



Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru Countryside Council for Wales

CADEIRYDD/CHAIRMAN: MORGAN PARRY • PRIF WEITHREDWR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE: ROGER THOMAS

Anfonwch eich ateb at/Please reply to: Roger Thomas, Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive
Cyfeiriad Isod/Address Below
Llinell Union/Direct Line: 01248 387146; Ffacs/Fax: 01248 385506
Ebostr/Email: n.sanpher@ccw.gov.uk

by e-mail:- ridgegower@btinternet.com

Mr M Ridge
Chairman, The Gower Society
The Orchard
Perriswood
Penmaen
Swansea
SA3 2HN

5 December 2011

Dear Mr Ridge

EXTENSION OF GOWER AONB

Thank you for your letter of 22 November 2011. We are delighted that, on 22 November, Minister John Griffiths announced the confirmation of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Designation Order.

As you are aware from our previous correspondence, the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) had undertaken more than seven years' work establishing and assessing the evidence base before my Council agreed to proceed to the Public and Statutory Consultation phases of the process. It was only following this detailed evaluation and scrutiny that CCW decided to submit the formal Designation Order in March for the Welsh Government's consideration.

Since the Order was confirmed, you may be aware that the Welsh Government (WG) has also announced a further significant decision affecting the environmental framework in Wales. On 29 November, WG Cabinet approved the business case for establishing a Single Environment Body comprised of CCW, Environment Agency Wales, Forestry Commission Wales and possibly some functions presently undertaken within government.

This Single Environment Body (SEB) is being established in order to deliver the Welsh Government's vision for the natural environment, 'A Living Wales'. This is an integrated ecosystem approach to managing a sustainable, diverse and productive environment.

Given these momentous changes, we will be focussing our efforts for protected landscapes over the next 18 months in working with our National Parks and AONB partners to ensure a

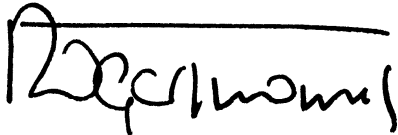


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smooth transition from CCW to the SEB. Inevitably there will also be a focus on establishing the new Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB. Therefore, given the disappearance of CCW and the legal nature of designation work, we are not currently in a position to consider any further proposals for boundary changes or new designations.

I understand that this will be a disappointing response for you and the Gower Society, but hope that you will appreciate the context within which we are now working.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Thomas', written over a horizontal line.

Roger Thomas
Chief Executive

cc: Mr John Griffiths AM (ps.minister.for.esd@wales.gsi.gov.uk)
Mrs Edwina Hart AM (Rosemary.Jones@Wales.gov.uk)
Mr Martin Caton MP (martin.caton.mp@parliament.uk)
Cllr John Hague (john.hague@swansea.gov.uk)
Cllr Ioan Richard (ioan.richard@swansea.gov.uk)
Mr Mike Scott, Gower Assistant AONB Officer (Mike.Scott2@swansea.gov.uk)