

Inquiry into the Welsh Government's Historic Environment Policy
Response from John M. Lewis

20 June 2012

The Committee Clerk,
Communities, Equality & Local Government Committee,
National Assembly for Wales,
Cardiff Bay, CF99 1NA.

Dear Sir / Madam,

Royal Commission for Ancient & Historic Monuments in Wales
Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments:
proposed merger

Having spent practically the whole of a working life involved in Archaeology in Wales, first in the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments, the predecessor of Cadw, and then in the National Museum, I write with some concern at the news of the above proposal.

On the face of it, they may appear to be very similar bodies, being both concerned with our 'heritage', in the sense of the field monuments and buildings that have survived to us from the past.

They have, however, very different functions. The Royal Commission's function is to *identify* and *record*. For this they have built up a formidable body of expertise, attested by their meticulous archive and superb publications. Their function is basic: they identify for us what is important. This is a full-time job.

The function of Cadw, on the other hand, as its name implies, is, to *preserve* that heritage: to consolidate the more important ruins, to negotiate with developers to mitigate the effects of their proposals, and to arrange for the archaeological investigation of the site if no method of preservation can be found.

I must apologise for rehearsing what the Committee must already be aware of, but I emphasise them because the differences are radical, and it is vital that they should be respected in whatever form of merger is envisaged. A general pooling of personnel and functions would be a very retrograde step. The functions and expertise of each body should be respected.

Yours sincerely,



J. M. Lewis, M. A., F.S.A.