



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Leslie Griffiths AM
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs
Hannah Blythyn AM
Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Kelly Tolhurst MP

Department for Business, Energy &
Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000

E enquiries@beis.gov.uk

W www.gov.uk

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Reef (estio),

Thank you for your letter dated 14 January 2020. I am grateful for the time taken to write setting out the views of the Welsh Government with regard to the conclusions of the Petitions Select Committee inquiry around fireworks. I will be responding to that inquiry on behalf of the Government in due course.

I am pleased that officials in the Office for Product for Safety and Standards (OPSS), who have responsibility for fireworks policy, have met with officials from both the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government. I would like to encourage their continued joint working, particularly as they are considering how to develop a joint campaign to help educate the public and make them aware of the issues associated with firework use.

Following the two most recent e-petitions and subsequent debates in parliament, I have taken a keen interest in the issue of fireworks and have been listening to the concerns that individuals have been raising in debate and through correspondence. We receive representations from a wide range of stakeholders, including members of the public, organisations and charities, all with ranging views on what the issues are and what action they would like to see.

As you may be aware, I have asked OPSS to develop a fact-based evidence base on the key issues that have been raised around fireworks. This includes looking at data around noise and disturbance, anti-social behaviour, non-compliance, environmental impact, and the impact on humans and animals. The aim is to build a full picture of the data around fireworks in order for us to identify whether there is a problem, and if so, what action - if any - is appropriate. This work will also help us identify trends across fireworks seasons.

I was interested to read of your proposed consultation on a Clean Air Plan for Wales and hope you will be able to share any evidence that you have in relation to the impact of bonfires and fireworks, so that it can be included as part of OPSS' evidence base.

Thank you again for sharing your views. I look forward to the continued joint working of our respective officials.

KELLY TOLHURST MP

Minister for Small Business, Consumers & Corporate Responsibility