

Answers issued to Members on 31 October 2008

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

[W] signifies that the question was tabled in Welsh.

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Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

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Darren Millar (Clwyd West): Further to WAQ45316, can the Minister give an update on the response? (WAQ52667)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Edwina Hart): The Welsh Assembly Government launched the Central Energy Fund in 2006, providing £3.1 million for energy efficient investment schemes.

Biomass boilers have been installed in new hospitals currently under construction and these and other renewable energy systems are being evaluated.

A study of on-site wind turbines identified four sites with potential for wind power and an in-depth investigation is underway at Withybush, the most promising site.

Solar photovoltaic electricity is in use at Bronllys Hospital which at peak capacity can meet half the hospital's demand.

A number of initiatives to promote low carbon and renewable energy have been developed by NHS organisations. A new BREEAM Healthcare standard has been developed which includes assessment of energy performance of new schemes.

Low carbon technologies are also being promoted with several new Combined Heating and Power schemes planned, the largest under construction at University Hospital of Wales.

Questions to the Minister for Heritage

Eleanor Burnham (North Wales): Will the Minister make a statement on historic listed buildings owned by local authorities? (WAQ52664)

The Minister for Heritage (Alun Ffred Jones): Published circular states that local authorities should manage their own listed buildings in ways which provide examples of good practice to other owners. They should make every effort to maintain historic buildings in good condition, and to find appropriate new uses for buildings in authority ownership no longer in active use.

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): What plans has the Minister got to ensure the continued adequate funding of current advice providers following the tendering process of Community Legal Services under the 'Making Legal Rights a Reality in Wales' strategy? (WAQ52674)

The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government (Brian Gibbons): Many current advice providers have a rich history in tendering for services and the opportunity that could arise from these developments should be acknowledged.

The LSC, Law Society and Advice Services Alliance have provided How to Tender workshops, which were available to all providers. Further sessions will also be offered. A south Wales session has been arranged in Caerphilly on 11th November 2008—there are plans for an identical event in north Wales but the date has yet to be confirmed.

We are committed to an ongoing consultative process as plans for CLANs develop. Open meetings will be held in all areas once discussions have developed to the point where there is a meaningful update to deliver and a proper opportunity to engage and elicit views.

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): What assessment has the Minister made of the impact of competitive tendering and marketisation of Community Legal Services under the WAG and Legal Services Commission strategy 'Making Legal Rights a Reality in Wales' on the future of advice services in Wales? (WAQ52675)

Brian Gibbons: The intention of 'Making Legal Rights a Reality in Wales' is to provide a comprehensive advice service to citizens of Wales.

To date, publicly funded legal advice has been governed by the location of the advice providers. It is now crucial to place the citizen at the heart of service delivery so that their needs are met.

It is essential to secure the services of the best quality advice providers, to offer the best quality service, based on a formal needs assessment and encompassing an open consultation process. We must make the best use of the funds at our disposal to achieve the best return for public money in line with the policies and priorities of the 'One Wales' Government.