

P-06-1553 Increase investment and action in nature-based flood management to protect Welsh communities – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 02 February 2026

Dear Deputy First Minister and the senedd petitions committee ,

Thank you for your detailed response to our petition calling for increased investment and action in nature-based flood management (NFM) to protect Welsh communities. We are writing to you as the Youth Climate Ambassadors for Wales, representing young people who will live with the long-term consequences of today's decisions on flood risk, climate resilience, and the health of our natural environment.

We recognise a number of positive elements within your response, including continued funding for NFM, the commitment to catchment-scale planning, progress towards a National Beaver Strategy, and the emphasis on community involvement. These are welcome signals. However, from a young person's perspective, we remain concerned that much of what is described reflects plans to develop further plans, rather than the pace and scale of action needed to protect our future in Wales.

While we welcome the £2 million allocation for nature-based flood management in 2025–26, we are concerned that current spending patterns are not delivering the outcomes Wales needs. Flooding continues to affect communities across the country, suggesting that existing approaches alone are not solving the problem. At present, only around 2.5% of flood-related expenditure is directed towards nature-based solutions. From our perspective, this indicates a missed opportunity to invest more strongly in approaches that address the root causes of flooding while delivering long-term benefits for nature, climate resilience, and future generations.

We believe there is a real opportunity for the Welsh Government to champion nature-based solutions and to lead the way across the four nations of the UK. Wales has strong environmental legislation, a commitment to the Well-being of Future Generations, and a growing evidence base for nature-based approaches. We believe that setting an aspirational target such as committing 10% of flood-prevention funding to nature-based solutions would send a powerful signal that Wales is serious about long-term, preventative action rather than continually reacting to flood damage after it occurs. We understand that flood management decisions are made in terms of need, and so we believe that an aspirational target would respect the ever-changing nature of flood management while making sure that nature is still considered as a priority. For young people, this kind of ambition matters because it shows that our future is being actively protected.

As young people, we are particularly concerned about long-term accountability. Flood resilience by 2050 will span multiple future governments, yet the impacts will be felt most strongly by our generation and those that follow. We would welcome further detail on how the Welsh Government plans to secure long-term progress through durable funding commitments, statutory targets, or governance arrangements that will not be easily undone by future political change.

We note with interest the recent work of the National Infrastructure Commission for Wales trialling the inclusion of nature as a representative in decision-making. From a youth perspective, giving nature a voice in governance reflects the kind of systems thinking needed to address climate and ecological crises. We would therefore welcome consideration of independent representation for nature across key decision-making bodies, including the Sustainable Farming Scheme, national flood governance structures, Natural Resources Wales, and the Welsh Beaver Forum.

Finally, we were disappointed to see little reference to the forthcoming development of secondary targets under the Environmental Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Bill. For young people, this represents a crucial opportunity to embed long-term commitments to nature-based flood management, ecosystem restoration, and potentially species reintroductions such as beavers, within a statutory framework that helps secure our future.

In summary, while we recognise positive intent in your response, we remain concerned that current funding levels, governance arrangements, and delivery mechanisms do not yet reflect the scale or urgency of the challenge facing our generation. We want to see Wales move from incremental progress to genuine leadership in nature-based flood resilience not only for today's communities, but for those of us who will inherit the consequences.

Thank you for engaging with young people on this critical issue. We look forward to continued dialogue and to seeing how the Welsh Government will act to safeguard our future in Wales.

Yours sincerely,

Menna Roberts ,

Youth climate Ambassadors for Wales.