

Alun Davies AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd
Minister for Natural Resources and Food



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-537
Ein cyf/Our ref AD-/00629/14

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

21 April 2014

Dear Bill,

Tree Planting and Flooding

Thank you for your letter regarding the above. Welsh Government is aware that flood risk management is not only about building defences and we have set out a range of approaches in our National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales, including making more use of the natural environment.

The Welsh Government intends to introduce support for tree planting under the Glastir scheme as soon as we are able to under the next Rural Development Plan programme. This is due to start in January 2015 but depends on approval of the Wales Rural Development Plan which will be submitted this summer.

The support for woodland creation will be based on a revised woodland opportunities map which will replace the 'red, amber and green' map that was used under the previous programme.

Welsh Government is working on the development of the revised map now and are in discussion with stakeholders, including the Woodland Trust about the most beneficial places to plant trees. There will be a new 'green' zone on the revised map. Within this zone we are looking for a positive commitment from stakeholders to promote planting in that zone.

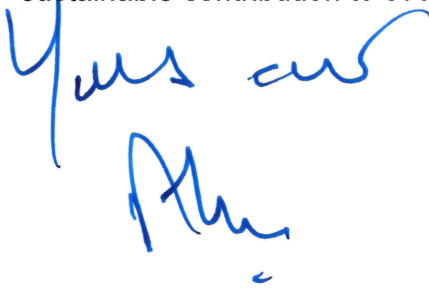
As part of the process of agreeing this new green zone, we want to ensure that we are using the latest work from DEFRA and Forest Research which identifies places that woodland creation can contribute to flood prevention and water quality improvement, building on the work done with Coed Cymru and the Pontbren Farmers.

We will also be taking into account social and ecosystems issues when compiling the map.

Once we have achieved a consensus with stakeholders, including Natural Resources Wales, local authorities, Coed Cadw, National Parks and others we will prioritise resources, both grant and advisory, to the green zone.

In addition Welsh Government continues to work on ways in which woodland creation can be expanded, such as through our Plant! project which aims to plant a tree for every child born or adopted in Wales. Since its launch in 2007, 200,000 native broadleaf trees have been planted on 8 sites across Wales and we continue to support its delivery by Natural Resources Wales in partnership with Coed Cadw.

In summary therefore, I confirm that Welsh Government is fully committed to increasing woodland creation, as stated in our Wales Forestry Strategy '*Woodlands for Wales*' as woodlands can provide a full range of ecosystem services and benefits which provide a sustainable contribution to society as a whole.



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