



Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs Lesley Griffiths
Welsh Government
5th Floor
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA
August 18th 2017.

Dear Minister.

Following the inquiry by the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs committee assessing the delivery of the Woodlands for Wales strategy and the subsequent publishing of the report “Branching out: a new ambition for woodland policies”, we thank Welsh Government and the committee for their time and effort in compiling this report.

The committee make a number of recommendations in the report which we support and we propose that the sector and WG work together to deliver agreed outcomes.

We welcome the report and believe it confronts issues that have previously been ignored and seeks answers to questions which have, to date, been avoided. It is forthright in its findings and recommendations and calls on WG to address the identified shortfalls.

Members of the Confor Wales Committee represent a wide cross section of the woodlands and forestry sector in Wales and they all support the requests in this letter. Specifically, we ask that as minister you:

1. Accept the recommendations of the report in full and promptly set out a timetable for actions to resolve the issues they raise.
2. Work with the sector and stakeholders and actively help facilitate a resolution that will implement the recommendations in the report.
3. As an interim measure, commit to restructuring the Glastir Woodland Creation Scheme, limiting the eligibility criteria to complying with UKFS (which includes timber production), aimed at substantially increasing woodland and forestry creation in Wales.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Martin Bishop Confor Wales Manager on behalf of the Confor Wales Committee including:

Mike Harvey, Maelor Forest Nurseries Ltd.
Andrew Bronwin, Andrew Bronwin & Co Ltd.
David V Edwards Tilhill Forestry.
Charles Gittins and Alastair Squire, Flintshire Woodlands.
Tim Kirk, Forest Valuations.
John Searl, John Searl Forestry Ltd
Chris Emery, Kronospan.
Graham Taylor MBE and Arthur Wiggins, Pryor & Rickett Silviculture.
George Johnson, Coed Trallwm woodlands
Kyle Williams, Pontrilas Sawmills.
Hugh Wheeldon, Hugh Wheeldon & Co
Roger Cooper.

Martin Bishop, National Manager for Wales, Rheolwr Genedlaethol i Gymru .