

# Managing today's natural resources for tomorrow's generations

## Our Corporate Plan to 2022 - Summary



Noddir gan  
Lywodraeth Cymru  
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We would like to thank all of our staff who donated their  
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Diane McCrea,  
Chair

The natural environment of Wales is exceptional and inspiring. It is the foundation for our health, well-being and prosperity. It provides the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat. It provides energy and raw materials. It is essential – we can't live without it – but all too often, we take it for granted.

Natural resources are under pressure from human activity. Biodiversity is declining. Ecosystems are becoming less resilient and less able to adapt to challenges such as climate change. This means they are less able to provide the

benefits that contribute to everyone's health and well-being.

Yet natural resources can help address many of the issues we face today – tree planting can help reduce flooding, reduce air pollution and provide green spaces for people to enjoy; well-managed soils can improve water quality, store carbon and continue to grow food. There are huge opportunities to improve everyone's lives – but this can only happen if the natural environment is managed sustainably and recognised for the benefits it provides.

Things need to change – and we can all make this happen by living and working differently.

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is proud to be leading this change.

The Corporate Plan sets out the next stage of our journey. It takes us to 2022 and will evolve over the next few years. We hope you find this summary and the full Corporate Plan inspiring and ambitious – and look forward to working with you towards a more sustainable Wales which will provide prosperity for all.



Clare Pillman,  
Chief Executive



Kevin Ingram,  
Interim  
Chief Executive



# Welcome

The Corporate Plan builds on our Well-being Statement, published in 2017. This described our seven Well-being Objectives and the steps we need to take to achieve them.

They demonstrate how we want to contribute to the goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. We will do this by pursuing the sustainable management of natural resources (SMNR) and applying its principles – our purpose as set out in the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

By SMNR we mean looking after all natural resources (which include air, water, soil, wildlife and geological and climatic processes) in a way that ensures they will be available now, and for future generations. This requires working in a way that better understands and values the natural environment, is more joined-up and more proactive. How things are delivered is just as important as what is delivered.

We developed the Well-being Objectives collaboratively with our staff and stakeholders.

## Our Well-being Objectives are:

1. Champion the Welsh environment and the sustainable management of Wales' natural resources
2. Ensure land and water in Wales is managed sustainably and in an integrated way
3. Improve the resilience and quality of our ecosystems
4. Reduce the risk to people and communities from environmental hazards such as flooding and pollution
5. Help people live healthier and more fulfilled lives
6. Promote successful and responsible business, using natural resources without damaging them
7. Develop NRW into an excellent organisation, delivering first-class customer service

## The Corporate Plan is our medium-term plan for the organisation:

	Long term	Medium term	Short term
Plan	Shared Vision to 2050	Corporate Plan	Business Plan
Duration	20 – 25 years	3 – 5 years	1 year
Monitoring	Indicators showing changes in Wales due to activity by all organisations and individuals in Wales as a whole	Medium-term 3 – 5 year performance measures for NRW – our Corporate Plan Dashboard	Annual targets for NRW – our Business Plan Dashboard

These are our highest level plans. Below these will sit operational plans such as our natural resource plans and medium-term service plans.

This summary sets out what we intend to do up to 2022 to work towards achieving our Well-being Objectives and the sustainable management of natural resources in Wales.



# 1

## Champion the Welsh environment and the sustainable management of Wales' natural resources

### Where are we now?

Wales' ecological footprint has been calculated at five times the actual area of the country and its natural resources are being depleted faster than they can be replenished.

Managed sustainably, people and businesses would derive even more benefits from natural resources than they do already – food, jobs, recreation, raw materials, energy, clean air and water. This is so long as everyone in Wales grasps the opportunities and understands the need to do some things

differently in future – to live and work more sustainably.

### What will NRW do?

We in NRW will champion the natural environment and help people make the most of the benefits it offers, as well as valuing it for its own sake – now and for future generations.

“People always say; why do you enjoy that sort of job? It's about having that long-term data that I can look at and point and say we did that...”

Phil Newman  
Senior Marine  
Conservation  
Officer



## We will:

- Develop a shared vision for the natural environment in Wales for 2050
- Co-produce seven Area Statements which gather evidence and identify opportunities to make ecosystems more resilient and provide more benefits for people
- Help develop and deliver Well-being Plans as statutory members of all Public Services Boards (PSBs) across Wales
- Develop and share evidence with other organisations and make the best use of their information
- Lead the ambition for Wales' public sector to be carbon neutral through our Carbon Positive Project
- Exemplify SMNR – in all our work, across our whole organisation
- Inspire others to adopt SMNR, helping match needs to what is sustainable and learning from SMNR good practice across the world



# 2

## Ensure land and water in Wales is managed sustainably and in an integrated way

### Where are we now?

Land and water (including the marine area) in Wales are not currently managed in an integrated way, and although water and air quality has improved in some cases over recent years, there is still a long way to go before we are managing all Welsh land and water sustainably.

### What will NRW do?

NRW will be seen as an advocate for the economic, social and cultural benefits that integrated land and water management can provide, as well as the environmental benefits.

We will put this approach into practice on the land and water we manage ourselves.



“I am passionate about our trees and woodland. They form part of our landscape and heritage, and our work is providing benefits both now and for future generations with places to work, play and relax as well as providing valuable habitat to support many species

Rachel Chamberlain  
Team Leader, Forest Planning



## We will:

- Demonstrate SMNR in practice on the 7% of Wales' land and water we manage ourselves and try out new approaches making use of our experimental powers
- Encourage an SMNR approach in partnership with land owners and industry, agriculture and forestry
- Work towards bringing water bodies into good ecological status by 2027, develop a reformed and sustainable abstraction licencing system, and help water companies develop their long-term plans
- Complete the review of the Welsh Government Woodland Estate and begin to implement the findings
- Develop a climate change risk management strategy for NRW managed land
- Develop green infrastructure, including woodland planting particularly in urban areas with local authorities and other partners
- Work with Welsh Government on the post-Brexit rural development plan and support it in developing its Marine Plan, Marine Transition Programme and the National Development Framework



# 3

## Improve the resilience and quality of our ecosystems

### Where are we now?

Our State of Natural Resources Report (published 2016) has identified that currently no ecosystem in Wales has good resilience and many will not be adaptable enough to deal with climate change and other pressures.

Overall, biodiversity in Wales is declining. The extent of some habitats has declined significantly, and connectivity between habitats has also reduced. The condition of our ecosystems is mixed depending on the particular habitat.

### What will NRW do?

NRW will play a key role in delivering the Nature Recovery Action Plan, working with other public bodies and the private and voluntary sectors. Our own land and water management will exemplify ecosystem resilience and connectivity.



“ Having the opportunity to look after habitats and work with landowners to try to improve their condition so that they are of the highest possible standard is incredible

Rhodri Dafydd  
Senior Reserve Manager

## We will:

- Ensure we consider biodiversity and ecosystem resilience in all our functions, activities and decision making and help other public bodies do the same
- Work with other public bodies and the private and voluntary sectors to deliver the Nature Recovery Action Plan
- Help prevent, detect and control invasive non-native species, pests and diseases
- Restore protected sites towards favourable condition and manage PAWS (Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites) towards restoration on the land and water we manage
- Review protected sites to ensure we have the right network in place and collaborate with land owners and managers, valuing those sites as part of a larger network and essential component of the natural environment
- Improve the resilience of marine ecosystems as part of the Marine Protected Area network
- Work with key partners to improve river habitats through river restoration plans establishing salmon as an iconic species indicative of habitat quality across Wales



# 4

## Reduce the risk to people and communities from environmental hazards such as flooding and pollution

### Where are we now?

Pollution and flooding have wide-ranging damaging effects in Wales, with poor air quality identified as one of the greatest immediate environmental threats to people and the natural environment. Agricultural pollution incidents continue to be an issue with significant impacts on water courses. Water pollution in Wales caused by abandoned metal mines is the worst in the UK. Although recycling rates are increasing, hazardous waste and fly-tipping continue to be a serious issue.

Climate change is likely to result in more frequent and extreme weather events, with people located on flood plains or near to coasts increasingly at risk. Drought is also an issue with water availability likely to be reduced in some areas.

### What will NRW do?

NRW will work in partnership – providing guidance and advice, monitoring and evidence, modelling and forecasting the likelihood of events and providing an effective response to incidents that do occur. We will be trusted to recommend

the best approach to help reduce the risks both to people and to habitats and biodiversity. As a firm but fair regulator, we will investigate incidents and use our full range of powers to tackle environmental crime when it becomes necessary.





## We will:

- Use our Area Statements to assess the risk of environmental hazards, and develop nature-based solutions as a first option to reduce their frequency/severity
- Ensure these are integrated into Well-being Plans and provide multiple benefits where possible, such as habitat creation and recreation opportunities
- Work with partners on preventative measures and to prepare for environmental incidents if they do occur
- Collaborate with organisations such as Public Health Wales and local authorities to trial innovative approaches to improving local air quality, diffuse and/or agricultural pollution, metal mine remediation and dealing with slurry
- Maintain our existing flood assets and build flood defences to reduce the risk to further properties
- Reduce pollution risks by effective use of our regulatory powers

- Support initiatives such as Flood Awareness Wales and Fly-tipping Action Wales



“We were working on a site in Llanelli and two ladies came down who were living on the street. They were so grateful we were there, they were overjoyed which made me happy that we’re doing a good job

Allyn Hawkes  
Operations Supervisor

# 5

## Help people live healthier and more fulfilled lives

### Where are we now?

There are significant health issues and considerable differences in healthy life expectancy between different areas in Wales. Living

in and making use of a good-quality natural environment could help address some of these as part of a healthy lifestyle and improved physical and mental health.

Although many people already enjoy the natural world, not everyone understands the benefits the natural environment provides for their day to day lives. There are considerable challenges to reconnect some people to the natural environment, learning in and about the outdoors and the benefits they provide.

### What will NRW do?

NRW will encourage access and provide a wide range of opportunities for recreation and volunteering. We will have joint initiatives with Public Health Wales, Sport Wales and other experts using the natural environment to improve health and well-being.

We will help the natural environment be seen as integral to local Well-being Plans, with Welsh landscapes and seascapes inspiring lifelong learning and participation in sports and the arts.

“The thing that I enjoy is helping the communities’ ideas come to fruition, and to see people appreciate the environment.

Geminie Drinkwater  
Project Officer,  
Llynfi Valley  
Woodland



## We will:

- Develop and manage walking, running, mountain bike and horse riding trails and access points, focusing on places where this can provide the most benefits
- Support community projects and social enterprise on land and water that we manage
- Deliver Cyfle - our scheme for the support of apprenticeships, research and work placements and volunteering
- Help every child in Wales experience and value the natural environment, working in partnership to ensure outdoor learning is included within the statutory curriculum for all age groups
- Work with Public Health Wales and Sport Wales to develop joint actions that improve health and well-being and ensure this is embedded in Well-being Plans
- Work with partners to deliver the benefits of the Wales Coast Path and Welsh National Trails for visitors and locals alike
- Work with partners, communities and educators to promote the value of the local natural environment and the opportunities they can provide to improve health, develop skills and support Wales' cultural heritage



# 6

## Promote successful and responsible business, using natural resources without damaging them

### Where are we now?

Over 90% of the land area in Wales is used for agriculture and forestry. Wales also has significant freshwater and marine fisheries: ensuring the sustainability of fish stocks is a significant issue.

Local authority recycling rates have risen and are now the highest in the UK, second highest in Europe and third highest in the world. Electricity generated from renewables has more than tripled since 2007.

### What will NRW do?

NRW will have strong links with industry and agriculture through advice and regulation. While some businesses already operate sustainably, there are more opportunities for green growth, benefiting industry itself, the natural environment and the people of Wales.

We will support the development of alternative markets as well as Payment for Ecosystem Services and use our buying power to influence our suppliers and the wider public sector to encourage working towards a circular economy.

“I like to think I’m helping to leave a legacy for my daughter so she can continue to enjoy these things

Charlie Lewis  
Project Support  
Officer





## We will:

- Deliver our Enterprise Plan, including timber, renewable energy and tourism
- Promote the compelling reasons for businesses to adopt an SMNR approach, helping understand the benefits to industry, people and the natural environment
- Use our experimental powers to work with emerging technologies to help businesses operate sustainably
- Help provide good-quality jobs throughout Wales and support apprenticeships, work placements and Welsh Government employment programmes
- Work with the private, public and voluntary sectors, neighbours and communities to support appropriate use of the land and water we manage to deliver multiple benefits
- Support the Welsh Government to develop their approach to new tax powers
- Put steps in place to work towards a circular economy and zero waste in Wales



# 7

## Develop NRW into an excellent organisation, delivering first-class customer service

### Where are we now?

Since 2013, we have established our standalone capability, developing our own systems appropriate for Wales.

We are poised to reorganise our structure to deliver our local, area-based approach, following on from work over several years leading up to this point.

### What will NRW do?

NRW will be leading the way to a better future for Wales by managing the environment and natural resources of Wales

sustainably. And we will know we are working in the best way we can because our staff and customers will have told us so.

We care for our staff: our staff are, and recognise that they are, valued for their professionalism and expertise, listened to and their diversity celebrated. We care for our customers, and will be seen as a valuable partner because we listen, respond and are keen to work collaboratively. We care for the natural environment: that is why we are here. It is usually why people work for NRW.

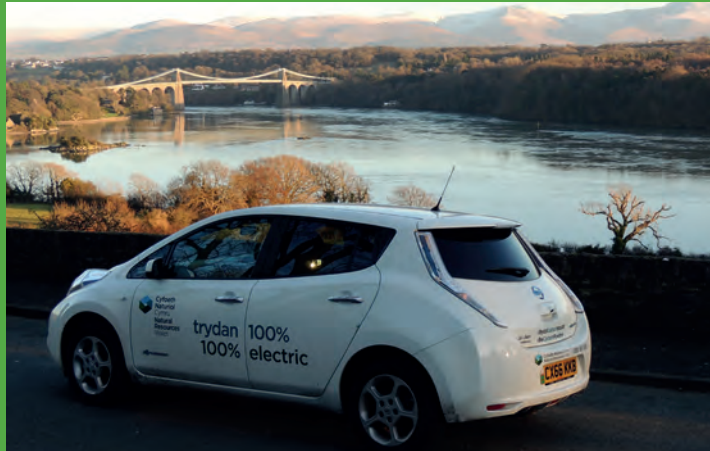
“We respect the identity of our customers and the partners we work with, and aim to provide those services in their language of choice, Welsh or English as they so wish

Lyn Williams  
Welsh Language  
Officer



## We will:

- Inspire, motivate and empower our staff to live our values, and be our ambassadors
- Ensure we listen to staff, understand their views and improve NRW as a place to work
- Reduce our own environmental impact and carbon footprint showing leadership in decarbonisation in the public sector
- Enable our customers to do business with us online – because it's the simplest, cheapest and quickest way to do so
- Support wider sharing and efficient use of our assets such as offices and fleet, to help move towards an efficient and integrated public service for Wales
- Pilot new approaches to our grant-giving work
- Trial and share our new approach to procurement across the public sector



To deliver the Corporate Plan we will need to manage our resources carefully – both staff and money - ensuring we provide good value for money.

Over the next two to three years we will be changing – to a more integrated, locally based organisation, only using a national approach where it makes more sense to do so.

We will be moving towards a more enabling organisation, where we help partners to work with us to help deliver joint outcomes.

We will measure performance, through indicators aligned to the long-term vision for the natural environment in Wales, measures for our Corporate Plan and annual targets for our Business Plan.

This will ensure we are ambitious and rigorous in monitoring both the natural environment in Wales and the benefits it provides, and our own performance and how we contribute to well-being in Wales now and for future generations.



For more information please read our full Corporate Plan [www.naturalresources.wales](http://www.naturalresources.wales)