

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

Ein cyf/Our ref: PO/HIDCC/0041/25

Llŷr Gruffydd MS
Chair
Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

5 February 2025

Dear Llŷr,

I am writing to follow up a couple of matters raised during my evidence session as part of the Climate Change, Energy and Infrastructure Committee's budget scrutiny.

During the session, the Committee asked whether Local Authorities were still required to produce Rights of Way Improvement Plans and I promised to write with further information.

I can confirm that, under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, each local highway authority is required to publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan for all of their area. Where parts of an authority's area are within a National Park, the local highway authority may make arrangements to carry out their Rights of Way Improvement Plan functions jointly with that National Park authority.

Authorities are required to make a new assessment, review their ROWIP and decide whether or not to amend it, not more than ten years after publishing their previous plan.

As an incentive to ensure compliance with the production of Rights of Way Improvement Plans, we have attached a funding condition to the award of Welsh Government's Access Improvement Grant to Local Authorities which has helped boost compliance. There are currently 14 completed Rights of Way Improvement Plan and eight which are still in progress but nearing completion.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Huw.Irranca-Davies@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Huw.Irranca-Davies@gov.wales

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.

During the session, we also discussed our ambition that the public sector in Wales should reach net zero by 2030. This is an ambition, not a target, but we do expect every public sector organisation to strive to meet it. I am pleased to report, as I outlined in Committee, there is clear commitment from public bodies to work towards it.

We track carbon emissions from the public sector through an annual reporting exercise: [Welsh public sector carbon emissions 2023: net zero report | GOV.WALES](#). This demonstrates good progress in many areas. For example, local government is investing £20m each year in upgrading local authority heating systems to low carbon alternatives. Each year we also provide £11,25m capital to fund public sector decarbonisation activity such as solar PV, wind turbines and better insulation.

While there is much improvement, differences in the makeup and remit of public sector organisations influences how easily they can reduce carbon emissions. For example, a local authority in an area with heavy industry will face different challenges compared to a rural authority. There are also other challenges, such as those relating to carbon emissions from the procurement of goods and services. The ambition to be net zero by 2030 will be a significant challenge, but it is a collective ambition across the whole of the public sector and we want organisations to continue to aim towards it.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Huw Irranca-Davies', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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