



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government
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12 April 2021

Dear

ATISN 14985 INSPECTION OF MONUMENTS

Thank you for your request which I received on 12 March 2021. You asked for information about:

1. how often Cadw inspects unmanned guardianship sites? Is it at least once a year?
2. when was of the latest inspection and what were the findings for Bridgend Old Bridge (GM049)?
3. when was of the latest inspection and what were the findings for the New Inn Bridge (GM050)?
4. when was of the latest inspection and were the stones in a safe condition for pedestrians for Ogmore Stepping Stones (GM184)? And would any works to raise and level the stones assist pedestrians and safety?

I will answer your questions in the order set out above.

1. Cadw's guardianship sites undergo several types of inspections for different purposes:
 - a. We undertake quinquennial structural surveys (i.e. every five years) of all sites owned by Cadw or in our guardianship. This is a tendered exercise where the appointed independent experts inspect each site and make recommendations to Cadw;
 - b. Cadw's Conservation Works and Property team undertake frequent inspections for both staffed and unstaffed sites which continued throughout the pandemic last year. Unstaffed sites are inspected on a monthly basis. Those unstaffed sites with key keepers (i.e. behind locked gates) are inspected daily as part of the key keepers' duties. Staffed sites are inspected on a daily basis as part of our custodians' daily checks. In addition, our facilities management company - *Vinci* - undertake vegetation management works and they also report to us any health and safety issues that may be apparent. The frequency of their visits is dependent on whatever seasonal tasks may be required (e.g. grass mowing once a week in the summer but not in the winter);
 - c. Our Health and Safety team visit sites in response to reports of accidents or near misses and I can confirm that there have been no accidents reported at the 3 sites that you have identified within your request for information; and
 - d. Our Field Monument Wardens undertake condition monitoring inspections on a 10 year cycle to all scheduled monuments irrespective of who owns or is responsible for them in order to inform our broad understanding of the state of conservation of the historic environment. The Wardens also inspect sites once damage has been reported.

2. Bridgend Old Bridge (GM049) is owned by Bridgend County Council and is a public right of way. It is not a guardianship monument and therefore not managed or maintained by Cadw. Cadw's Field Monument Warden last inspected the site in October 2019 and noted that the conservation works undertaken in 2005 had started to fail.
3. New Inn Bridge (GM050) is owned by Bridgend County Council. Cadw's Field Monument Warden last inspected the structure in 2013 and, unless concerns are brought to our attention, it is not due to be visited again until 2024 (as part of the 10 year cycle, but delayed a year due to the pandemic restrictions). In 2013 our Warden noted that the condition of the monument had improved. It was also noted that the monument is at constant risk from vehicular damage and would benefit from traffic restriction if possible.
4. I understand you were in contact with us about Ogmore Stepping Stones (GM184) last year. I can confirm our position regarding their safety and potential works remains unchanged - any proposal to realign the stones would undermine their archaeological authenticity and as they are covered twice a day by the tidal river, this naturally makes them uneven and slippery when wet. Therefore it is a matter for individuals to assess the risk before crossing. The stepping stones are regularly inspected by Cadw's Conservation Works and Property Manager and other members of Cadw's conservation team. The latest inspection was made during the week commencing 22 March 2021.

Our Head of Health and Safety carried out an inspection on 8 July 2020 and all of our sites that are associated with various water risks will be assessed as part of our commitment to the Wales Drowning Prevention Strategy 2020-2026. We have also recently joined the Water Wales Safety Group and will of course consider adopting any good practice that is identified within this group.

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response.

Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at the Information Rights Unit, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales
Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely