

Julie James AS/MS  
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd  
Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our ref WQ89573 WQ89629 WQ89630

Andrew R.T. Davies  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

Dear Andrew R.T. Davies,

Thank you for your Written Questions 89573 of 10 November and 89629 and 89630 of 15 November, relating to water quality. Further to the interim responses issued on 27<sup>th</sup> November, please find further substantive responses as follows.

First, your question WQ89773 *“To what extent did the Welsh Government consult with companies operating as New Appointments and Variations over its Strategic Priorities and Objectives Statement to Ofwat, which would limit competition in the provision and operation of water and wastewater networks?”*. Section 2B(4) of the Water Industry Act 1991 sets out the list of statutory consultees when publishing a Strategic Priorities and Objectives Statement. Companies operating as New Appointments and Variations are not specifically listed. Nevertheless, we shared our draft SPS to Ofwat with the relevant NAV in Wales, as part of the process.

Second, your question WQ89629 *“What assessment has the Welsh Government made of the consequences of the storm overflow report being published 7 months late?”*. There have been no adverse consequences from the timing of the publication of the storm overflow report. We have been clear that we are taking an evidence-based holistic approach to tackling all sources of pollution that affect our water bodies. The Storm Overflows Evidence for Wales (SOEfW) Report is one important piece of evidence under a wider action plan. We are considering the report alongside several other elements such as Natural Resources Wales’ storm overflow guidance, the water company draft business plans and environmental drivers.

Finally, your question WQ89630 *“Will the Minister provide a timeframe for when the Better River Quality Taskforce will publish its targets which are informed by the storm overflow evidence for Wales report?”* The Better River Quality Taskforce is reviewing the SOEfW Report with a view to developing an achievable and affordable short-, medium- and long-term programme for the prevention of ecological harm of our riverine waters. The Taskforce will decide the format of the plan, including any associated targets. The programme and priorities will be communicated more widely in due course.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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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.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Julie James AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd  
Minister for Climate Change

**PLEASE LEAVE BLANK**

**To:** Julie James, Minister for Climate Change  
**From:** Catherine Morris

**CC:** Clare Fernanes, Dan Butler,  
Eifiona Williams, WaterFlood  
mailbox

**Date:** 28 November 2023

**Follow-up responses to Andrew RT Davies – WQs 89573, 89629 and 89630 on water quality issues**

1. Andrew RT Davies has tabled a series of Written Questions recently around New Appointments and Variations and our SPS to Ofwat (89573) and the Storm Overflow Evidence for Wales (SOEfW) Report (89629 + 89630).
2. Holding responses have been issued to the three WQs, this letter provides the substantive answers for your review.