

Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1SN

By Email: Correspondence.Huw.Irranca-Davies@gov.wales

Friday 3rd May 2024

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Re: Introduction to Stove Industry Association

Congratulations on your new role as Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs. We write to introduce ourselves as the leading trade association for the UK stove sector, which was formed to promote the benefits of modern wood burning stoves and biomass appliances. Our members include manufacturers, distributors and retailers of stoves, flue and chimney systems, fuel, glass and components, as well as industry stakeholders, such as testing laboratories and chimney sweep associations.

We inform the public and governments about the carbon-saving benefits of wood burning stoves, successfully showing that modern clean-burning stoves can reduce particulate emissions from wood burning, compared to open fires and older wood burning stoves.

With an estimated 155,000 households in fuel poverty in Wales, we believe that access to a low cost, effective, efficient and controllable source of single space heating is essential. Modern wood burning stoves using dry wood logs is one of the cheapest ways to heat homes, costing 71% less than electric heating, 12% less than mains gas, and 21% less than an air source heat pump, with the average annual cost of kiln dried logs being £600-700.

We also advocate responsible sourcing of wood fuel from sustainably managed forestry and note that modern wood burning stoves are entirely independent of the energy grid, offering a consistently reliable source of affordable heating, even in the event of a power cut. They can also be paired with a heat pump, to deliver fast, controllable and low carbon heat to deal with temperature fluctuations and power cuts.

The Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Act

As a former member of the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee, you may have been aware that we have engaged with your predecessor, Julie James MS, and other Senedd Members about the Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Act. We're pleased that the Welsh Government is working with industry groups on communications about the new air quality standards. As supporters of the Act's general principles, the Stove Industry Association would be delighted to work with you and offer support where we can with plans and guidance.

Specifically, we endorse using Ecodesign wood-burning stoves. Used correctly, these emit up to 90% less PM_{2.5} than an open fire and up to 80% less than some basic older stoves, having technologically advanced designs, making up a very small percentage of overall UK particulate matter emissions - approximately 1.2% according to our calculations.

Wood logs also have the lowest carbon density of any domestic heating fuel – 87% less carbon intensive than gas, 88% less than electricity and 74% less than an air source heat pump. Using renewable, sustainably sourced wood instead of gas results in a typical carbon saving of over half a tonne of CO₂e a year. Over the course of a week's real-world use, a Euro 6 HGV produces 13 times more PM_{2.5} emissions than an Ecodesign stove.

Ecodesign stoves are rated A-A+ according to Eco Label Energy ratings with the higher the rating showing the better they can produce heat using less fuel. By comparison, open fires are rated G. We encourage homeowners, where they can, to replace open fires with an Ecodesign stove, and when considering exemptions for use in Smoke Control Areas, we recommend consumers look for a clearSkies certification mark.

Legislation supporting consumer choice and wellbeing is in line with both carbon reduction and sustainability. Anything promoting best practice for domestic burning is supported by us. We are keen to engage with Welsh Government to ensure the Act is effective and we can assist with best practice for using wood burning stoves and reducing carbon emissions.

We also note that the previous Minister expressed her support in educating members of the public about best practice use of domestic fuels, and we believe our position in the industry can help communicate this message as well, through our extensive knowledge and understanding of the different types of domestic burning, and how they will impact on air quality.

As such, I would be most grateful if we could arrange a meeting with your officials to discuss this further.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted personal data]
Stove Industry Association

| [Redacted personal data]

| www.stoveindustryalliance.com