

## **Written Questions answered from 13 to 20 July 2000**

[R] signifies that the Member has declared an interest.

### **Contents**

- 2 Questions to the First Secretary on Economic Development
- 3 Questions to the Secretary for Agriculture and Rural Development
- 5 Questions to the Secretary for Local Government and Housing
- 6 Questions to the Secretary for Education and Children
- 7 Questions to the Secretary for Post-16 Education and Training
- 8 Questions to the Secretary for Health and Social Services
- 9 Questions to the Secretary for the Environment, Planning and Transport

## Questions to the First Secretary on Economic Development

### The Black Box Project

**Nick Bourne:** Does the First Secretary plan to have any discussions with the Ministry of Defence concerning the possibility of the black box project contract being awarded to the Raytheon plant in north Wales? (WAQ6514)

**The First Secretary (Rhodri Morgan):** It is important for Raytheon to secure the successor identification friend or foe (SIFF) contract. I want to help in any way I can. Officials are in touch with Raytheon with a view to establishing how the National Assembly for Wales might be able to help.

### Attracting Jobs to Swansea

**Nick Bourne:** Can the First Secretary report on any plans he has to attract jobs to Swansea? (WAQ6526)

**The First Secretary:** Among the many activities taking place to attract jobs to the Swansea area, the Welsh Development Agency, in partnership with the City and County of Swansea, is promoting Swansea Vale as a mixed development site. Work on the advance call centre complex is nearing completion and infrastructure works are under way to service plots for high-tech manufacturing and distribution uses. The strategic employment site at Felindre is also being serviced with a direct link to the M4 and the site will shortly be the subject of a targeted inward investment campaign in the United States of America. Work has commenced on a quality office development at Lakeside, Swansea to attract e-commerce and customer contact businesses. The Technium Centre at the Prince of Wales Dock will be completed in October and will provide premises, as well as back up support, for new and fledgling businesses in the field of technology.

The overall strategy for attracting jobs to Swansea focuses on knowledge-based and added-value manufacturing business covering start-ups, expansion of existing businesses as well as inward investment.

### Attracting More Call Centres to Wales

**Nick Bourne:** Can the First Secretary report on any plans to attract more call centres to Wales after the recent closure of those belonging to First Line Mobile? (WAQ6527)

**The First Secretary:** The attraction of quality customer contact centres into Wales continues to be a key focus for the Assembly, the WDA, and other more specific initiatives. A number of steps are under way to ensure that we have a competitive climate and facilities in Wales to attract quality contact centres. Last year 11 projects were secured from within this sector representing over 4,000 jobs and £56.7 million capital investment. This effort will be sustained in the coming year.

### Implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review on Economic Development

**Nick Bourne:** Can the First Secretary report on any discussions that he has had with members of the Treasury team, or any of his Westminster colleagues, as regards the spending review and its implications on Welsh economic development? (WAQ6530)

**The First Secretary:** I have ongoing discussions about the spending review with both the Chancellor and Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

## **Questions to the Secretary for Agriculture and Rural Development**

### **Ensuring that Farmers Receive a Fairer Price for their Produce**

**Nick Bourne:** Can the Secretary for Agriculture and Rural Development report on plans she has to ensure that farmers receive a fairer price for their produce from supermarkets? (WAQ6483)

**The Secretary for Agriculture and Rural Development (Christine Gwyther):** I have met a number of the major retail companies to discuss issues which arise from the farming crisis, including the questions of pricing and profit margins in the dairy, processing and retail sectors and to consider what can be done to alleviate the situation.

The industry is aware of the need to see best practice in business relationships throughout the supply chain with particular relevance to farmers and small producers. I am pleased that in my meeting with major retailers they have assured me that they will be working to follow the Institution of Grocery Distribution's Code of Practice.

### **Encouraging Consumers to Buy More Local Produce**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Christine Gwyther report on any plans she has to reduce the present supermarket monopoly and encourage consumers to buy more local produce? (WAQ6484)

**Christine Gwyther:** The Competition Commission is continuing its monopoly inquiry into supermarkets, looking into such issues as price competition, competition in terms of services and sites for which the consumer may be paying, and how the supermarkets treat their suppliers. The Commission is due to report at the end of July 2000.

The National Assembly, together with the Agri-Food Partnership and the Welsh Development Agency Food Directorate, is working to promote Welsh food through the agri-food strategy. The Agri-Food Partnership is heavily and successfully involved in pursuing opportunities with all supermarkets in Wales to promote and encourage the supply of locally produced products.

### **Developments and Discussions regarding the Tir Mynydd Scheme**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Christine Gwyther report on any further developments in relation to the approval and implementation of Tir Mynydd? (WAQ6485)

**Nick Bourne:** Can Christine Gwyther report on any recent discussions that she has had with the European Union in relation to the hill farming support scheme? (WAQ6486)

**Christine Gwyther:** Negotiations are continuing with the Commission on the rural development plan for Wales, including the Tir Mynydd scheme for the less favoured areas.

### **Damage from Genetically Modified Crops**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Christine Gwyther report on any measures that she proposes to introduce to ensure that the crops of conventional and organic farmers will be protected from damage by GM crops? (WAQ6510)

**Christine Gwyther:** If I become aware of damage to the environment as a direct result of the planting of GM crops then I will take action to suspend the authorisation or ask the UK Government subject to the legal basis under which the crop is being grown. I refer you to the paper ref. ARD 18-99, which was considered by the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee on 15 December 1999, on this.

The UK Government has been encouraging discussions between organic farmers and SCIMAC, the supply chain initiative on modified agricultural crops, aimed at finding ways that the two systems can live together. The Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is reviewing separation distances following the recent contamination of Advanta's oilseed rape seeds which were grown in Canada. The results of this review are expected later this year, and I will fully consider the findings in deciding whether to propose any specific further measures necessary to protect conventional and organic farming in Wales.

### **Monitoring the Development and Planting of GM Crops in Wales**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Christine Gwyther report on any plans she has to establish a regulatory process to monitor the development and planting of GM crops in Wales? (WAQ6511)

**Christine Gwyther:** I shall be considering the monitoring and assessment of the farm-scale evaluations when these are available with a view to considering what lessons may be appropriate.

### **The Proposal to Ban Hunting with Hounds (Representations)**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Christine Gwyther report on any representations that she has had against the proposal to ban hunting with hounds in Wales? (WAQ6512)

**Christine Gwyther:** I have received many representations both for and against a ban on hunting with dogs from individuals and organised groups.

### **Meetings with People who are Involved in Hunting with Hounds**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Christine Gwyther report if she has had any meetings with any Welsh people who are involved in hunting with hounds? (WAQ6513)

**Christine Gwyther:** I refer the Member to my answer on 10 July to an earlier question by him on this subject.

### **Implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review on Agriculture**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Christine Gwyther report on any discussions she has had with members of the Treasury team, or any of her Westminster colleagues, as regards the spending review and its implications on Welsh agriculture and rural development? (WAQ6518)

**Christine Gwyther:** I am in regular contact with my Westminster colleagues about issues affecting Welsh agriculture and rural development.

### **The Launch of the All-Wales Meat Co-operative**

**Peter Rogers:** Will Christine Gwyther reveal how much money was spent on the launch of the all-Wales Meat Co-operative from the WDA agri-food budget? (WAQ6546)

**Christine Gwyther:** I have asked the Chair of the Welsh Development Agency to write to you with the information.

### **Reduction in the Suckler Cow Quota**

**Peter Rogers:** How much will the reduction in the suckler cow quota take out of farmers' incomes, including two headage payments, slaughter premium, suckler cow payments and extensification payment? (WAQ6547)

**Christine Gwyther:** As part of Agenda 2000 reform of the common agricultural policy, the UK was required to reduce the suckler cow premium scheme quota ceiling by 95,600 units. The farming industry was consulted on the way the cut should be implemented. The consensus of opinion was that any reduction to farmers' quota level should be kept to a minimum. Consequently, most of the cut, which becomes effective for the 2000 scheme year, will be achieved by use of the national reserve. The remainder of the cut will be achieved by reducing producers' individual quota by 2.75 per cent. Those producers who hold 3.6 quota units or less are exempt from any cut. For those farmers who are investors and/or extensifiers there is an appeals procedure for reinstatement of quota. Appellants must submit their appeals to the Llandrindod Wells Divisional Office by 4 August 2000.

Until the outcome of the appeals procedure has been decided the precise effect on farm incomes will not be known, but it is estimated it will be less than £850,000 for the suckler cow premium and the extensification schemes. The slaughter premium scheme is not affected by the cut in quota.

## **Questions to the Secretary for Local Government and Housing**

### **Funding Formula for Local Government**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Secretary for Local Government and Housing make a statement in relation to any plans he has to review the funding formula for local government in Wales? (WAQ6535)

**The Secretary for Local Government and Housing (Peter Law):** The funding formula for revenue distribution (the standard spending assessment formula) has just been comprehensively reviewed by the consultative forum on finance's distribution sub-group. Councillor Sir Harry Jones, leader of the Welsh Local Government Association, and I presented the distribution sub-group's report to Assembly Members and local government representatives on 3 July. Following the Plenary debate on 11 July, we are now consulting widely on the distribution sub-group's proposals. Consultation will end on 8 September. I will consider responses to the consultation and reporting to the consultative forum on finance on 9 October. An Assembly Plenary debate on the review has now been scheduled for 12 October, so that the Assembly can give its further views, informed by responses to the consultation.

### **Supplementary Business Rate for Wales**

**Nick Bourne:** Will Peter Law make a statement in relation to any plans he has to introduce a supplementary business rate for Wales? (WAQ6536)

**Peter Law:** Proposals for giving councils in Wales and in England limited powers to set a supplementary local business rate are likely to be published later this year. There will be extensive consultation with business and local government in both countries and the Local Government and Housing Committee will have the opportunity to consider the proposals further in the autumn.

### **Business Rate Revaluation**

**Nick Bourne:** What objections has Peter Law had to the business rate revaluation, and will he list them? (WAQ6537)

**Peter Law:** I have received representations from, or on behalf of, the following business organisations concerning the impact of the 2000 revaluation.

Alan's Furnishers  
Bear Hotel, Crickhowell  
Body Shop, Swansea  
Boots the Chemists Ltd

British Holiday and Home Parks Association  
British Retail Consortium  
Brook Inn, Haverfordwest  
Buck Horse Hotel, Bangor

Caravan and Camping Forum  
CBI Wales  
Corus  
David Lloyd Leisure Ltd  
Egerton Grey Country House Hotel, Rhoose  
First Hydro  
First Motorway Services  
Floorex Carpets Ltd  
Golden Sands Holiday Camp Ltd  
Happy Home Furnishers  
Llink Group Ltd  
Marriott Hotel, Cardiff  
Marriott Hotel, Swansea  
Masons Arms, Flintshire  
Metropole hotel, Llandrindod Wells  
Morgan's Brasserie, St Davids  
Orb Steel Works  
Parc Caerelwan

Penhelig Arms, Aberdyfi  
Pound World  
Red Hart Inn, Monmouthshire  
Red Lion, Builth Wells  
Rizla UK Ltd  
Royal Oak, Flintshire  
Solutia UK Ltd  
St Pierre Hotel, Golf and Country Club  
Talacre Beach Caravan and Leisure Park  
The Horseshoe Inn, Pontypool  
Wales Tourist Board  
Warpool Court Hotel, Pembrokeshire  
Welsh Golfing Union  
Whitbread plc  
Wisco  
Ye Olde Bulls Head Inn, Beaumaris  
Ynyshir Hall Hotel, Machynlleth  
Yr Hen Lew Du, Aberystwyth

A transitional relief scheme has been introduced to protect small businesses from the adverse effects of the revaluation. More than one in three properties—almost 90 per cent of those with increases of 10 per cent or more in their bills—are benefiting from the scheme.

### **Implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review on Local Government and Housing**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Peter Law report on any discussions that he has had with members of the Treasury team, or any of his Westminster colleagues, as regards the comprehensive spending review and its implications on local government and housing in Wales? (WAQ6538)

**Peter Law:** I am in regular contact with my Westminster colleagues about issues which affect local government and housing in Wales.

## **Questions to the Secretary for Education and Children**

### **Supporting Children with Hearing Impairment**

**Jenny Randerson:** Will the Secretary for Education and Children ensure that the education service can intervene early—before the age of two—to support very young children identified with hearing impairment? (WAQ6476)

**The Secretary for Education and Children (Rosemary Butler):** Section 331 of the Education Act 1996 already empowers a local education authority to make an assessment of the special educational needs of a child under the age of two if a parent requests one or the LEA, with the parents' consent, considers one necessary. A LEA can then make and maintain a statement of special educational needs in the light of such an assessment.

The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs sets out guidance on the making of assessments and statements together with programmes of support to which the LEA must have regard. For the very young LEAs should consider home-based programmes such as Portage or peripatetic services for children with hearing and visual impairment.

The earlier a disability is identified the more effective the planning and intervention to meet a child's special educational needs is likely to be. The Children First programme requires health authorities,

education and social services to combine information about children with disabilities and special educational needs, and the services being provided for them. In addition, the Sure Start initiative, and the special educational needs regional planning projects which I approved last year will strengthen the working relationships between LEAs, health authorities, NHS trusts and other organisations with an interest in the future of children with low-incidence disabilities such as hearing impairments. They will facilitate even earlier identification and intervention, and a more effective sharing of information across organisational boundaries towards this goal.

### Discussions regarding the Comprehensive Spending Review

**Nick Bourne:** Can Rosemary Butler report on any discussions that she has had with members of the Treasury team, or any of her Westminster colleagues, as regards the comprehensive spending review and its implications on education and children in Wales? (WAQ6534)

**Rosemary Butler:** I am in regular contact with my Westminster colleagues about issues affecting education and children in Wales.

### Questions to the Secretary for Post-16 Education and Training

#### Access Funds

**Elin Jones:** How much has each higher education institution received and distributed in access funds over the last five years for which figures are available? (WAQ6575)

**The Secretary for Post-16 Education and Training (Tom Middlehurst):** The information that you have requested is in the table below. Where the amount of access funds disbursed is greater than that received by the institution, either interest from the account has been added or the institution has supplemented from its own resources the amount made available from the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.

	1998-99		1997-98		1996-97		1995-96		1994-95	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Institution</b>	Received	Disbursed	Received	Disbursed	Received	Disbursed	Received	Disbursed	Received	Disbursed
University of Glamorgan	477,381	481,046	161,571	181,831	161,571	161,751	149,320	149,320	140,364	140,364
University of Wales, Aberystwyth	209,086	214,670	152,778	154,500	142,770	152,778	142,770	142,770	139,839	139,839
University of Wales, Bangor	229,312	234,345	154,518	159,985	126,795	129,263	126,795	126,795	126,795	124,826
Cardiff University	433,777	439,370	287,580	297,705	287,580	287,580	281,864	281,864	280,099	280,099
University of Wales, Lampeter	54,742	56,242	29,921	30,670	28,328	29,921	25,405	25,405	25,041	25,041
University of Wales Swansea	292,683	308,157	193,815	199,856	193,815	193,815	187,473	187,473	181,279	181,279
University of Wales College of Medicine	76,407	85,820	33,763	45,700	32,805	33,763	32,805	32,805	32,805	32,805
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff	211,870	119,413	115,362	122,101	112,820	115,362	109,004	109,004	102,440	102,440
University of Wales College, Newport	218,143	222,311	56,985	58,155	56,262	56,735	56,262	55,958	53,588	53,580
North East Wales Institute	135,372	137,539	42,343	43,604	41,750	42,343	41,750	41,750	41,750	40,816
Swansea Institute of Higher Education	119,215	117,996	54,602	57,241	54,602	54,602	54,602	51,544	53,179	53,179
Trinity College, Carmarthen	50,826	51,325	32,761	34,280	31,540	32,761	25,226	25,226	24,673	24,673
Welsh College of Music and Drama	16,187	16,180	12,631	12,950	12,631	12,631	12,631	12,631	12,631	12,631
Coleg Normal	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	25,255	25,255	25,255	25,255	25,255	24,390
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,525,001</b>	<b>2,484,415</b>	<b>1,328,630</b>	<b>1,398,578</b>	<b>1,308,524</b>	<b>1,328,560</b>	<b>1,271,162</b>	<b>1,267,800</b>	<b>1,239,738</b>	<b>1,235,962</b>

### Access Funds (Success of Applications)

**Elin Jones:** What percentage of applications for access funds to each of the higher education institutions in Wales which have been successful? (WAQ6578)

**Tom Middlehurst:** The information that you have requested is in the table below.

Institution	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
	%	%	%	%	%
University of Glamorgan	63.33	77.05	59.93	62.69	77.39
University of Wales, Aberystwyth	58.55	57.53	50.47	60.29	94.05
University of Wales, Bangor	80.82	88.68	93.94	94.21	96.56
Cardiff University	74.09	100.00	83.23	88.32	92.51
University of Wales, Lampeter	76.04	60.16	72.34	88.54	88.83
University of Wales Swansea	90.35	96.45	93.08	82.66	95.37
University of Wales College of Medicine	77.82	55.90	75.68	51.88	68.92
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff	40.94	42.63	54.33	58.93	51.16
University of Wales College, Newport	91.51	87.07	89.88	90.05	95.32
North East Wales Institute	93.98	98.17	99.28	100.00	96.44
Swansea Institute of Higher Education	53.54	49.54	54.37	58.20	63.24
Trinity College Carmarthen	100.00	96.27	94.88	95.30	96.97
Welsh College of Music and Drama	48.21	45.45	46.62	43.97	58.54
Coleg Normal	100.00	86.67	86.67	n/a	n/a

### Questions to the Secretary for Health and Social Services

#### Funding for the Health Service in North Wales

**Nick Bourne:** Can the Secretary for Health and Social Services make a statement on the present levels of funding given to the health service in north Wales? (WAQ6491)

**The Secretary for Health and Social Services (Jane Hutt):** In 2000-01, Welsh health authorities received a total revenue allocation of £2.2 billion. This included an overall cash increase of £196 million (9.4 per cent cash terms or 7.15 per cent real terms) over 1999-2000. North Wales Health Authority received £513.2 million, an increase of £43.4 million over 1999-2000.

North Wales received a further £9.2 million as its weighted capitation share of the £40 million allocation that I announced on 17 May for a range of initiatives, including joint working with social services and others, emergency and winter pressures, and for the NHS to reduce waiting times and lists. It will also receive £5.7 million as its share of an additional £25 million allocation, to address priorities that I have agreed with the Health and Social Services Committee in accordance with its health improvement programme.

#### Protecting and Supporting Community Hospitals

**Nick Bourne:** Will Jane Hutt report on any plans she has to protect and support community hospitals in Wales? (WAQ6505)

**Jane Hutt:** I recently addressed the Community Hospitals Association annual conference on the future of community hospitals in Wales. I endorsed the approach set out in the document 'Community Hospitals—The Future' issued by the Welsh Office in 1996. This guidance recognises the important overall contribution of community hospitals as part of a co-ordinated health service in Wales. It stresses the need



for a clear, locally agreed role for each individual hospital. As with other NHS facilities, this clear role, underpinned by high standards and quality services, is essential to the future success of each unit.

### **Funding Advocacy Organisations for Disabled People**

**Jenny Randerson:** Has Jane Hutt given any consideration to the need to fund advocacy organisations for disabled people, currently funded by local authorities, directly from the Assembly? (WAQ6515)

**Jane Hutt:** I have given no specific consideration to the Assembly directly funding local advocacy organisations for disabled people. However, the general issue of Assembly direct funding is one of the areas under consideration as part of the strategic review of voluntary sector funding initiated by the shadow Voluntary Sector Partnership Council.

### **Implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review on Health and Social Services**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Jane Hutt report on any discussions that she has had with members of the Treasury team, or any of her Westminster colleagues, as regards the comprehensive spending review and its implications on the Welsh health and social services? (WAQ6531)

**Jane Hutt:** I am in regular contact with my Westminster colleagues about issues affecting Welsh health and social services.

### **The Royal Institute of Psychiatry's Report on Mental Health Services**

**David Melding:** When will the Royal Institute of Psychiatry's report on mental health services at Whitchurch Hospital, Cardiff be released? (WAQ6542)

**Jane Hutt:** The Royal Institute of Psychiatry's report was commissioned by the Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust. I understand that the findings of the report will be published in the near future.

## **Questions to the Secretary for the Environment, Planning and Transport**

### **Restrictions on the Height of Wind Turbines**

**Nick Bourne:** Will the Secretary for the Environment, Planning and Transport please make a statement on instructions given to Ceredigion County Council regarding restrictions placed on the height of wind turbines and the maximum number allowed in any one development? (WAQ6316)

**The Secretary for the Environment, Planning and Transport (Sue Essex):** I am not aware of the instructions to which you refer. National planning policy in Wales is set out in Planning Guidance Wales, and for wind power developments, in the accompanying Technical Advice Note 8 'Renewable Energy'. This imposes no prescriptive restrictions of the type you outline.

### **Restoring Ewenny Priory Church**

**Alun Cairns:** Will Sue Essex make a statement on the plans to complete restoration on Ewenny Priory Church? (WAQ6516)

**Sue Essex:** Ewenny Priory Church is divided into two parts. The nave continues in ecclesiastical use while the crossing and chancel are in the care of the National Assembly and managed by Cadw as an ancient monument. The Preservation Trust of Ewenny Priory Church received a grant of £279,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to undertake a major restoration programme on the nave of the church. Cadw fully supported this application and monitored the work on behalf of the Heritage Lottery Fund. To

coincide with this, Cadw has carried out substantial repairs to the church tower roof and intends to undertake a programme of conservation work in various areas of the church under its management, starting with the south transept.

### **Developments regarding Implementing the Right to Roam**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Sue Essex report on any further developments as regards implementing the right to roam in Wales? (WAQ6517) *Transferred from the Secretary for Agriculture and Rural Development.*

**Sue Essex:** Provisions for access to the open countryside are contained in Part I of the Countryside and Rights of Way Bill which has now been discussed in the Commons by Standing Committee. The Bill is now to be discussed in the House of Lords and our wish is that it will receive Royal Assent in November.

The Assembly has provided additional funding for the Countryside Council for Wales to undertake responsibilities arising from the Bill including preparatory work connected with mapping 'open country' and registered common land in Wales. It is also providing support for the establishment and running of a number of local access forums.

The access provisions of the Bill were discussed at the Environment, Planning and Transport Committee on 22 June and the central tenets of the Bill are to be discussed again by the Committee in the autumn. I will continue to discuss with various interested parties ways in which the right of access can be best implemented in Wales.

### **Implementing Regulations on Building Wind Farms in Wales**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Sue Essex report on proposals that she has to implement regulations as regards the building of wind farms in Wales? (WAQ6519)

**Sue Essex:** National planning policy in Wales favours the development of renewable energy, but only where it is environmentally acceptable. Planning guidelines are published in Planning Guidance (Wales): Planning Policy, First Revision (April 1999) and in the accompanying Technical Advice Note 8 'Renewable Energy' (November 1996). A review of planning policy is underway, and the resulting draft Planning Policy Wales will issue for consultation towards the end of the year. A draft energy strategy for Wales is also being developed, and the implications for planning policy will be considered in tandem.

### **New Road Safety Measures for Brecon and Radnorshire**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Sue Essex report on any new road safety measures that are being proposed for Brecon and Radnorshire? (WAQ6520)

**Sue Essex:** On the trunk road network, a road safety scheme at Crickhowell has been approved this year. In addition, some 25 small schemes are currently proposed within Brecon and Radnorshire, all of which have some road safety implication. Progress will be subject to the availability of finance and the acquisition of land.

Recently I announced an additional allocation of £245,000 to Powys County Council for this year to be targeted specifically at road safety projects on the local road network.

### **New Road Safety Measures for Ceredigion**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Sue Essex report on any new road safety measures that are being proposed for Ceredigion? (WAQ6521)

**Sue Essex:** On the trunk road network, four local road safety schemes have been approved in Ceredigion this year. All schemes are on the A487, at Commins Coch, Penglais Road, Aberystwyth, Great Darkgate

Street, Aberystwyth and at the Gogerddan Arms, Tanygroes. A further three schemes are currently under consideration. These are on the A487 at Llanfarian and Tre'r Ddol and on A44 at Lovesgrove Junction, Aberystwyth.

Recently I announced an additional allocation of £119,000 to Ceredigion County Council for this year to be targeted specifically at road safety projects on the local road network.

### **Implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review on Environment, Planning and Transport**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Sue Essex report on any discussions that she has had with members of the Treasury, or any of her Westminster colleagues, as regards the comprehensive spending review and its implications on the Welsh environment, planning and transport? (WAQ6522)

**Sue Essex:** I am in regular contact with my Westminster colleagues about issues affecting the Welsh environment, planning and transport.

### **The Talgarth Bypass**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Sue Essex report on any further developments as regards the Talgarth bypass? (WAQ6523)

**Sue Essex:** Following the abandonment of the Welsh Office's proposals considered at the February 1998 public inquiry, various options are being considered with a view to a further public consultation later this year on a relief road for Talgarth.

I had a useful meeting on 13 July with representatives of Talgarth Town Council on the town's traffic problems, and their view will be taken into consideration as the options are developed.

### **New Road Safety Measures for Pembrokeshire**

**Nick Bourne:** Can Sue Essex report on any new road safety measures that are being proposed for Pembrokeshire? (WAQ6524)

**Sue Essex:** On the trunk road network, two local safety schemes have been approved in Pembrokeshire this year. Both schemes are on the A40, at Redstone Cross and Letterston. A further five schemes are currently under consideration. These are on the A4076 at Castle Terrace, Milford Haven, The Vine, North Johnston and Dredgman Hill, Haverfordwest, on the A40 at Canaston Bridge and on the A477 at Ferry Lane Junction, Pembroke Dock.

Recently I announced an additional allocation of £162,000 to Pembrokeshire County Council for this year to be targeted specifically at road safety projects on the local road network.

### **Changing Pub Names**

**Nick Bourne:** Will Sue Essex consider proposals for the requirement of planning permission in order to change pub names? (WAQ6541)

**Sue Essex:** The choice of pub names, and the reaction to them, are subjective matters and I do not think it would be appropriate to consider making that choice subject to planning control.