

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS  
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros  
Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig  
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate  
Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Our Ref: HIDCC/PO/0314/24

Paul Davies MS  
Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee  
Welsh Parliament Cardiff Bay,  
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11 November 2024

Dear Paul

Thank you for your letter of 9 August and my sincere apologies for the delay in responding.

I recently responded to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee report on the Welsh Government's proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme, which may provide a more substantive update but I thought it appropriate to respond to the feedback you received at the Royal Welsh Show regarding Working Groups and the Carbon Sequestration Evidence Review Panel for the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS).

We established three Stakeholder Working Groups to aid in the development of the SFS. These groups covered tenancy, common land and the inclusion of new and young entrants in the future Scheme.

The purpose of these groups was to help Welsh Government officials explore the opportunities within the Scheme to accommodate these important considerations in Scheme design. The content generated by these groups was important in helping to shape the content of the [Sustainable Farming Scheme - Keeping farmers farming](#) consultation published in December 2023.

Tenancy, common land and new entrants remain important elements of the SFS and have been considered by the Ministerial Roundtable and Officials Groups. The groups include all the key stakeholders with an interest in these areas. I am grateful for the effort made by the participants of the previous working groups and the positive commitment being demonstrated by stakeholders in the current discussions.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The work of the Carbon Sequestration Evidence Review Panel is established in their Terms of Reference (ToR), which were developed and agreed by the Ministerial Roundtable. Its members are now leading the work with the Welsh Government providing the support mechanism and secretariat function. The Panel has made good progress, but the timetable is challenging as the work needs to fit within the wider scheme design timeline. In response I did find additional time for the Panel to conduct their review of the evidence, and the ToR were updated.

No constraints have been placed in the ToR other than to remain in scope of additional or alternative Actions to potentially sequester carbon as part of the SFS. I am not aware of any concerns on which experts were contacted to help the Panel with their review.

I remain convinced that this partnership approach is needed to help finalise the design of the SFS so it can commence in 2026. I am extremely grateful for the ongoing efforts made by all to meet this challenging timeline, on top of their ongoing business and personal commitments.

I will update Committee members on progress as this phase of the work draws to a conclusion.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Huw Irranca-Davies', written in a cursive style.

**Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS**

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