



Eich cyf/Your ref JF938
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/00279/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS

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22 January 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter dated 13 January regarding support for the fisheries sector and self-employed fishermen under the new Economic Resilience Fund Sector Specific Grant.

Certain fisheries companies will be eligible to receive support under the Restrictions Business Fund and the Sector Specific support. Others may be eligible under the discretionary support available through local authorities in Wales for businesses not on the non domestic rates (NDR) system who are materially impacted. Further information on these schemes is available at <https://businesswales.gov.wales/coronavirus-advice/>.

I recognise that the vast amount of fishers in Wales would not be eligible to access the Restrictions Business Fund or Sector Specific support, in a similar way that they are unable to access the Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR), due to them not owning premises with a rateable value and or paying employees through a PAYE.

As the majority of Welsh fishers are self-employed or share fishers, they should be eligible to access support from the Self Employed Income Support Scheme on an individual basis. <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support>.

Some fisherman may be able to benefit from our Discretionary Assistance Fund which provides grants to people in need of urgent help during the crisis, including those waiting for benefit payments and those in employment who are facing hardship. Further information is available at <https://gov.wales/discretionary-assistance-fund-daf>.

Our package of support has been designed to be affordable within the available funding and we had to take difficult decisions on the eligibility criteria. The measures we have taken are in addition to those provided by the UK Government, making the support package in Wales the most comprehensive and generous in the UK. We will continue to do all we can to support Welsh businesses through these incredibly difficult times and consider options beyond the current package of support.

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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.

We are continuing to monitor the difficult market situation for the Welsh seafood industry and what other options there might be for supporting the sector.

Separate to the above, Business Wales has a wide range of non-financial advisory support available. Any business affected is encouraged to visit the Business Wales website <https://businesswales.gov.wales> or contact the Business Wales helpline on 03000 6 03000. The Business Wales Helpline is available Monday to Friday from 10am to 4pm.

Elsewhere, as you will be aware, the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs wrote to George Eustice MP, Secretary of State for Defra on 15 January - about a compensation scheme for the Welsh seafood sector in the light of the issues that have arisen as a result of the EU trade deal. We note the UK Government has since committed to a £23m compensation fund. It is essential the whole supply chain including fishers, aquaculture businesses, processors and exporters, across Wales are compensated.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken', is enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Ken Skates AS/MS

Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales