Sent by the Sustainable Access Campaign Cymru, established by Angling Cymru, Angling Trust, Countryside Alliance, Country Land and Business Association, Fish Legal and the Welsh Salmon and Trout Angling Association

Welsh Anglers Unite to Support Campaign for Sustainable Access

Representatives of the Sustainable Access Campaign Cymru (SACC) took their campaign for locally-managed access to land and water to the home of Welsh politics, The National Assembly for Wales on Wednesday 15th January. They hosted an exhibition of angling to stress the importance of the £150 million freshwater recreational angling sector to the Welsh economy, and to highlight the risks that proposals for universal access to land and water being discussed by the Minister for Culture and Sport John Griffiths would pose to this sector.

Almost 100 anglers from across Wales were accompanied by rural organisations, riparian owners and landowners at the angling exhibition which filled the Senedd hall much to the delight of visiting Assembly Members. Those present were very pleased indeed to welcome the legendary former Wales and British Lions player Gareth Edwards - a passionate angler who spent the day meeting fellow anglers and politicians. The event, which received cross party support, was sponsored by David Rees AM, Llyr Gruffydd AM, Antoinette Sandbach AM and William Powell AM.

More than 50 organisations and 2,000 individuals have signed up to support SACC which aims to challenge these proposals before they have a chance to take shape in a green paper that was due to be published in the autumn, but has been delayed. It is thought that the volume of letters from SACC supporters, and the representations made to Assembly Members by farmers, anglers and wildlife groups has made the government think again about an access free-for-all in Wales. Opposition Assembly Members will be asking the Minister on 20 January why the green paper has not yet come forward.

Since its launch in November 2013, SACC has raised £10,000 in donations from angling clubs and individuals who are concerned about the damage to wildlife habitats and the economic impact on angling, farming and other rural businesses that universal access would cause. The funds will be spent on campaign materials and on legal advice to resist any proposals that could damage the interests of hundreds of angling clubs and fisheries in Wales.

Notes to editors:
The Sustainable Access Campaign Cymru (SACC) was founded by Angling Cymru, Angling Trust, CLA Cymru, Countryside Alliance, Fish Legal and the Welsh Salmon and Trout Angling Association. More information here: www.accesscymru.org