

Cllr Andrew Morgan OBE
WLGGA Leader

5 June 2025

Dear Andrew,

Soil Health in Agriculture

Healthy soil is incredibly important to support our agricultural systems, for food/fibre production, water quality, flood prevention, biodiversity, and carbon storage. In order to support Wales soil health into the future, the Committee is undertaking an inquiry into **soil health in agriculture**.

One of the areas the Committee is particularly interested in is the classification of soils for land use. As you will be aware **Planning Policy Wales** states agricultural land of ALC grades 1, 2 and 3a is "the best and most versatile, and should be conserved as a finite resource for the future". It states that "considerable weight should be given to protecting such land from development, because of its special importance" and land in these grades should only be developed if there is "an overriding need for the development".

However, the Committee recognises there is a tension between the need to develop land, particularly for housing, and the need to protect our most valuable and potentially most productive farmlands. As part of our inquiry the Committee would be very keen to hear local authorities views, via the WLGGA, on that tension and what local authorities are doing, especially as part of their work on Local Development Plans, to protect the most valuable soil and to retain its use for growing crops.

Thank you in advance for your support with this important inquiry, please could you respond by 22 June.



Yours sincerely,

Andrew RT Davies

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

