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National Assembly for Wales

Access to inland water in Wales is a right of equity and social justice

The current situation regarding rights to inland water in Wales is confusing, untenable and unworkable; there should be the same right of public access as there is in Scotland, according to the National Assembly for Wales's Petitions Committee.

"The rivers of Wales are a natural 'gift' that everyone should have the right to enjoy," said Committee Chair, Val Lloyd AM.

"Access should not be based on the vagaries of permissions bestowed or ability to pay, but on the fundaments of equity and social justice.

"We believe there should be the right of non-motorised access to inland water in Wales as there is in Scotland."

Val Lloyd made these comments as the Petitions Committee launched its report into a petition received from the Welsh Canoeing Association.

Welsh canoeists are calling for public access rights along inland water to be clarified and for there to be a statutory right of access in line with what has already happened in Scotland.

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develop an identification system for regular water users.

The Petitions Committee will now be writing to the Chairs of both the Sustainability Committee and the Communities and Culture Committee to ask whether one of them wishes to take forward the suggestion of a full scrutiny inquiry.