

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-579
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/05188/14

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

21st October 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter dated 30 September regarding the Cardiff University Ornithological Society's petition about funding for monitoring of guillemots at Skomer Island.

Wales provides important areas for breeding seabirds including guillemots, and I recognise the importance of monitoring population variations. Natural Resources Wales has a contract with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) to undertake annual surveys of the seabirds on Skomer Island, which includes guillemots.

I am aware that earlier this year Natural Resources Wales (NRW) decided not to renew a specific guillemot survey contract with Sheffield University. The long term increase in guillemot numbers at Skomer Island, and the fact that this species will continue to be monitored under the JNCC contract, reassures me that there will be no loss of data or information about these birds. NRW will of course keep monitoring needs and requirements under review.

My recent approval of boundary extensions and updated listing of species for three Special Protection Areas (SPA) for breeding seabirds now includes the marine areas which are vitally important for feeding, preening and other behaviours during the birds' breeding season. The sea adjacent to the nesting areas now enjoys the same level of protection as the nesting sites themselves. This gives both the colony the protection that will sustain the growth of guillemot and other seabird populations. The positive implications of these SPA extensions will also enhance the future visitor experience especially for those who enjoy

wildlife trips to these special places.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a vertical line and a small flourish at the bottom.

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
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