

**Response from petitioner, Cllr Sam Swash, to correspondence shared via the Senedd
Petition's Committee re: Petition P-06-1521**

Taken together, the responses to the Committee from Welsh Water and the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs reinforce the central concern raised by this petition: that park home residents remain uniquely exposed to unfair charging and environmental harm because the current legal and regulatory framework provides them with neither individual consumer rights, nor effective regulatory protection.

It is reassuring to see that the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary is now recognising that this is the case in his latest response. However, and despite increasingly widespread acknowledgement of the problem, park home residents continue to bear financial responsibility for water they have neither used, nor have the ability to control.

Welsh Water's response

Welsh Water confirms that it did not serve a formal notice under Section 75 of the Water Industry Act 1991, nor did it pursue prosecution under Section 73, despite acknowledging prolonged and significant leakage on the network.

I think it is important at this point to reiterate the scale of the injustice: millions of gallons of water was leaked over a five year period for which residents paid more than £350,000 – and Welsh Water did not use its discretion to statutorily intervene.

Despite Welsh Water's assertion that the issues on Willow Park have been 'resolved', this is not the case. Just this week, a significant leak has again been ongoing at Willow Park for more than 5 days. Under the current arrangements, the residents of the park, many elderly and on fixed incomes, will once again bear the financial cost of water they have not used.

Deputy First Minister's Response

The petitioners welcome the Deputy First Minister's acknowledgement of the problem. However, directing residents toward engagement with the Green and White Paper processes is not sufficient in light of the scale of the injustice exposed at this site.

These processes are necessarily lengthy and complex, and in the meantime, park home residents will continue to face serious financial harm.

It is important to also note that park home residents represent a small and often vulnerable demographic. Many are elderly and digitally excluded, making meaningful participation in inadequately promoted national consultation exercises inherently difficult. Suggesting this as the primary route to justice risks excluding precisely those who are most affected.

Further Concerns

Given the above, it is difficult to reconcile suggestions made previously by some members of the Petitions Committee to close this petition in the face of clear evidence that the underlying injustice persists.

As it stands, the situation at Willow Park is:

- Residents have already paid an estimated £350,000 for water lost through leaks beyond their control
- A further leak is currently ongoing (for which they will be charged)
- Residents remain legally treated as a single customer despite living in 159 separate homes
- Neither the water undertaker nor the regulator is required to intervene
- Regulators describe disputes as 'private matters'

If a petition demonstrating ongoing financial harm, environmental waste, and acknowledged regulatory gaps does not justify continued scrutiny, it is unclear what threshold would.

Whilst wider water reform is being considered at UK and Welsh Government level (and is cautiously welcomed by the petitioners), this should not be viewed as a reason for inaction.

Both primary and secondary legislative options are available to the Welsh Government now, including granting park home residents a statutory right to individual water meters, or by amending the model standards under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 to impose duties on mobile home site owners to install individual water meters.

It does not require waiting for wholesale reform of the water sector to begin addressing this injustice.

Conclusion

Closing the petition at this stage would not provide a resolution to the issues raised; it would simply leave affected residents to continue navigating a system already acknowledged to produce unfair outcomes whilst hoping that government reform might at some point in the future address the problem.

The petitioners therefore respectfully urge the Committee to keep the petition open and to press the Welsh Government to pursue immediate legislative or regulatory remedies alongside longer-term reform work.

Park home residents are not asking for special treatment – they're asking for the same basic protections which every other household in Wales already takes for granted.