

Mark Drakeford AM  
First Minister of Wales  
National Assembly for Wales  
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Date/Dyddiad: 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2020

Dear First Minister,

### Re: Risk of Land Slippage on Former Coal Sites

As you are aware, the recent storms across the South Wales Valleys, has led to a number of landslides across the former coalfields of South Wales.

Whilst most of these slippages have been minor in nature, some have been more significant and have left communities with major concerns over further slippages. Quite naturally, the catastrophic disaster of Aberfan many years ago, has been replayed by many who live in these areas.

Across the County Borough of Caerphilly, there are a total of 234 coal tips – many of these located close to thriving communities. The 104 tips that are owned by the Council, are routinely inspected and maintained. Immediately, following the recent storms, the high risk tips were all inspected and any identified remedial works carried out.

Whilst the Local Authority is able to offer reassurance regarding the structural integrity of Council owned tips, the same cannot be provided, regarding the 130 tips that are in private ownership and many of these too, are in close proximity of vibrant communities.

The Council currently has no powers to obtain any information regarding the structural integrity of privately owned tips. Indeed, the Council only has powers to undertake works in emergency situations.

The Government's responsibilities in relation to subsidence, remedial works and coal mine water discharge in England and Wales are laid out in the Coal Mining Subsidence Act 1991 and the Coal Industry Act 1994. We understand this is in the main a reserved and not a devolved responsibility.

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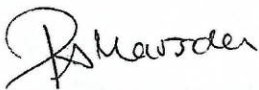


We are therefore writing to you to ensure that the Government is assured of its responsibilities in this regard and in particular we are asking that:-

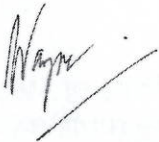
1. A full review of all former coal sites across Caerphilly County Borough and the South Wales Coalfield is undertaken, to ascertain the status of the structural integrity of all tips across the region.
2. A commitment to provide whatever funding is necessary to ensure all these sites are safe.
3. The preparation and publication of a map of all former coalfield and neighbouring land across Caerphilly and the South Wales Coalfields delineating which body is responsible for water courses and subsidence.
4. A review of the legislation powers given to Local Authorities in regard to privately owned tips.

We look forward to hearing from you as a matter of urgency

Yours sincerely,




**Councillor Philippa Marsden  
Leader, Caerphilly County Borough Council**



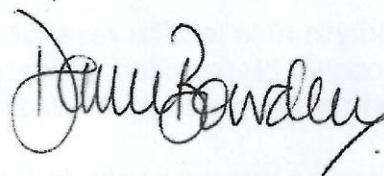
**Wayne David MP**



**Gerald Jones MP**



**Chris Evans MP**



**Dawn Bowden AM**



**Hefin David AM**



**Rhianon Passmore AM**