

Hannah Blythyn AC/AM  
Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd  
Minister for Environment



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Mr Andrew Blake  
Wye Valley AONB Officer  
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CC: Howard Davies  
Chief Executive, National Association of AONBs  
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Clare Pillman  
Chief Executive, Natural Resources Wales  
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14 May 2018

Dear Mr Blake,

I am inviting you to share your views with me on the issues which need to be addressed to provide greater parity for the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) with the National Parks in Wales.

One of the key observations made during the Review of Designated Landscapes and the Future Landscapes Wales Programme was although parity broadly exists between National Parks and AONBs in terms of planning policy, there is an inequality of status, profile and resourcing. Whilst this may be a strength in allowing flexibility of governance and the formation of partnerships in the AONBs, it is also a potential weakness in terms of the stewardship of these equally valuable landscapes. I have made a commitment to continue discussions with the AONBs to address this.

The AONB officers, along with the National Association of AONBs and colleagues in Natural Resources Wales, are best placed to advise me on how this should be addressed. I'm inviting you to work together to prepare a brief paper, for discussion with me later this year, on the action you believe necessary to address the issues observed during the review.

I am prepared to support you to overcome these issues; however, you must be realistic in your deliberations about the levels of current and future resourcing.

I am committed to ensuring our AONBs and National Parks are equally valued for their natural beauty by our people, communities and country – and, that our designated landscapes deliver rich ecosystems, vibrant and resilient communities and opportunities for outdoor recreation for all of the people of Wales.

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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.

My lead official on this matter is John Watkins, Head of Landscape and Outdoor Recreation. You should contact him if you have any questions in regard to this invitation. Please send me your paper of suggested actions by early September. My office will confirm a date and venue for me to meet with you and your colleagues to discuss your proposals.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Hannah Blythyn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

**Hannah Blythyn AC/AM**  
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