

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-683
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00245/16

William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
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committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

 February 2016

Dear William Powell AM,

Thank you for your letter dated 26 January. The importance of urban trees in delivering a range of benefits to communities is reflected in the Welsh Government's Woodland Strategy and in the refreshed 'Woodlands for Wales' Action Plan, which will include an action to increase and safeguard existing tree cover in towns and cities and to support sustainable urban tree management. The Plan will be published on the Welsh Government website shortly.

The Welsh Government is providing funding to Natural Resources Wales to manage a project which will provide up-to-date evidence on the status of canopy cover within communities and towns in Wales. A similar study of urban trees was previously undertaken in 2009 and comparing the new data against that found in the previous study will help to monitor change over time to Wales's urban trees and will identify any tree loss (notably our most beneficial large, long-lived trees). Evidence will further build the case for targeted action areas that are particularly low in tree cover. Once completed, this study will be available online.

The study will be of interest to local authorities who will be able to draw on tree cover data to make decisions in respect of their delivery against the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Wales is the first country in the world to assess the tree cover of all its urban areas. To assist local authorities to examine the benefits of urban green infrastructure, Natural Resources Wales have worked with Forest Research to calculate the value of the urban tree cover in a selection of Welsh local authorities. The studies have quantified the benefits that trees provide for Wrexham, Bridgend and Swansea. For example in Wrexham these are valued at £1.2m per year.

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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.

In respect of funding, Glastir Woodland Creation grants are available to any landowner who wants to plant trees providing they meet the rules of the scheme. It is not restricted to farmers. There are some limitations on funding available on publicly owned land but with the right ownership structure, being given support through knowledge and experience, even on public land funding can be made available.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a statutory duty on the public bodies listed in the Act to pursue a set of national well-being goals according to the principles of sustainable development. Therefore this is an ideal opportunity for Coed Cadw to work with those listed in order to develop proposals to increase the levels of urban tree cover as they suggest, where it is appropriate and practicable to do.

I therefore agree with their support for urban trees and I strongly recommend that Coed Cadw contacts all of the local authorities in Wales so that they can work together to develop their points regarding the benefits of urban and community tree planting and, where applicable, to help them to put forward applications for funding for this purpose.

Yours sincerely,



Carl Sargeant AC / AM
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