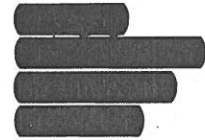


**National Assembly for Wales
Environment and Sustainability Committee
NRW 2015 - 104
Natural Resources Wales - Annual Scrutiny 2015
Response from Jean Lee-Tappin**



For the Attention of the
Environmental and
Sustainability Committee
Welsh Government

30 April 2015

Dear Sirs

I welcome the opportunity to express my opinion about the state of NRW, since the amalgamation of the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), the Forestry Commission (FC) and the Environment Agency (EA) in 2013.

I manage a ten acre Smallholding, which is managed on Organic principle and has been in an Environmentally Sensitive Area scheme for many years. The FC owns forest adjoining my Haymeadows; the Nant Gwenst runs through my land; and I now have many features, ponds, broadleaved woodland etc which are of considerable environmental benefit. Over the 41 years of ownership, I have had many dealings with the three Agencies. I have been very pleased with the excellent help and advice that I have received, in particular from CCW. It was always easy to make telephone contact with the experts with whom I could speak directly. Alternatively, I could call in at the Llandrindod Wells office. The staff knew my site and my aims and objectives. Much could be achieved because there was continuity in the team. Ray Woods was a stalwart in giving me advice, based on his extensive knowledge. I realise now, how good things were in the past.

Since the formation of NRW, when the agencies were placed under 'one umbrella', quality has totally deteriorated. It is time-consuming, difficult, if not impossible to reach an advisor on the telephone to discuss an issue. Furthermore, it is now quite impossible to get a member of staff to make a site visit. Visits are essential when issues/problems arise. There are far too many 'hot office people' today who have little or no experience of 'coal face issues' that they control. I find the current state of NRW a depressing disaster and regret that I now feel these days I have to 'go it alone'.

I conclude with a quote from the Head of Conservation and Technology Kew Millennium Seed Bank.

"Your property and especially your wonderful meadows are an inspiration for any landowner concerned about biodiversity and land management"

In 2014 Dr Robin Probert collected seeds from my Hay meadows which are now preserved in the National Collection. This results, not only, from a move to sensitive management but also from the excellent help in the past from CCW, FC and the EA.

Yours faithfully



Jean Lee-Tappin

Envelope to: Alan Davidson, Clerk to the Environmental & Sustainability Committee
National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay, Cardiff CF99 1NA