

**ORAL PRESENTATION MADE AT OPEN FLOOR HEARING ON 5th FEBRUARY 2015
CONCERNING MYNYDD Y GWYNT WIND FARM**

Good morning, my name is Gillian Foulkes – this is a personal submission that supplements my joint WR.

Can I take you on a walk along the Upper Wye Valley – one that I followed earlier this week - a beautiful, sunny, crisp, cold day with a smattering of snow on the surrounding hills. The rusty red of the dead bracken on the lower hillsides contrasting with the pale yellow tussocks of the Purple Moor grass, and the dark green of the gorse on the steeper, sunnier slopes. Red kites and buzzards circling overhead. Quiet all around except for the gentle burbling of the River Wye. There was even a large salmon lurking under the bridge where the Wye Valley Walk crosses from the west to the east bank. The steep prow of the hill called Y Foel rising sharply to the east of the Wye. Walking north, the Pumlumon ridge was clothed in white, with the single cairn of Pen Llest y carn appearing at the western end and those of Pumlumon Arwystli just peeping above the skyline to the east.

Fast forward 5 years and what will we see?

Wide, wide, tracks carving across the slopes to the east of the Wye. On bends, there may be up to 8.5m of land-take on each side of these tracks. I repeat, on bends, there may be up to 8.5m of land-take on each side of these tracks. But the main players will be the 125m tall wind turbines with whooshing blades (that is if it's windy and not high pressure weather as it is this week).

The Wye Valley Walk from the A44 through the Sweet Lamb Farm/Rally Complex may not be pretty – abandoned vehicles, conifer plantations with pheasant coupes, building rubble, piles of loose tarmac. But, somehow the River Wye and the surrounding hills manage to shine and stand above all of the farmyard and rally clutter. The stark, vertical, man-made structures of the proposed wind farm will totally alter this picture. The land-take of the new tracks and the widening of existing ones will be equally jarring. I cannot understand how anyone who is lucky enough to own the upper reaches of the Wye, as well as the slopes of Pumlumon up to the ridge, can treat their land in this way.

The Applicant says that the importance of Pumlumon has been over-exaggerated. Pumlumon is the greatest watershed in Wales – it's the source of the Wye, the Severn and the Rheidol. It's also the physical divide between north and south Wales.

I oppose this application as I believe that the adverse impact on the upper Wye and Pumlumon landscape outweighs any benefit.