following policy areas:

- Business and enterprise, including inward investment / exports
- Research, development and innovation
- Higher education
- Technology and science
- Strategic, physical and legacy regeneration
- Employment
- Workforce development
- Skills
- Vocational qualifications
- Those not in education, employment or training (NEETs)
- Adult community learning and work based learning
- Employability and careers advice
- Welfare reform
- ICT Infrastructure
- Transport
- Social Enterprise
- EU structural funds programmes
- Relevant EU policy matters

COMMITTEE ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE FOURTH ASSEMBLY

 **21**
INQUIRIES
UNDERTAKEN

21
COMMITTEE REPORTS
PUBLISHED

SCRUTINY OF **7**
LEGISLATIVE CONSENT
MEMORANDA REFERRED
TO THE COMMITTEE

LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY OF THE
ACTIVE TRAVEL (WALES) ACT 2013

307 RECOMMENDATIONS MADE

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY BREAKDOWN



- FINANCIAL SCRUTINY – **9%**
- LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY – **6%**
- POLICY SCRUTINY – **71%**
- ENGAGEMENT WORK – **14%**

INNOVATION AND ENGAGEMENT



1011
PEOPLE ANSWERED OUR
BUS USERS SURVEY



47
VIDEOS
PRODUCED



912
TWEETS
SENT

16,000 AVERAGE TWEET
IMPRESSIONS PER MONTH

15,000 VISITS TO
TWITTER PROFILE

Introduction

The Enterprise and Business Committee has put a strong emphasis on policy scrutiny during this Assembly – spending more than two thirds of our time on it.

A lot of this was spent looking at how to keep Wales moving, whether by land or sea. We've also found time in all our work to consider how Wales can contribute to, and benefit from, its relationship with the European Union.

At the forefront of our work has been a desire to be innovative in the way we engage with the people of Wales. We have travelled to many different locations to hear views from all parts of Wales and to feed them into our inquiries. Whether it was meeting small business owners in Ynys Môn and Newport, or speaking to the Irish Government in Dublin about how to grow our maritime economy, in each case we have sought to find the best ways to tackle the economic challenges facing Wales.

We have been innovative in the way we work. We were the first committee to launch a report on a train. We have also experimented with less formal methods of evidence gathering – including breakfast seminars with business leaders in North and South Wales to talk about skills and training, and small discussion groups led by Committee members to gather evidence on active travel. Instead of a traditional report we produced a Charter for the next Wales and Borders franchise – setting out the essential requirements for serving the needs of Wales. We have also published easy read versions of reports to make our work more accessible.

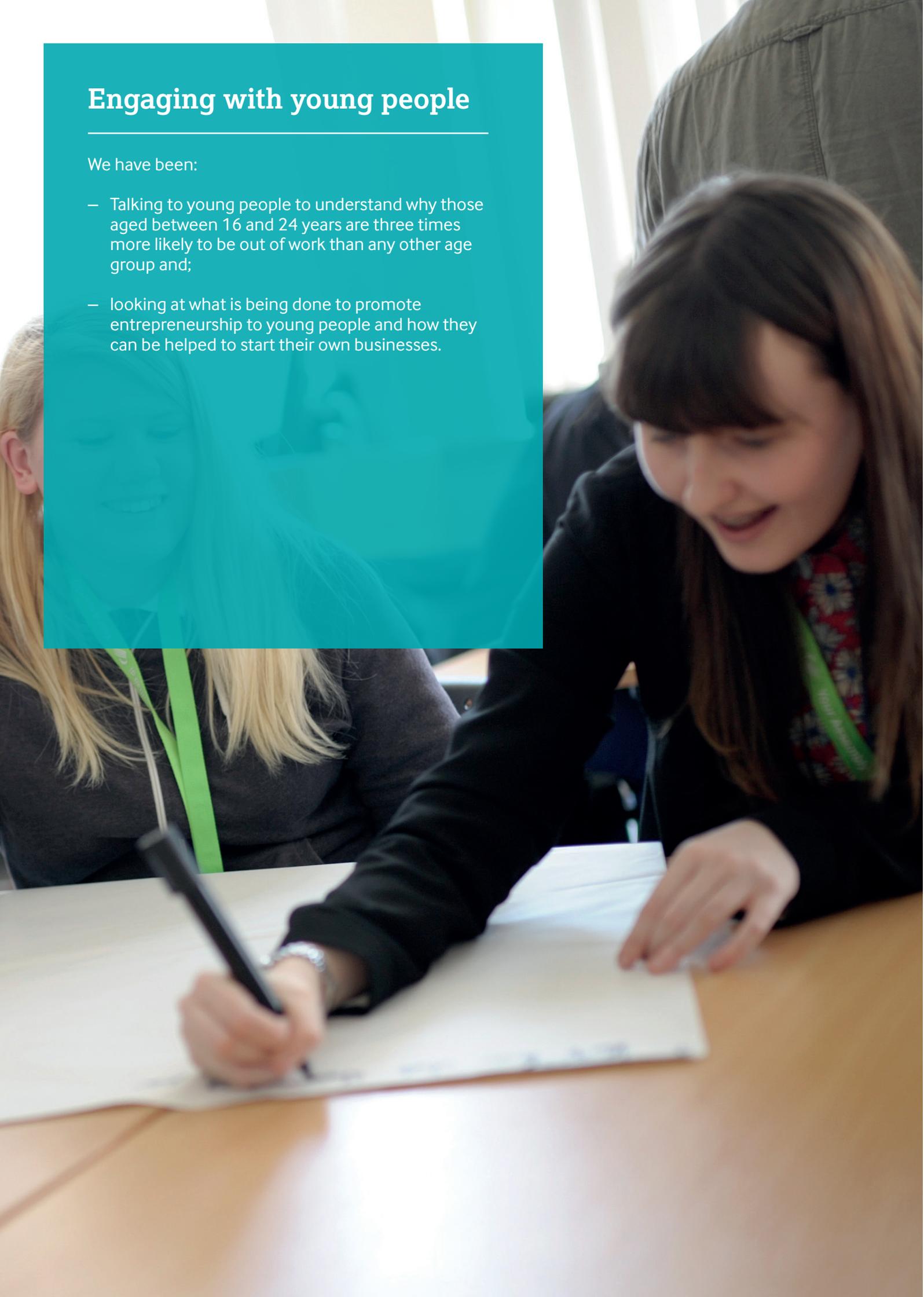
Our work has had a positive impact on Welsh Government policy. The appointment of EU Funding Ambassadors – to promote the potential of EU funding to businesses in Wales – was a suggestion that came from one of our inquiries. Our recommendations to improve access to major sporting events have been taken up by rail operators.

This short report sets out what we have done and suggests areas for work in the Fifth Assembly.

Engaging with young people

We have been:

- Talking to young people to understand why those aged between 16 and 24 years are three times more likely to be out of work than any other age group and;
- looking at what is being done to promote entrepreneurship to young people and how they can be helped to start their own businesses.



Inquiries

We have conducted 21 inquiries into the issues which can make a real difference to people and businesses in Wales. We listened to individuals and organisations to hear what they think are the changes needed. We also took written submissions and published a report at the end of each inquiry. The reports set out recommendations for the Welsh Government to which they then responded. All of the evidence, reports and Welsh Government responses can be accessed on our webpage: www.assembly.wales/SeneddEcon

Business

The Committee has carried out inquiries in order to ensure that businesses in Wales are receiving the right support to prosper. These were:

- **Regeneration of town centres**
- **The potential of the Maritime Economy in Wales**
- **Tourism**
- **Welsh Government Approach to the Promotion of Trade and Inward Investment**

Skills

We carried out inquiries to determine whether or not employers had sufficient skilled workers to grow the economy. These were:

- **Apprenticeships in Wales**
- **Assisting Young People into Work**
- **Employment Opportunities for People Over 50**
- **Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)**
- **Youth Entrepreneurship**

Transport

The Committee looked at a range of issues in order to assess whether or not the transport infrastructure in Wales can cope with demand now and in the future. These were:

- **Active Travel: the Start of the Journey**
- **Bus and community transport in Wales**
- **Future of Wales and Borders Franchise**
- **Priorities for rail infrastructure in Wales**
- **Integrated public transport**
- **International connectivity through Welsh ports and airports**
- **Rugby World Cup Transport**

Mainstreaming of European Union agenda

EU policy and funding have featured in a number of our other inquiries. We have also undertaken a number of dedicated EU inquiries in key strategic areas. These were:

- **EU funding opportunities**
- **Horizon 2020 Stage 1**
- **Horizon 2020 Stage 2**
- **Influencing the modernisation of the EU procurement policy**
- **Draft legislative proposals for EU structural funds 2014-2020**

Legislation

Part of our role involves scrutinising legislation to ensure that it is workable. The legislation we have considered includes:

- **Active Travel (Wales) Bill 2013**

We have considered Legislative Consent Motions – which allow the UK Government to legislate in devolved areas – for the following UK Bills:

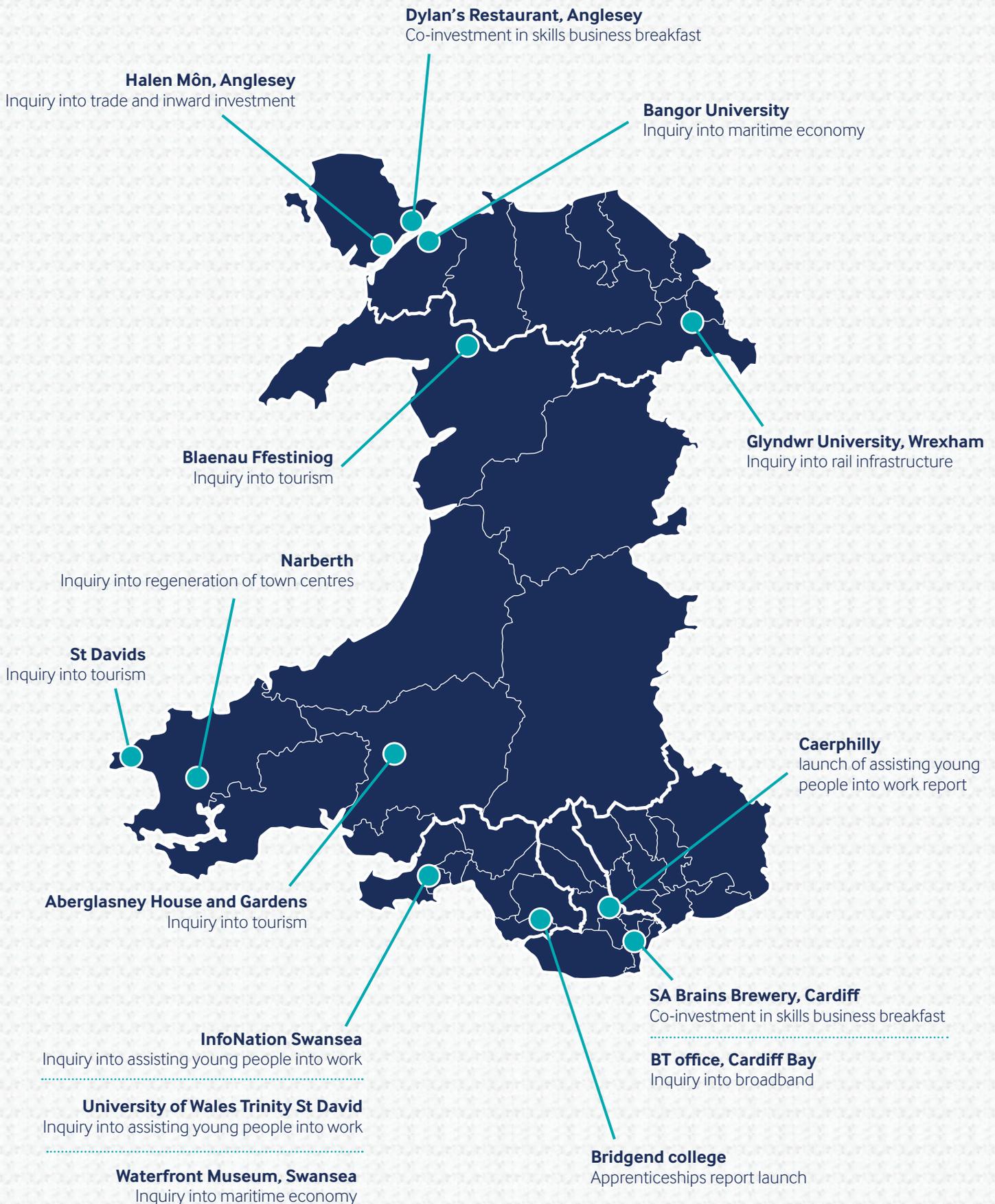
- Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill
- Intellectual Property Bill
- Growth and Infrastructure Bill
- Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill
- Trade Union Bill

Other work

- The proposed Development Bank for Wales
- The City regions, enterprise zones and the planned metro project
- The Welsh Government's approach to large scale job losses
- Maximising the impact of public sector procurement in Wales
- Looking at broadband coverage in Wales

The Committee has also visited London, Manchester, Hereford, Brussels, Luxembourg and Dublin

Committee activity across Wales



The Committee has also visited London, Manchester, Hereford, Brussels, Luxembourg and Dublin.

Looking to the Fifth Assembly

Priorities for the next Assembly

As part of our legacy work we were keen to leave a long list of possible inquiries for a future committee (or committees) to explore. We have broken these down by subject areas.

The Committee expressed a strong preference for these pieces of work in particular:

To consider the impact of the EU referendum (whatever the outcome) on the Welsh economy; and to look more closely at the Welsh Government's Skills strategy.

We also felt that – depending on progress between now and the summer – the governance, progress and development of the METRO project merits further scrutiny.

The next Committee may wish to consider the following suggestions for inquiries:

Skills

- Scrutinise the Welsh Government's skills strategies including whether or not Wales is training people in the right skills for its economic needs.
- Assess the impact of reductions in the Welsh Government's budget for Careers Wales and the consequences of this on their role and remit.
- Scrutinise the Welsh Government's response to the Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance Arrangements (chaired by Professor Sir Ian Diamond) in autumn 2016.

Economy

- Investigate how North Wales can benefit from the Northern powerhouse initiative.
- Scrutinise the purposes of City Regions and what levers will they be given to succeed.
- Seek further clarity on the precise remit of the Development Bank for Wales and the timescales for establishment.
- Inquire into the various options for taking forward changes to Business Rates in Wales.
- Carry out an inquiry into gender and the economy. This could include some gender budgeting to see the impact of spending decisions on different groups.

Transport

- Look into the governance, development and progress of the Metro project.
- Look into the progress of Welsh Government preparations for the next Welsh Rail Franchise.
- Consider how effectively Wales is contributing to reducing carbon dioxide emissions from transport and how Welsh Government policies such as the Active Travel agenda can better support this.
- Assess the impact on the economy of the purchase of Cardiff airport and whether it has generated the improved connectivity and economic benefits anticipated in the business case.
- Consider what improvements have been made to integrating public transport.
- Investigate the provision of highways in Wales and their impact on people, businesses and the environment. For instance, projects such as the upgrading of the A470, the A465, the A55 and the M4 relief road.
- Investigate the Welsh Government's plans for capital funding and how Wales can leverage in additional sources of funding such as European Investment Bank, Connecting Europe Facility and private investment.

Engagement in EU policy and funding

- Investigate the consequences of the EU referendum on the Welsh economy.
- Carry out a review of the Welsh Government's EU Strategy.
- Carry out follow up work on the delivery of the recommendations in the EU Funding Opportunities report, in particular the role of EU Funding Ambassadors in raising awareness of funding opportunities.

