

Lee Waters AS/MS  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd  
Deputy Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1211  
Ein cyf/Our ref LW/11432/21

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee

petitions@senedd.wales

25 October 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 17 September to the Minister for Climate Change regarding Petition P-06-1211 Remove the average speed cameras and 50mph speed limit on the M4 between Newport and Cardiff. Your letter has been passed to me due to my portfolio responsibilities and I apologise for the delay in responding.

Following the First Minister's decision not to proceed with the M4 Relief Road, the South East Wales Transport Commission (SEWTC) was established to consider the problems, opportunities, challenges and objectives for tackling congestion on the M4 in South East Wales and make recommendations to the Welsh Government on long term solutions. It should be noted that the Commission was operationally independent from the Welsh Government.

The Commission considered a wide range of options to tackle congestion on the M4. The Commission's [final recommendations](#) were endorsed by the Welsh Government in January 2021. Details can be found online at [Commission recommendations endorsed by Welsh Government](#).

[Llwybr Newydd - Wales Transport Strategy](#) places people and climate change at the front and centre of our transport system. The Strategy focuses on three priorities, which place emphasis on reducing the need to travel but where people do travel, they do so by sustainable transport means where this is possible.

We need fewer cars on our roads, more people using public transport and more walking or cycling. Where we need new transport infrastructure, we will take a new approach. We will use the Sustainable Transport Planning Hierarchy to give priority to meeting the demand for travel by walking, cycling and public transport ahead of private motor vehicles.

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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.

We have appointed Simon Gibson CBE as Chair of the Burns Delivery Board, with Dr Lynn Sloman MBE as Vice Chair. Together they are overseeing the progression of the 58 Burns recommendations by the dedicated Unit set up in Transport for Wales. The Delivery Unit are already making good progress. They are employing a new way of working to bring together varied stakeholders to deliver the multi-modal recommendations. For example:

- They have scoped the next batch of technical work needed to enhance the South Wales Main Line ready for the UK Government, and their Union Connectivity Review, to improve this non-devolved infrastructure.
- They are developing options for flagship improvements in cycling and bus infrastructure between Cardiff and Newport, bringing together and supporting the Local Authorities.
- They are working with Dafydd Trystan, the Chair of the Active Travel Board, to look at options for encouraging behaviour change.

We published our [Clean Air Plan for Wales](#) in August 2020. Air pollution impacts on public health, the natural environment and the economy, and exposure to high levels of nitrogen dioxide can irritate the airways of the lungs, increasing symptoms of those suffering from lung diseases. Short-term exposure to nitrogen dioxide is also associated with increased cardiovascular and respiratory morbidity.

The environment is at the heart of our decision making and we are committed to tackling the sources of air pollution and ensuring people's right to clean air in Wales. Improving air quality is one of the most complex challenges we face, needing collaborative action across sectors and communities to achieve clean air. It is important we get this right.

We have brought in 50mph speed limits at 5 locations across Wales to reduce nitrogen dioxide pollution, including the M4 between junctions 25 and 26 and the speed limit at this location will be enforced by Average Speed Enforcement at a future date. We understand that speed limits may be unpopular. However, through our investigations we know they are likely to be the quickest and most effective way to reduce nitrogen dioxide levels and it's essential that drivers comply with the speed limit to reduce nitrogen dioxide levels.

This autumn we will publish, for consultation, our Update Plan on actions we are taking to address exceedances of nitrogen dioxide limit values. This will detail the progress made to date and next steps to ensure we achieve urgent air quality improvements for the benefit of public health.

Yours sincerely,



**Lee Waters AS/MS**

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