

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru / National Assembly for Wales
Y Pwyllgor Materion Allanol a Deddfwriaeth Ychwanegol / The External
Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee
Bil y Diddymu Mawr / The Great Repeal Bill
EAAL(5) GRB 06
Ymateb gan Involve / Evidence from Involve

Consultation on the Great Repeal Bill and its implications for Wales

The Involve Foundation ('Involve') provides below its response to question 4.1 of the above consultation, namely:

“How can the Assembly ensure that the Welsh people, stakeholders and organisations have sufficient opportunity to contribute to the legislative processes established by the Great Repeal Bill?”

About Involve

1.1 Involve is the UK's leading authority on public participation. We develop opportunities for engagement, collaboration and accountability that work for both citizens and organisations.

1.2 Since our foundation in 2004, we have partnered with international, national and local organisations – including the OECD, Open Government Partnership, Cabinet Office, Houses of Parliament, NHS England, Scottish Government, local authorities and clinical commissioning groups – to transform how the public sector engages with citizens, communities and stakeholders.

1.3 We focus on the practical reality of public participation, to bring about:

Better practice – in engagement strategy, design and delivery

New thinking – through research, evaluation and advocacy

Greater capacity – with training, mentoring and advice

We work with organisations committed to involving citizens in meaningful ways.

1.4 We are registered charity number 1130568 and registered company number 05669443.

How can the Assembly ensure that the Welsh people, stakeholders and organisations have sufficient opportunity to contribute to the legislative processes established by the Great Repeal Bill?”

Opportunities to contribute

2.1 The Assembly should consider providing the Welsh people, stakeholders and organisations with an opportunity to help shape **Assembly procedures and processes** around the Great Repeal Bill, for example how secondary legislation should be made and approved. It should also give Welsh people, stakeholders and organisations an opportunity to contribute to the **content of legislative processes** (i.e. the issues and policies under consideration) established by the Great Repeal Bill.

2.2 The Assembly should consider at which points in its decision-making and scrutiny processes the Welsh people, stakeholders and organisations should be given an opportunity to contribute. These should include **engaging these groups before relevant decisions are made** so that their views can help shape the Assembly’s decision-making, not just in scrutiny activities once decisions have been made.

2.3 The Assembly should focus its engagement work where the views of the Welsh people, stakeholders and organisations **have a genuine opportunity to influence its decisions and where it is most important for Assembly Members to be fully informed about these groups’ views and wishes**. Engaging people where there is no room for influence is counterproductive in terms of the public’s and stakeholders’ attitudes towards the Assembly. It is also a waste of resources for both the Assembly and participants. The Assembly may most wish to engage these groups on issues which have the greatest significance for the future workings of the Assembly (and thereby devolved decision-making), have the greatest potential direct impact on people’s lives, or where it feels these groups’ hold specialist knowledge necessary to ensure informed decision-making.

Assembly expertise

3.1 The Assembly conducts excellent work to engage the Welsh people, stakeholders and organisations and give them opportunities to contribute through the work of its committees. **Assembly committees provide an important avenue through which engagement on the legislative processes established by the Great Repeal Bill could take place.**

3.2 Where engagement through existing committees would not provide the Welsh people, stakeholders and organisations with an opportunity to contribute their views before decisions are made, **the Assembly should consider either establishing a new temporary committee to focus on this area or temporarily changing the remit of an existing committee to enable it to lead this work.** For engagement to be effective, it is important that leadership of the work is provided by a relatively small and coherent group.

Conducting effective engagement

4.1 Once the Assembly has identified where it wants to provide opportunities to contribute to the Welsh people, stakeholders and organisations, the next step is to ensure the opportunities provided are effective from both the point of view of the Assembly and participants. Section Three of our report [‘People and participation’](#) provides a **sector-leading nine step guide to designing effective engagement activity. We recommend that the Assembly uses this process.**

4.2 Among other benefits, the nine step process will **ensure the Assembly makes most effective use of its resources, and that its engagement work is of maximum benefit to its Members.** It will do this by ensuring that the Assembly is clear on the desired, scope, purpose and outcomes of its engagement, and that the methods it uses are suitable for both the relevant timescales and budgetary constraints, and its desired participants.

4.3 As well as using the nine step process, the Assembly should also consider Sections Two and Three of [this guide](#), produced by Involve for the Select Committee Engagement Team at the Houses of Parliament. Section Two outlines considerations on **how to make engagement methods successful, for example ensuring their accessibility.** Section Three outlines **a range of tried, tested and effective engagement methods suitable for the Assembly’s use.**

4.4 The guide references in paragraph 4.3 above focuses on engagement activities where the desired participants have direct experience of the issue in hand – for example, engaging mental service users and staff in decision-making on mental health. Whilst some of the legislative processes flowing from the Great Repeal Bill may cover issues where the public will have valuable knowledge derived from lived experience, many of questions may be more technical – for example, how secondary legislation should be made and approved. **On these technical questions, public and stakeholder**

engagement is still immensely valuable: stakeholders may have significant technical expertise, whilst public engagement can increase the representativeness and legitimacy of decisions, and ensure they are taken with public interest front-of-mind. For example, the public can provide decision-makers with information on the values and priorities that they think should inform decisions.

4.5 To engage the public in technical questions, the most effective method the Assembly could use is the method known as a [citizens' jury](#). Citizens' Juries have been used successfully in the UK and across the world by a wide range of public sector and government organisations to get the public's input on complex issues. Recent UK examples include the work of the Scottish Government and Citizen Advice Scotland on energy efficiency (conducted by Involve and Ipsos Mori) and [Coventry Council's public engagement around devolution](#).

A leading role for Wales and its Assembly

5.1 Through the engagement work of its committees, the Assembly has gained a reputation as the leading UK legislature for public and stakeholder engagement – a fact of which the Assembly should be very proud. Its engagement work around the Great Repeal Bill provides the Assembly with a high profile opportunity to again show it is leading the way and setting the standard for how modern day legislatures in the UK should conduct their work.