

19th January 2022

Dear Julie James

Over the past few months Afonydd Cymru have noted a number of important and investigative reviews being undertaken on rivers in England. These reports and the work being undertaken reflects a growing concern for the state of our rivers, which has rightly attracted widespread public concern.

Two recent reports are of particular interest. In November 2021, the Storm Overflow Taskforce published its report on Storm Overflow Evidence reporting on the extent and costs for removal and mitigation for storm overflow removal. At Welsh Government's request, we outlined what we would expect to see in an equivalent report for Wales. We are yet to receive an acknowledgement of that letter nor any indication on timescales and desire to undertake a similar investigation for Wales.

Secondly, last week the publication by the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee on River Water Quality. This report has concluded that there is a chemical cocktail of sewage, agricultural pollution and plastics in our rivers. The River Wye, as a cross-border river, featured heavily in the report. The report however focussed only on England.

We expect our rivers in Wales to receive the same focus and attention as England. We have recently been invited to join the Taskforce for Storm Overflows in Wales and we are hoping that we will work with you and other bodies on it to drive and challenge outcomes for our rivers in Wales. However, Wales also deserves the same level of scrutiny, investigation and evidence that is being obtained for England. A full review of evidence for Welsh rivers is required as this must be the starting point to successful delivery of change.

We will be publishing this letter on our website as part of our policy to support others working for delivery of a better freshwater environment. We would request please a meeting with you to discuss further.

Kind regards



Gail Davies-Walsh, CEO



Viscount Chris Mills, Chair