



David Rowlands AM
Chair – Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales,
Ty Hywel,
Cardiff Bay,
Cardiff,
CF99 1NA

Saturday 7th April 2018

Dear David

Thank you very much for forwarding Kevin Ingram, Interim Chief Executive, of NRW's dated 22nd February 2018 letter and I am pleased to confirm that I we had a very successful public meeting on the 7th March with over 100 members of the public in attendance. John Hogg, Steve Morgan, Derek Stephen and Sally Tansey attended on behalf of NRW and the overall impression we gained from what they said was positive. We believe that, with the necessary revenue streams sourced, it should be possible to get the Scenic Drive re-opened by September of 2019. We would once again like to re-iterate that question raised by our petition asks for the Welsh Government to help source the finances required to re-open the Forest Drive and if there is a requirement to draw on European Union (WEFO) funding then time is now of the essence and it should be done as soon as possible. The Welsh Government were consulate on the closure of the Forest Drive and as an aspect of this they should have insisted upon NRW ring-fencing a re-instatement fund. As they failed to do this our society considers that the problems surrounding this issue were caused by the Welsh Government's lack of due diligence on this matter and hold them accountable. We would appreciate a commitment from them that they will ensure that, if necessary, funds will be made available to ensure the Drive will be re-opened to private cars as soon as is possible.

Our petition calls for the Cwmcarn Forest Drive to re-open at Easter 2018 and it seems that it may be time to close it to consideration by the Petitions committee, however given that the project led by Derek Stephen is only just starting I would like to suggest that the Petitions committee maintains a watch brief on this issue for at least the next six months. Obviously it is very much up to your committee to determine whether it wants to do this or not but given NRW's track record it may be considered appropriate at this time to keep an eye on how things move forward.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R Southall', written in a cursive style.

Robert Southall
Chair, Friends of Cwmcarn Forest Drive