

**National Assembly for Wales**  
**Environment and Sustainability Committee**  
**NRW 2015 – 87**  
**Natural Resources Wales – Annual Scrutiny 2015**  
**Response from Dr Christine Hugh-Jones**

10.4.15

I am grateful for the opportunity to respond to NRW.

I wrote to Emyr Roberts on his appointment to the newly formed NRW, congratulating him but also expressing my misgivings about nature of the organisation. He had said to the BBC "The model that the Welsh government wants here is slightly different from other arms length organisations in that the expectation is that this body will work very closely with the Welsh government in developing policies, and their operational impact."

I have been very disappointed in my experience with CCW and later NRW over the role as Statutory Consultee for the Planning applications for Reeves Hill Wind Farm (in Herefordshire) and Access to Reeves Hill Wind Farm (in Powys).

I do not think proper attention was given to thorough, critical reading of the Developer's Environmental Statements, to conservation of priority habitats, to Welsh Planning Guidance or to prompt responses to letters. I have had the distinct impression of a corporate pre-determination not to raise problems in relation to these related applications whereas NRW has responded with clear objections to projects with negative impacts of much lesser degree.

My original misgivings have been borne out by this experience and by the experience of those investigating the impacts of intensive poultry farming on local rivers. I believe that development interests are overshadowing NRW's duty to protect our environment.

It is impossible to know to what extent the plan to "work very closely with the Welsh Government in developing policies" is responsible for this failure to protect our natural heritage.

Dr Christine Hugh-Jones