



PRESS RELEASE

Embargo until 00:01 Monday 26 February 2018

“Decarbonisation or New M4?” – CALM demonstration calls for the Welsh Government to follow through on policy

Today sees CALM – the Campaign Against the Levels Motorway – demonstrating against the M4 Black Route outside The SSE Swalec Stadium in Cardiff.

Inside the stadium Welsh Government officials will be discussing how their Decarbonisation Programme can implement the new Welsh laws protecting the Well-being of Future Generations. Rob Hepworth of CALM says: *“The Welsh Government is rightly proud of its world-leading sustainability legislation – the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Devolution in Wales was founded on the principle of sustainability. The Decarbonisation Programme is essential. Yet we can’t stand back and applaud when the Government’s major infrastructure project is likely to spend £2 billion on an M4 bypass at Newport which will generate huge amounts of carbon dioxide.”*

Rob continues *“This is the first major test of our innovative sustainability legislation. Wales can only pass the test if our Government invests in sustainable transport and low carbon technology rather than an energy-intensive and traffic generating M4 bypass. Sophie Howe, Future Generations Commissioner has been very clear in the strong signal she has sent regarding this ill-conceived project.”*

CALM activist Catherine Linstrum explains *“This legislation requires us to act in recognition of the needs of future generations and not just our current selfish wants. The environment of Wales can no longer be considered a ‘free’ resource to be traded off for short-term gains. We must avoid ruinous levels of global warming. Who can seriously suggest that saving a few minutes of journey time for Amazon and Tesco lorries – or our own cars – on the M4 is worth a permanent increase in traffic and huge destruction to the wildlife-rich Gwent Levels? In their hearts, surely all political parties in Wales know that is true?”*

Catherine continues *“The Well-being of Future Generations legislation is an incredible opportunity for our Government in Wales to take the lead in sustainable, future-proof transport. Instead of focusing on old-fashioned solutions like new motorways, the Welsh Government could be investing in integrated transport, active travel and a dazzling new public transport system which would be the envy of the world.”*

In addition to the huge volume of evidence presented to the ongoing Public Inquiry, CALM issued its position statement¹ to all Assembly Members in January. This made it very clear that building roads just increases congestion through ‘induced

¹ <http://savethelevels.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CALM-statement-Jan-18.pdf>



traffic' whilst pointing out that the claimed economic benefits were likely to be illusory and certainly wouldn't reach areas of need such as the Valleys – the new M4 project would fail to meet its promises whilst swallowing the budget that could be used to make Wales a better place to live and work.

CALM has been very clear that the destruction of the SSSIs of the Gwent Levels would be wholly unacceptable in wildlife and cultural heritage terms. Furthermore, carbon emissions need to be reduced and air quality improved.

The last point about air quality is particularly topical, with the UK and Welsh Governments having been defeated three times in the High Court – most recently in the last week – for their failure to prevent life-threatening air pollution from car exhausts. Indeed, the most polluted street outside London is believed to be Hafodrynys Road in Crumlin. If the lion's share of capital investment for transport goes into a new road then 'induced traffic' will worsen pollution blackspots across South Wales. Think-tanks such as The Bevan Foundation have laid out the alternative vision – affordable bus fares connecting with an effective Metro – these are the measures that can give accessibility to all whilst cleaning the air we breath and dealing with congestion once and for all.

[#DecarboniseTheM4](#) [#NoNewM4](#)

– Ends –

Notes to editors

- 1 The Welsh Government decarbonisation workshop is being held at the SSE Swalec Stadium from 1-4pm. The CALM protest is planned to run from 12.30-1.30pm, outside the building.
- 2 Members of CALM will be available to speak to the media on Monday. Please email savethegwentlevels@gmail.com should you wish to arrange this in advance, or to get further information.
- 3 CALM (the Campaign Against the Levels Motorway) is an alliance of community groups, environmental organisations and individuals all determined to save the Gwent Levels and find better solutions to travel needs in south-east Wales.



The **Campaign Against the Levels Motorway** is an alliance of local people and organisations working to protect the Gwent Levels from the proposed M4 Relief Road and find better solutions to travel needs in south-east Wales.