

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig  
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-472  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00474/17

Mike Hedges AM  
Chair - Petitions Committee  
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28 March 2017

Dear Mike

Thank you for your letter of 27 February regarding petition P-04-472 Make the MTAN Law. As you will be aware, I cannot comment on specific cases but I can give you an outline on what has happened since the petition was last mentioned during the No-Named Day Motion debate in April 2015.

In July 2015, the previous Minister for Natural Resources and officials held a summit on opencast coal where a number of stakeholders from industry, local authorities and residents, including Dr Cox, the lead petitioner, attended and a number of speakers were heard. One of the actions to emerge from the summit was a focused review of MTAN2 Coal.

Following this, in January 2016, officials held a consultation event on focused changes to MTAN2 attended by industry, local authority officers and local residents. Discussions centred on exceptions to the buffer zone policy, extensions and restoration/financial arrangements. Other views raised at the event included the need for coal, the environmental dis-benefits of coal, the need for a presumption against coal, the need to give health and well-being more importance and the need for better quality information. However some respondents felt MTAN2 worked well, that no changes were necessary and that coal would continue to have a role.

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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 position of coal has since been shown as uncertain, particularly following Amber Rudd's energy statement in November 2015 outlining no unabated coal fired power stations following 2025 and the subsequent consultation paper *Coal generation in Great Britain: The pathway to a low-carbon future* published in November 2016. In the Energy Statement which I gave in plenary in December 2016 I stated support for the phasing out of unabated coal fired power and indicated my intentions to amend planning policy to limit the opportunities for new coal development.

Proposed amendments to Planning Policy Wales will be subject to consultation later this year.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

**Lesley Griffiths AC/AM**

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