

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: Roderick Griffiths

Name of your Council: Llansteffan & Llanybri Community Council

Email address: @gmail.com

2. DETAILS OF YOUR INTEREST

What is the matter under consideration?

Matters relating to The Green, Llansteffan. Improvements are planned to the north section of The Green which require agreement between three parties - the County Council, the Community Council and the Covenant-holder.

What is your interest in the above matter?

My land boundaries The Green, Llansteffan, which is partly owned by Llansteffan and Llanybri Community Council. My family maintains a constant covenant over the area of the land.

When will the above matter be considered?

The County Council is in receipt of a Brilliant Basics Grant for improvements to The Green, Llansteffan. Carmarthenshire County Council is working with the Community Council and Covenant-holder over the coming year to make improvements to the amenity and to parking on The Green. The project is due to be completed by the end of 2024.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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"/>

PLEASE REFER TO THE ATTACHED DOCUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF MY DISPENSATION REQUEST.

4. 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)

PLEASE REFER TO THE ATTACHED DOCUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF MY DISPENSATION REQUEST.

(please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

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:

W R Griffiths

Date:

05 / 02 / 2024

Please return this form to the Monitoring Officer, Chief Executive's Department, Carmarthenshire County Council, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP. / Monitoringofficer@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Guidance notes

- (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)(b)	Council business in which there may be a conflict between your decision-making role and your role in representing constituents in your ward	
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 state that a Standards Committee may grant dispensations where:

- (a) 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;
- (b) 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;
- (c) 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;
- (d) 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.

Addendum – 05/02/2024

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)

THE LAND AND MY INTERESTS:

The Green is mostly owned by Carmarthenshire County Council, except for a strip to the north-west which is owned by Llansteffan and Llanybri Community Council (see attached map 1).

1: The Community Council-owned land boundaries my land at the Cottage Fields. My wife's family has farmed this land for generations, and our home overlooks the land and The Green. (see map 2)

2: A small strip of land which accesses the northern parking area of the Green is owned by my family. (see map 2)

3: My sister-in-law and my wife are joint owners of a small plot which has boundaries to the Village Green and my sister-in-law and her partner run a mobile coffee-pod from this location. (see map 2)

4: My wife's family, the Lloyds of Cottage Farm, are the holders of a Deed of Covenant which applies to the northern section of The Green. As previous owners of this part of The Green, the covenant was made in 1981 on the transfer of the land from the Lloyd Family to Carmarthen District Council and Llansteffan Community Council. There are no financial implications to the covenant and the family does not benefit financially. **The covenant is extant and applies only to uses of the land in perpetuity**. (attached)

CURRENT CONTEXT:

1: CAR PARK - BRILLIANT BASICS PROJECT

The northern section of The Green has suffered neglect over many years, and while being used as a car park for many years prior to its registration as Village Green, it has never been maintained as such due to its registration. Following the Carmarthenshire County Council Leader-funded Llansteffan Consultation in 2022, the County Council and the Community Council are now working together to design significant improvements to this area for the benefit of locals and visitors alike. The granting of a Brilliant Basics Award in 2023 to fund improvements to parking and amenity is welcomed and both councils are anxious to see the project succeed. The project requires the support and consent of three parties - the County Council, the Community Council and the Covenant-holder. It is necessary for all three parties to be represented in meetings, and I need to be able to be present in my capacity as Covenant-holder in these meetings.

In meetings of the Community Council when this matter is on the agenda I feel it's necessary to be permitted to take part in presenting information and discussing the plans, but not to vote. Not being able to participate could result in the Community Council not being fully informed, and I believe the community I represent would expect me to help facilitate the best possible outcome for this development.

2: COCKLE GATHERING

Llansteffan is part of the Three-Rivers Cockle Fishery which is fished seasonally. The fishery is managed by Welsh Government Marine & Fisheries. Cockle-gatherers access the beach at Llansteffan to fish the Three-Rivers cockle beds, and pass through the north parking area of The Green to reach the beach (see Map 2). In 2019 (?) I allowed the cockle-gatherers to use my field, adjacent to the car park, to load their catch onto the trailers for safe removal to the processing plants. This was a private arrangement between myself and a cockle processing company for which I received recompense. During the following years no such arrangement has been in place and they have not used my land.

The most important local factor in the cockle-gathering issues is that of public safety. There is a Llansteffan & Llanybri Fisheries Stakeholder Group, which includes Welsh Government Marine & Fisheries managers and enforcement officers, Dyfed-Powys Police, the Community Council and the Cockle Processors. The group meets periodically each season and plans access for the cocklers which protects the safety of the public to the best of our ability. I am a member of this group as a private landowner and covenant-holder, and I will continue to be a part of this group in order to facilitate the safest possible way for the gatherers to access the beach. At present the gatherers are conducting all their activity on the beach, which is outside anyone's control. Should it be deemed necessary over coming years to consider using my land for the catch transfer once again for reasons of public safety, I will need to work with the Stakeholder Group and the Community Council to co-ordinate the plans. The Brilliant Basics plan to improve the Green hopes to facilitate a safer access to the cockle beds, so the development and the access for cocklers are inseparable. The Brilliant Basics scheme will, hopefully, address both issues - and this is an opportunity to resolve two complex issues at the same time.

As above, in meetings of the Community Council when this matter is on the agenda I feel it's necessary to be permitted to take part in presenting information and discussing the plans, but not to vote. Not being able to participate could result in the Community Council not being fully informed, and I believe the community I represent would expect me to help facilitate the safest possible operation of the cockle-fishing industry in Llansteffan.

3: COASTAL DELIGHTS

Coastal Delights is a mobile "pod" selling coffee, snacks etc. on the land owned by my wife's family adjacent to the Green. The business is run by my sister-in-law and her partner. I have no financial interest in this business.

I have no business interests in this enterprise, but it's owned and run by members of my family. It could be perceived that any improvements to the Village Green would benefit this business, and so I have a prejudicial interest as a Community Councillor. The interest is covered in Section 1 above in matters regarding the development of the Green and my family's general interest as land-owners adjacent to the Green.

MY ROLE AS COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR

I was co-opted to Llansteffan and Llanybri Community Council in June 2022. I have always declared an interest in agenda items pertaining to The Green, however, with the imminent improvement programme there are occasions when discussions need to be inclusive and the contributions of all parties need to be aired openly within the meeting setting. It is vital that plans for the completion of the development are not

delayed, and my inability to provide information or answer questions due to my interest is likely to be an impediment to progressing the project.

I am not seeking a dispensation to vote on any matters pertaining to The Green. My request is to speak and write as and when appropriate or required. I was elected to the Community Council as a native of Llansteffan and Llanybri, with local knowledge and experience. As with many rural villages, Community Councillors are a blend of "old" locals and "new" locals. With the retirement in 2022 of two "old" local Councillors there was a gap in local knowledge as regards history, events, records, maps etc. and I am able to contribute to filling that gap. That is my strength.

However, in a small community there will be conflicts of interests if local land-owners become Community Councillors, even though their contribution to council business is vital. I feel that I am unable to properly exercise the trust invested in me if I cannot participate, within limitations, in matters which will deliver huge improvements for our community. Without a dispensation, it may not be possible to progress the Village Green Brilliant Basics plan or improve arrangements for the Three-Rivers Fishery as all parties will not be permitted to hold open discussions.

The Community Council has appointed a sub-committee to deal with matters pertaining to The Green, of which I am not a member. This sub-committee does not have decision-making powers, and its function is to make recommendations to full council. One such meeting has been held to date, which I attended as a representative of the Lloyd family as covenant-holder and not in my capacity as Community Councillor. However, in general full Council discussions it is sometimes necessary to provide historical or contextual information, and I feel it is important that all parties involved in improving the amenity of The Green work together to ensure the best possible outcome.

The interests of the village residents are the priority, and the requested dispensation would permit me to work alongside both the County, the Community Council and other parties to this end.

Dwy wedi cael ei geni a chodi ac byw erioed yn pentrefi Llanybri a Llansteffan.

Diolch yn fawr iawn.



