



**Janet Finch-Saunders MS|AS**

Aelod Senedd Cymru dros Aberconwy  
Member of the Welsh Parliament for Aberconwy



Director-General,  
National Trust,  
Heelis,  
Kemble Drive,  
Swindon,  
SN2 2NA.

**Via email**

12/10/2020

**Re: Review of Wool Purchasing Practices**

Office of Janet Finch-Saunders MS,  
29 Madoc Street,  
Llandudno,  
LL30 2TL.  
01492 871198

Welsh Parliament,  
Cardiff Bay,  
CF99 1SN.  
0300 200 7245

Janet.Finch-Saunders@Senedd.Wales

Dear Director-General, Hilary,

I hope that this letter finds you and your staff members well during this most challenging period. In the first instance I would like to note that I appreciate that the pandemic is continuing to cause considerable challenges to the operations of the organisation across Wales, and as such would like to note that you are welcome to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

It is with much enthusiasm that I write to you during the Campaign for Wool's Wool Week 2020. As you may already be aware, this year's event is particularly important because, in addition to this year marking the campaign's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Welsh wool sector is in crisis. Indeed, this summer, Welsh sheep farmers have seen the price they receive for their wool clip collapse as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and its subsequent impact on the worldwide market for wool. Some sheep Farmers are now receiving merely 28p a fleece, an amount which is dwarfed by the cost of shearing. This year, industry officials predict that the value of wool is set to drop by at least half. Subsequently, several farmers have taken the difficult decision to plough their wool into the fields as fertiliser. I think you will agree that it is heart-breaking to see such tragic decisions having to be taken, adversely impacting a farmer's hard-earned livelihood.

I am firmly of the belief that Welsh Wool can play a fundamental role in insulating and furnishing National Trust buildings, especially as our nation looks to combat climate change. Locally sourced, its use would certainly lower the carbon footprint of the insulation and carpets. Furthermore, with the National Trust store selling a range of woollen items, I believe that Welsh wool can play a much broader role than it is currently. Indeed, as well as there being many smallholders throughout Wales standing ready to supply fleece and yarn, there are also several Welsh spinning and weaving companies who are happy to work with quantities of around 25kg and above to produce cloth. Whilst the charity's support of Welsh wool in the sale of throws is to be applauded, this organisation should set about to become a proud example to other firms.

As such, I am calling for the National Trust to engage with officials at British Wool to review its wool purchasing practices across the board. I would, therefore, be most grateful if you could write in reply to this letter with confirmation that your organisation will look to carry out this review at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

**Janet Finch-Saunders MS/AS**

Shadow Minister for Climate Change, Energy, and Rural Affairs /  
Gweinidog yr Wrthblaid dros Newid Hinsawdd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig