

APPLICATION TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE FOR DISPENSATION

Please note that each section MUST be completed. Please refer to the attached
Guidance Notes when completing the form.

1. YOUR DETAILS

Your full name: Anne Carys Jones

Name of your Council: Carmarthenshire County Council; Llansteffan and Llanybri Community Council.

Your address and postcode: Y Garth, The Green, Llansteffan, Carmarthen SA33 5LW

Telephone number(s): 07970 902996

E Mail Address: acarysjones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk; carysjones@cym.ro

2. DETAILS OF YOUR INTEREST

What is the matter under consideration?

PARKING (and other matters regarding use) ON THE GREEN, LLANSTEFFAN: The Green is the strip of land that runs parallel to the beach at Llansteffan. Cars have parked on The Green for many years. Most of The Green is owned by the County Council. One strip of the land is owned by the Community Council. The Green is registered as a Village Green, therefore there is no parking right on it. An official complaint has been lodged by a local resident to the Community Council for "allowing" parking on Village Green land. Both councils face a major dilemma when trying to solve Llansteffan's parking problems. Work is ongoing to resolve this.

What is your interest in the above matter?

I live in the row of houses that runs parallel to The Green. Y Morfa recreation grounds are located behind the house.

No one from the house parks on The Green - we have private parking and a garage.

When will the above matter be considered?

The official complaint was lodged in November 2019, and was discussed at the Community Council meeting on December 16th 2019 when the Community Council voted to seek legal advice before further discussion. The County Council is also in the process of seeking legal opinions. I have been a Community Councillor for the Llansteffan ward of Llansteffan and Llanybri Council since May 9th 2022 and will be expected to continue to bridge between the two councils on this issue. In light of the recently won Leader grant (see below) the need for this dispensation is increasingly important.

Are you applying for dispensation to:

Speak only: ✓

Speak and vote:

Make written representations ✓

Exercise Executive Powers

3. GROUNDS FOR DISPENSATION

Regulations issued by the National Assembly for Wales prescribe the circumstances in which the Standards Committee may grant a dispensation. These grounds for granting a dispensation are summarised below and are set out in full in the attached guidance notes. On which of the following grounds do you believe that a dispensation should be granted in this case? Please tick the appropriate box(es).

• at least half of the members considering the business has an interest	<input type="checkbox"/>
• my inability to participate would upset the political balance of the meeting to such an extent that the outcome would be likely to be affected;	<input type="checkbox"/>
• my participation would not damage public confidence	<input type="checkbox"/> ✓
• the interest is common to me and a significant proportion of the general public;	<input type="checkbox"/> ✓
• my participation in the business is justified by my particular role or expertise;	<input type="checkbox"/> ✓
• the business is to be considered by an overview and scrutiny committee and my interest is not a pecuniary interest;	<input type="checkbox"/>
• the business relates to the finances or property of a voluntary organisation of whose management committee or board I am a member and I have no other interest	<input type="checkbox"/>
• it is appropriate to do so in all the circumstances where not otherwise possible to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate a person's disability	<input type="checkbox"/>

INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF YOUR APPLICATION

Please set out below the reasons why you consider that the Standards Committee should grant a dispensation in this case:

(Please note that failure to complete this section will result in the application form being returned to you)

PARKING ON THE GREEN, LLANSTEFFAN - BACKGROUND:

The Green is the strip of land that runs parallel to the beach at Llansteffan. Cars have parked on The Green for many years - there is evidence of parking on it going back to the '50s and perhaps as far back as the '30s. There is an official Car Park at the southern end of The Green, owned by the County Council, which has 88 car parking spaces. During the summer, or on Bank Holidays, a total of approximately 250-300 cars will be looking for parking to access the beach/facilities/chips/shop.

Most of The Green is owned by the County Council, which is the strip that runs from the Car Park to the Football Field at the northern end of The Green. One strip of land affected by the parking is owned by the Community Council - approximately 10% - which includes the entrance to the northern strip. The Green is registered as a Village Green, therefore there is no parking right on it. For the past 5 years Camper Vans has been staying on the northern strip of The Green - up to 10-12 on some nights, and this has caused a number of unofficial complaints. Over the years the Community Council and the County Council have tried to address the problem of enforcing the parking ban for large vehicles/all vehicles, but this would create serious parking problems in Llansteffan. Both councils are now working together to seek solutions.

WHY NOW?

An Official Complaint was lodged in 2019 to the Community Council by a local resident for "allowing" parking on Village Green land.

Enforcing the parking ban on The Green would mean that:

- Up to 200 cars would be looking for parking places when the Car Park is full;
- Camper Vans taking the space of 2 cars in the Car Park;
- Cars parking along the narrow roads and obstructing access for emergency vehicles;
- Cars parking on the grounds of Y Morfa, which is the recreational land of the village, owned by the County Council;
- Cars parking on private property land/entrances in the village.

(a number of the above already occur on fine days)

It is therefore clear that a solution must be found to these parking problems, not just moving the problem to another part of the village. The Official Complaint means that the matter can no longer be avoided, and the County Council and I have been diligent on this issue since 2019. Over the past two years the County Council has made progress on the legal issues surrounding The Green and sought to identify the problems in resolving the conflict between Village Green status and the historic use made by the community – including parking. This work is now drawing to a close and both councils and the community must consider the implications thoroughly before reaching any decision on the way forward.

MY PART AS A COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR:

I was a Community Councillor for some thirteen years before standing down when I was elected as a County Councillor in 2017. Since 2017 the Community Council has been through an extremely turbulent period, with only one councillor having now been in post throughout the term. Three members are completely new, and four have been councillors for less than two years. Many of the community councillors have very little knowledge of the history of discussing the parking on The Green. The clerk is also fairly inexperienced.

(Cont/d...)

I have been present as an observer at all but one Community Council meeting since 2017 and I am fully conversant with the issues. I have taken my seat on the Community Council this time in order to lend experience and stability to the council, and I was elected Chair for the year 2022-2023. Although I am a County Councillor, I continue to see my role as one of presenting information and offering support to the Community Council so that both councils can work hand-in-hand on issues where appropriate. However, it is vital that I identify any potential conflict of interest and declare those interests and/or withdraw as appropriate.

LEADER GRANT:

In March this year the County Council was successful in winning a Leader grant to appoint an expert consultant to create a social and economics assessment of Llansteffan's needs as a strategic tourism centre. The intention is to create an assessment of the resources currently available and the potential for formalising and improving those resources through consultation with the community and other stakeholders. It is hoped to create fair proposals for the future that support the community in coping with the tourism industry, while offering visitors suitable and adequate resources. This work is likely to commence in May, and the County Council will work closely with Llansteffan and Llanybri Community Council to promote and complete the consultation. It is therefore important that I am able to continue to work to bridge between the two councils through this process.

MY INTEREST:

I live in the row of houses facing The Green and the beach, therefore it could be argued that this issue would affect my convenience, or the value of my house. Cars have driven on The Green in front of my house since I have been living there - 30 years - and neither I or anyone from my home has ever complained. We have private parking and a garage behind the house, therefore parking is not a problem for us. Almost everyone who lives on The Green owns a garage/parking space at the rear.

The Green in front of my house is very narrow, and cars will drive past rather than park as parking would create a barrier to other cars. It is fair to say that my house is one of the houses least affected by parking on The Green. I have no business interest or other interest in this matter.

The welfare of everyone living on The Green is important here. Some enjoy parking on The Green and others object. Those who live on roads slightly back from the beach are also affected - some of them, again, much more than me.

The parking, or any changes to the parking, affects everyone in the village in one way or another, and therefore I feel that I would not be doing my job if I completely disengaged from the matter. I think the public would be disappointed if I couldn't continue to contribute to ensuring that everything is discussed and decided between the two councils in an open and transparent manner.

It's important to say that I do not have an opinion regarding parking on The Green. The parking has not bothered me, but I have been aware all along that the day would come when the problems would have to be faced and an arrangement sought to solve the problem. I have had time to consider the implications of various possible new arrangements, and have identified them so that the community and the County Council can consider all options thoroughly.

Eventually a plan will have to be found that solves the parking problem on The Green. I believe I have an impartial contribution to make in promoting the process, without influencing, while ensuring that everyone considers all possibilities and implications - for the sake of the amenity of residents and visitors alike.

This is important to me as there is a risk that the complainant brings court action against the Community Council and/or the County Council. I do not want to see any further delays or complacency in trying to move this issue forward, which would be detrimental to the councils and the community as a whole.

I confirm that the information provided on this form is true to the best of my knowledge. I agree that this application and all the information contained within it may form part of a public report to the Standards Committee. I request a dispensation in respect of the above matter.

Signed:



Date:

16 / 05 / 2022

Please return to the Monitoring Officer, Chief Executive's Department, Carmarthenshire County Council, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP.

Notes for Guidance

- (1) Please read through the Code of Conduct and decide which of the paragraphs is most appropriate to your case. Brief details of the relevant paragraphs are noted in the table below. If you are unsure, please contact the Monitoring Officer for advice.

Para.	Type of personal interest
10(2)(a)	Council business which relates to or is likely to affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your employment or business • your employer, firm or company • a contract made between the Council and you • any land, lease or licence in which you have an interest • a public body or other association in which you have membership or hold a position of general control or management
10(2)(c)	Council business which affects your well-being or financial position, or the well-being, financial position or other interests of a person with whom you live or have a close personal association
13	Council business which is being considered by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and which relates to a decision of the Cabinet or another Committee of which you were a member at the time [County Council only]

- (2) The Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) state that a Standards Committee may grant dispensations where:

- no fewer than half of the members of the relevant authority or of a committee of the authority (as the case may be) by which the business is to be considered has an interest which relates to that business;
- no fewer than half of the members of a leader and cabinet executive of the relevant authority by which the business is to be considered has an interest which relates to that business and either paragraph (d) or (e) also applies;
- in the case of a county or county borough council, the inability of the member to participate would upset the political balance of the relevant authority or of the committee of the authority by which the business is to be considered to such an extent that the outcome would be likely to be affected;
- the nature of the member's interest is such that the member's participation in the business to which the interest relates would not damage public confidence in the conduct of the relevant authority's business;

- (e) the interest is common to the member and a significant proportion of the general public;
- (f) the participation of the member in the business to which the interest relates is justified by the member's particular role or expertise;
- (g) the business to which the interest relates is to be considered by an overview and scrutiny committee of the relevant authority and the member's interest is not a pecuniary interest;
- (h) the business which is to be considered relates to the finances or property of a voluntary organisation of whose management committee or board the member is a member otherwise than as a representative of the relevant authority and the member has no other interest in that business provided that any dispensation shall not extend to participation in any vote with respect to that business; or
- (i) it appears to the committee to be in the interests of the inhabitants of the area of the relevant authority that the disability should be removed provided that written notification of the grant of the dispensation is given to the National Assembly for Wales within seven days in such manner as it may specify.
- (j) It is considered appropriate in all the circumstances to do so where not otherwise possible to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate a persons disability