

**From:** [David Bellamy](#)  
**To:** [NDE](#)  
**Subject:** Response to NDF proposals on renewable energy  
**Date:** 18 October 2019 14:30:29

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Dear Sirs,

I append my response to the Welsh Government's proposals for renewable energy as outlined in their NDF below:

## **WELSH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

### **Renewable Energy Proposals**

I attended the consultation of the Welsh NDF at Llandrindod on 3<sup>rd</sup> October and was shocked at the amateurish approach by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), the immense scale of the proposals, the complete lack of democracy and compassion by WAG, and its cavalier attitude to the health and wellbeing of rural communities in Wales. I also hold little faith in the consultation being allowed to have any influence on WAG, given WAG's history.

The points I raise in objection to this deeply flawed proposal are as follows:

1 There has been no survey or investigation into the potentially devastating effect this scheme is likely to project on the health, livelihoods and wellbeing of rural communities, which, given the immense scale proposed is a vital first step. Mental health problems are rising alarmingly in the UK, and as has been well documented, wind turbines can cause severe health problems by way of direct noise, infra-sound noise, flashing sunlight and the cumulative effects of being surrounded by massive industrial contrivances. Most country people place a high value on their landscapes and cannot stand the thought of being imprisoned by a continuous wall of gargantuan turbines.

2 No survey has been carried out to assess the impact the scheme will impose on tourism, the chief economic resource for Mid-Wales, when existing massed windfarms are also taken into account. Any responsible government would consider this an essential prelude to such an overwhelming scheme that will undoubtedly ruin tourism, putting thousands out of business. As a member of the Outdoor Writers' & Photographers' Guild I am well aware that my colleagues who write guidebooks do not wish to touch Mid-Wales, given the on-going assault on its landscapes by the wind industry. As no attempt has been made to carry

out even a basic tourism survey it is indelibly clear that WAG could not care less about the Welsh countryside, and that this scheme has been concocted by city-dwellers. Our national parks will inevitably suffer as indeed does the Brecon Beacons NP already: in the southern area of the park the gigantic wind turbines near Pontneddfechan appear to be within the park even though they are just outside the park boundary, thus degrading the landscape of that part of the NP.

3 I travel extensively and have yet to come across any country that has covered 20% of its natural environment with industrial structures. Where renewable energy structures have been built they are normally in the less beautiful landscape areas, and intelligent consideration has been given to excluding those landscapes of high value for tourism. This judicious approach is completely lacking in the WAG proposal.

4 Mid-Wales has in the past made it abundantly clear to WAG that while it is not against renewable energy, it has been saturated with wind turbines, and does not want to be completely covered with these contrivances. Protests at Cardiff and the appalling abuse by developers and WAG agents at the Llandegley scheme known as Hendy windfarm should have emphasised this, yet unlike England we in Wales have no right to local democracy, and appear to be living in a petty dictatorship. Even Powys County Council has no say in this scheme and exchanges on these matters at public inquiries between WAG and PCC have been witnessed as vituperative, thus demeaning WAG to the level of laughing stock.

5 Having witnessed developments at Bryn Blaen and Llandegley, where turbines completely out of scale with the local countryside have been erected by developers and yet none are producing any electricity (Bryn Blaen after nearly two years I believe), it seems that such schemes are out of control and any planning regulations thrown out of the window, unlike in England which has much higher standards. It was noticeable that no locals were employed and much of the work was allocated to firms from the north of England. Local residents were intimidated and abused during the process, and one lady almost killed by these operatives, all of which bodes ill during further exploitation of our landscapes.

6 There appears to be no quantification of the financial costs caused by the need for policing, the impact on local NHS resources, the building and re-routing of roads, building of bridges, removal of street furniture, the damage caused to buildings by huge vehicles, the constant disruption to road users during construction with its cost to businesses, etc. Vast armies of residents will undoubtedly rise up to resist your unprecedented dictatorial proposals, and many of these are people who normally carry out charitable work to benefit the elderly, the infirm and other good causes.

7 Apart from health problems and disruption during construction periods over an unspecified number of years, the cost to local residents will be enormous: property prices will plummet and people will either be trapped and unable to sell their homes, or will simply abandon them, as has happened in many instances already. Note the situation at Fairbourne where scandalous official scare-mongering regarding rising sea levels and

irresponsible statements that the place is going to be the first seaside community in the UK to be inundated by the sea, has led to people being unable to sell their properties even at 30% below true value.

8 WAG itself has apparently done no on-site visits to the areas that will be blighted, and this was also the case at Llandegley where the minister herself couldn't even be bothered to read through the whole appraisal of the development, betrayed an appalling disdain and complete lack of care for the people and landscapes of Mid-Wales.

9 One wonders whether there is any intention by Wag to actually connect the turbines and solar panels to the grid, as plans for this do not seem to have been laid out, and the Llandegley/Bryn Blaen experience promotes little confidence that these structures will be little more than totem poles planed haphazardly across our glorious Welsh landscapes.

10 While the English are creating new national parks in areas of less scenic quality than much of Wales which is outside our three NPs, and places like Surrey and Sussex have no wind turbines, places like Powys, one of the poorest counties in the UK, will be further impoverished by these plans.

11 There appears to be no consideration on energy savings and methods to reduce wastage, especially in Cardiff and Swansea, and no plans to transfer the burden to off-shore wind-farms which are apparently more effective. Also, as in the case of Llandegley, much of the proposed land areas are not in places that attract the most wind. This issue alone illustrates clearly the confused thinking at WAG on their flawed proposals to tackle climate change, making one wonder that there is a more sinister reason for these irrational proposals.

12 Increasingly wind energy is causing further destabilisation of the grid and the constant surges of wind create huge problems for engineers, often with costly damage. Blackouts are increasingly more likely. During the coldest months of the year we often get long periods without wind. The turbines, like most electrical devices emit sulphur hexafluoride – SF6 – a gas which is 23,500 times more global warming potential than CO2. Leaks of SF6 in the UK and EU in 2017 were equivalent to an extra 1.3 million cars on the roads. Without further investigation the NDF renewable energy proposals should be immediately halted.

13 Under these plans many rural communities will be unable to survive. Most residents who are the more able to support the economy will simply leave the country. Unlike North Korea, whose leaders make similar anti-democratic and autocratic policies, Welsh people are more politically aware, and it is hard to see how the current administration can survive if they insist on such monumentally bizarre schemes. This error-ridden NDF Renewable Energy outline betrays a lack of understanding both of matters of energy generation, and of the Welsh countryside and its people.

Before any decisions are made I demand that surveys be carried out with regard to the effect this will have on tourism, and also the health and well-being of the populations affected, as well as deeper consideration and analysis given to all areas, as the document drawn up by WAG is in no way coherent or suitable for purpose.

David Bellamy October 2019



Yours faithfully,  
**David Bellamy**  
**Artist & Author**



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