

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-547
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00510/16

William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair - Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

21st March 2016

Dear William Powell AM,

Thank you for your letter dated 2 March requesting an update on the work that the Welsh Government is undertaking to help reduce the environmental impact of polystyrene and coastal littering in Wales (Petition P-04-545: Ban on Polystyrene (EPS) Fast Food and Drinks Packaging refers).

I can confirm that initial research work undertaken by Keep Wales Tidy (KWT) in 2015 identified that data on polystyrene litter in Wales was very limited and, as a consequence, it was difficult to assess the scale of the problem across Wales. To help address this, KWT are now collecting data on the amounts of polystyrene litter found on the streets of Wales as part of the annual Local Environment Audit Management System (LEAMS) surveys that they undertake. The 2015 -16 LEAMS report will be the first year that this data will have been collected, and my officials will need to monitor the findings in this, and subsequent annual reports, in order to draw conclusions to assist in the development of policy.

In relation to coastal litter, KWT published their findings to their 'Coast Care' Pilot in late 2015. This work not only included the evaluation of existing marine litter initiatives in Wales, and across the world, but also it resulted in KWT providing support to 543 coastal improvement projects and over 1000 clean up events across Wales. My officials are currently evaluating the outcomes of this pilot scheme and will be working with KWT to identify the practical actions that can be taken to address coastal littering.

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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.

To support this work, I have also agreed to the commissioning of a joint MSc research project with the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) and Swansea University to analyse the pressures and trends of marine litter on Welsh coastlines. The MCS carries out regular methodical beach surveys and holds data covering the last 20 years. It is hoped analysis of this data will help determine the type of marine litter specifically occurring on Welsh coastlines and provide the Welsh Government with a better understanding of the origins of this litter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CS', written in a cursive style.

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
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Minister for Natural Resources