



Ein cyf/Our ref LW/10522/21

Section 40 (2)

4 August 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 22 June to Julie James MS, Minister for Climate Change, regarding the Independent's 13 point plan to tackle climate change. I am responding as many of the issues fall under my portfolio.

The new Climate Change portfolio brings together transport, planning, housing, energy and the environment, enabling us to address the climate and nature emergencies in a truly cross-cutting way. We are making sure climate change is firmly on the agenda of every public service and private sector business in Wales.

The First Minister set out our ambitious Programme for Government last month, demonstrating how we will act decisively on the climate and nature emergencies and ensure future generations can continue to enjoy and benefit from Wales' rich natural resources.

Many of the proposals set out in the Independent's article are non-devolved, but we are working closely with the UK Government to tackle these issues and taking significant action here in Wales.

The 2020s need to be the decisive decade of action in tackling the climate emergency. We are working on the development of our next all-Wales net zero delivery plan, which will describe how Wales will continue to take action to meet these new targets. We will publish this Plan in advance of COP26 in November.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg 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.

There needs to be maximum progress made towards net zero by 2030. The challenge is to find practical ways to do that. The principles of progression in the Paris agreement mean our targets need to be regularly and independently scrutinised. This process has brought forward the Net Zero date by 15 years in the space of the last three years. However, the ambition for more rapid action needs to be backed up with evidence to avoid perverse outcomes, but our ambition is firm as we make sure we are developing the evidence. Our focus is on maximising progress towards 2030. Where there may be ways of going further and faster we are duty bound to seek that evidence and update our targets and plans accordingly.

Tackling both the nature and climate emergencies is at the heart of decision making within this government. Our refreshed Nature Recovery Action Plan sets out the action needed, and the actions already being taken across all sectors – but we need to do more, and step up our investment in resilient ecological networks and transformative change to reverse the loss of biodiversity and help tackle the climate emergency. We need to build on this and are currently developing a Multi-Year Programme to help target sustained investment in our protected sites network, creating resilient ecological networks to benefit society for future generations.

In respect of transport, during 2021/22 £75 million will be spent on active travel (all Wales). Over £53m has already been allocated to local authorities to create and improve walking and cycling routes in their communities and further allocations will be made this summer. It means that we will be spending more than any other part of the UK per head on active travel investment to encourage people to walk or cycle for local journeys.

The Welsh Government is committed to developing a world class, low carbon, multi-modal and integrated transport system to deliver the environmental ambitions we have as a nation over the coming decade and beyond.

Our new transport strategy Llwybr Newydd – the new Wales Transport Strategy - explains how we plan to open our transport system in a different world. Llwybr Newydd places the climate and people at the heart of our policy framework. It retains some of the positive things that have come out of an otherwise very difficult COVID-19 crisis.

<https://gov.wales/llwybr-newydd-wales-transport-strategy-2021>.

The strategy sets out a long-term vision for an accessible and sustainable transport system. It contains four high-level cross-cutting 20-year ambitions that can deliver wider benefits to people and communities, to the environment, to the economy and places, and to culture and language. These ambitions will be delivered through a set of five year priorities, targeting ways to reduce the need to travel and encourage modal shift. They will support innovation and new technology without losing sight of the importance of investing in safe, accessible, well-maintained and managed transport infrastructure.

Measures to support the decarbonisation and reduce emissions from both the international and domestic maritime sectors will be set out in our second low carbon delivery plan later this year.

For the agri-food sector, we are considering a range of measures that will be required to reduce the carbon footprint of the food supply system. We are working across departments to ensure we address the issues in a holistic way, from farm to fork. Our future farm support will reward active farmers to sustainably produce food alongside important action to respond to the climate emergency and reverse the decline of biodiversity. We are co-designing a support scheme for farmers to deliver outcomes that the market does not currently reward, such as clean air and water, mitigating flood and drought risk, maximising carbon storage and reducing greenhouse gas emissions with resilient ecosystems. Active farmers who are working to benefit the environment are fairly rewarded.

There is also a very important role for civil society in helping to generate the evidence needed to underpin changes in policy. We are keen to continue our constructive dialogue with Extinction Rebellion members and hear the views of other grassroots organisations, for example by supporting initiatives like the Blaenau Gwent Citizens' Climate Assembly. We have agreed to future regular discussions with your political engagement representatives.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee', is centered below the text 'Yours sincerely,'.

Lee Waters AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Deputy Minister for Climate Change