Anna Brychan AS/MS
Gweinidog Cabinet dros Addysg a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Minister for Education and the Welsh Language

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref AB/05704/26

Cllr Elin Walker Jones
Chair of the Council
Cyngor Gwynedd
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30 September 2026

Dear Cllr Elin Walker Jones,

Thank you for your letter and for the leadership that Cyngor Gwynedd has shown in promoting and protecting Welsh place names. That work has helped to raise awareness of the importance of place names as part of our linguistic and cultural heritage and has contributed significantly to the national debate on the issue. I fully share your commitment to ensuring that Welsh place names are respected and protected for future generations.

The role of Ordnance Survey in recording and presenting Welsh place names is important, and it is appropriate that its policies and practices are subject to public discussion and scrutiny. I understand the Council's concerns about the way in which the Ordnance Survey deals with Welsh place names and welcome the Council's engagement with the organisation.

It is encouraging that the Ordnance Survey has recently shown a willingness to work with partners in Wales on matters relating to place names. Its work with the Eryri National Park Authority and the Welsh Language Commissioner is a positive example of what can be achieved by working together and shows that change can be achieved when there is clear evidence and strong local support. A recent example is the Ordnance Survey's decision to add the name *Cwt Dafydd Ross* to its database, following local work to promote the name and validate it by the National Park.

My officers are in constant dialogue with the Ordnance Survey to ensure they are aware of the Welsh Government's priorities and of the concerns expressed by communities and organisations in Wales. We will continue to use that working relationship to seek further progress in promoting and protecting Welsh place names. The Welsh Language Commissioner also has a strong working relationship with the organisation, and the Ordnance Survey's Welsh language naming policy recognises the Commissioner's role in relation to the orthography of Welsh place names.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn yr iaith honno ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

To provide the full context, Ordnance Survey is a UK Government-owned company, over which the Welsh Government has no direct responsibility or powers to direct its decisions. Nevertheless, we continue to use our influence and relationship with the organisation to promote our point of view and to encourage practices that reflect the importance of Welsh place names.

While Ordnance Survey maps are important, the way in which people come across place names today is much wider. Major mapping platforms and social media are playing an increasingly important role in informing people's understanding of place names. That is why the Welsh Government is working with tech companies to strengthen support for the Welsh language in this area. It supports initiatives such as Mapio Cymru, which help ensure that reliable and up-to-date sources of Welsh place names are available and used more widely across the digital landscape. By enabling individuals and communities to contribute names, and by integrating data from projects such as Wikidata and the List of Historic Place Names, Mapio Cymru strengthens the presence of the Welsh language in the digital landscape and helps to safeguard Wales' linguistic identity for future generations.

These resources provide a solid basis for further action by the Welsh Government. Together, they contain a wealth of Welsh and historical names from across Wales – the List of Historic Place Names alone contains around 722,000 records. We will use this information in developing policies and considering legislative measures that will strengthen the arrangements for the protection and promotion of Welsh place names.

To sum up, Welsh place names are an integral part of our heritage, our language and our identity as a nation. I appreciate the leadership that Cyngor Gwynedd has shown in highlighting these issues and recognise the Council's significant contribution to protecting the heritage of place names in north Wales. As well as continuing to engage with the Ordnance Survey and other partners, we are considering how additional measures, including legislation, could strengthen the arrangements for the future protection and promotion of Welsh place names.

Yours sincerely,



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