

Nature and People Thriving Together

Our corporate plan to 2030



April 2023

The challenge

A vision of nature and people thriving together should not be difficult to imagine.

It is the stuff of children's picture books where pages are adorned with patchwork hills and towering trees, buzzing meadows abundant with wildlife, and sparkling seas and rivers.

But delivering our vision for Wales in 2030 as a land where nature and people thrive together is existentially challenging.

Because right now, nature and people are not thriving together. Far from it. From devastating floods, wildfires and droughts to the disappearance of species like the curlew, and declining habitats, the stark impact of the climate and nature crises on our communities is clear to see.

The warming planet and increasing pollution is driving nature in Wales towards collapse, extreme weather is on the increase, and the demand for the natural resources that support every aspect of our lives is now outstripping our planet's ability to renew them.

There is enough evidence now —surely more than enough — to convince everyone that these are climate and nature emergencies in the very real sense, and that urgent, transformative action is needed.

When set against the backdrop of the current economic and geopolitical uncertainty, it is easy to feel overwhelmed by the sheer scale of the task at hand.



Yet, as these interlinked crises have moved up the political agendas globally, and here in Wales, we have seen more governments, businesses and society join the urgent call to action to halt nature's decline and mitigate and adapt to climate change.

World leaders have committed to driving down carbon emissions until they reach net zero by the middle of this century. Here in Wales, the ambition is to get there sooner and to create a carbon neutral public sector by 2030. Putting nature on the pathway to

recovery by 2030 is at the heart of Welsh Government's ambition, driving collective action to protect and restore nature.

These commitments need to deliver lasting change, and the people of Wales are looking to us to lead the way, working alongside the Welsh Government, and our partners in the public, private and voluntary sector.

We understand that the actions we will all need to take to tackle the climate and nature emergencies presents many challenges to the sectors we work with, from farmers to foresters, to

fisheries and industry. But we also believe that it presents many opportunities – a chance for us all to do things differently and work more proactively together to future-proof our planet.

The creation of Natural Resources Wales (NRW) ten years ago was a bold step, signalling Welsh Government’s determination to deliver integrated environmental leadership and delivery in Wales.

As we move into our second decade, and as we approach the critical 2030 milestones, the experience and learning of the last decade have provided us with a unique springboard from which to deliver. Over the life of this corporate plan, we will use the unique tools and legal powers available to us, to ensure that Wales steps up to meet its 2030 targets and that, by taking a Team Wales approach, we make a decisive contribution to tackling these global emergencies.

We know that meeting the 2030 targets is the first step on the journey to stopping the loss and achieving wider international targets, goals and milestones in 2050. We also know that the scale of the investment needed to meet these targets cannot be funded by the public purse alone.

In our corporate plan, we set out where NRW is best placed to make a difference within the resources we have, but also where we will need to adapt how and where we work, and innovate and collaborate to bring about a change that is fair, just and ensures nobody gets left behind.

Because social justice and environmental recovery are indivisible - two sides of the same coin. We cannot tackle one without tackling the other. But if we do address them together, we can imagine a future where nature and people genuinely thrive together in a way that is sustainable for future generations. Their well-being depends on the legacy of our decisions, our actions and how we care for the environment.



This is the vision that will inspire us, motivate us and empower us to deliver the right solutions for the communities we live and work in every day, sharing our passion and our expertise with others and recognising the difference our colleagues make for Wales’ future prosperity.

We know what we need to do and how to do it. The time to act and to make this the decisive decade of delivery for people and for nature in Wales, and around the world, is now.

Sir David Henshaw, Chair

Clare Pillman, Chief Executive

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Handwritten signature of Clare Pillman in black ink.

Our Wales – Our Plan

In Wales, our relationship with the natural world is deeply-rooted in our history and culture. From our landscapes and seascapes to the rich mineral deposits and soils beneath our feet, nature has long-shaped our sense of community and identity, and critically, our economy.

Wales' rich mineral wealth fuelled the industries of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, leaving behind a proud legacy of innovation and community.

In the twenty-first century Wales can once again turn to its natural resources of wind and tide, rich soils and a temperate climate, to lead the charge to decarbonise our economy and regenerate our land.

Wales' long-standing interdependency with nature was given new focus during the global pandemic, as people turned to green and blue spaces for solace, and became more sensitised to the connection between clean air and health. In its wake, governments and others have set ambitions to ensure a green recovery that includes everyone, across all parts of society.



The evidence shows just how urgent and necessary this commitment to a green recovery is. Landmark assessments such as our own [State of Natural Resources Report \(SoNaRR2020\)](#) and the [State of Nature Report Wales, 2019](#) consistently underline how natural resources and biodiversity in Wales are in steep decline.

The [Climate Change Risk Assessment for Wales](#) also identifies 53 key risks impacting on all aspects of society - from health and nature to infrastructure and business.

It is this evidence base that is driving this small nation to think big in how we respond, how we adapt and how we mitigate.

The climate and nature emergencies have been placed at the heart of the [Welsh Government's Programme for Government](#), with Ministers convening a range of expert-led task forces to lead on deep dives on trees and timber, renewable energy and biodiversity. The tools defined in the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act](#) and [Environment \(Wales\) Act](#) are also pushing all parts of the public sector to work together to tackle the crises.

And we are already seeing progress. Over the last five years, greenhouse gas emissions have reduced, and Wales has met its first carbon budget (2016-2020) with a reduction of 28% in emissions.

A wide range of initiatives within specific communities or sites are also moving into delivery.

We have been scaling up efforts to keep carbon locked up in peatlands, restoring and improving habitats for our native and most threatened species through the Natur am Byth and Nature Networks schemes, and taking a catchment-scale approach to the restoration of our rivers.

How successful we will be in the future will not only be determined by how we lead the way, but how well we, and the people of Wales, collaborate on our shared ambitions across the public, private and third sectors.

Working in partnership will not only bring benefits for our depleted environment, but it can also create employment through green jobs and skills, secure our food and water supplies, and support public health. It can also build the well-being and resilience of communities, reduce the risk of the perpetuation of existing inequalities and social exclusion, and propel the Welsh economy to become a green and just economy.

To achieve all of this, we need to listen to a range of voices, knowing that more inclusive decision-making that is representative of the communities we live and work in, leads to better outcomes for all.

This has already started through our Nature and Us campaign, as we involved the people of Wales in a national conversation about the future of our natural environment.

While some of the conversations will be difficult, the aim is to develop a shared vision for the year 2050 and consider the changes we all need to make leading up to 2030 and 2050, as individuals and as a country for the benefit of current and future generations.

The first phase of the conversation identified climate change, the decline or extinction of animal and plant life, and the pollution of rivers, lakes and groundwaters as three of the greatest concerns.



People also recognise the need for lifestyle changes to minimise impacts on nature, and the need to foster people's connections with nature, ensuring that we also take these opportunities to tackle inequalities.

Everything we've learned from this conversation has helped shape our corporate plan and informed how we will deliver our work over the remainder of this decisive decade.

The challenge for us now is to harness our collective energies and skills for innovation, and convert it into action on the ground.

The difference we can make

We work for the people of Wales, and it is our duty to pursue the sustainable management of natural resources (SMNR). These guiding principles underpin everything we do, including how we use our connections and bring people together to create and deliver shared outcomes for nature.

They inform how our colleagues flex and respond to the diverse needs of our communities and the environment, taking a place-focussed approach to our work, applying the sustainable development principle and contributing to the seven well-being goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

We share with many other organisations and individuals a love and passion for nature, detailed knowledge and expertise, as well as pride in supporting communities across Wales to take action.

We also share a pride in supporting the Welsh language, recognising how it defines us as people and as a nation, and connects us with our natural resources and our communities.

This pride and confidence in using Welsh in our work has been at the forefront of our minds as this corporate plan has evolved, ensuring our vision, mission and values are written in a way that resonate in the Welsh and English languages.



This corporate plan has been crafted with our colleagues in mind, building on our experience and learning over the last decade, and setting out our priorities to 2030.

We've set our sights on where **we** can and are best placed to lead and make a difference, using our tools, powers and our resources to drive action to meet the 2030 targets, while at the same time working with others to harness their own power to effect change.

Beyond 2030, society will face tougher choices on how Wales can reach the 2050 commitments for climate and nature. We are starting that work now - identifying, testing and making the case for change to set us on the right pathway collectively.

Our well-being objectives take us to 2030 and encompass what we will be able to achieve ourselves, but also how we will work with others to ensure Wales meets these more immediate international targets.



Our vision

Nature and people thriving together.

Our mission

Focussing our passion and collective action towards:

- nature's recovery
- resilience to climate change
- minimising pollution

through the sustainable management of our natural resources.

Our values

We are proud to serve the people of Wales by being:

- **Connected:** we value our deep-rooted attachment to the land and water, nature and communities of Wales and build meaningful partnerships
- **Bold:** we use our voice, take action to make a difference and lead by example
- **Caring:** we listen to understand, care for each other and the communities we serve, and the environment we all depend on
- **Resourceful:** we explore new ways of doing things, innovate to accelerate change and use our resources effectively.

These values reflect, in part, where we are now as well as our aspirations for the future. They are intrinsic to the successful delivery of our vision and mission. The values will be front and centre of everything we do to deliver this corporate plan; they will be embedded in our brand, our storytelling, our learning and development, leadership and management. All our work conversations and behaviours will be rooted in these values.

Our well-being objectives to 2030

By 2030 in Wales:

- nature is recovering
- communities are resilient to climate change
- pollution is minimised

By focussing on the three well-being objectives *together*, we will protect and enhance the well-being of future generations.

- Nature is the foundation stone of Wales' well-being - supporting community cohesion and resilience, strong local economies, employment, learning, and mental and physical health.
- Nature underpins vibrant rural communities, with a direct relationship between nature and sustainable agriculture, woodlands and those that manage the land. This relationship must be nurtured if Wales is to maintain clean water, productive soils, food supplies and fibre.
- Without nature, we have no shield against climate impacts. Thriving nature stores carbon and reduces the risks and impacts of a warming world. Many actions to support the recovery of nature also provide solutions that will help us adapt to and mitigate against climate change.
- Minimising pollution and waste has a direct benefit to the health and resilience of nature and people. It can also benefit industry and business, helping them to become more responsible, improving their efficiency, effectiveness, helping to reduce costs and protect jobs and livelihoods.

The evidence tells us that by targeting action on these three well-being objectives, wider opportunities and benefits will flow for:

- mental and physical well-being
- lifelong learning and creativity
- job creation and skills

In turn, these will also contribute to the seven well-being goals for Wales which we have outlined in our well-being statement.

A healthy, happy and affluent society is one that is more likely to care for nature and take positive action for its future. We believe that helping people live better lives will also help us address our well-being objectives.

But we cannot do it alone.

We will work collaboratively across our teams, with sector representatives and through the Public Services Boards (PSBs) to optimise these opportunities, and build meaningful partnerships to drive the transformational change we need.

In developing our well-being objectives and the steps that we will take to achieve them, we have applied our purpose to pursue the sustainable management of natural resources, and applied the sustainable development principle.

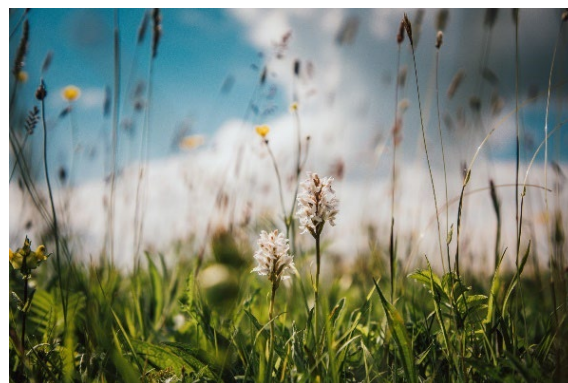
As each step is implemented, we will continue to apply our purpose but will also acknowledge the value, insight and input our communities and other parts of the public, private and third sectors can contribute along the way.

The ambition running through all our efforts will be to ensure that nobody gets left behind as Wales pursues action for nature and climate. To exacerbate or to widen existing inequalities in our communities would be at odds with the commitments made within the Programme for Government.

For the lifetime of this plan, and through applying our purpose, we will sharpen our focus on social and environmental justice, on equity and inclusion, making sure delivering for rural and urban communities across Wales is at the heart of everything we do.

Well-being objective 1: Nature is recovering

This means taking urgent action to halt and reverse the decline in biodiversity, and to build the resilience of ecosystems so that nature can adapt to a changing climate and continue to provide the basis of all life – clean air, clean water, food and a stable climate. Wales needs to act now to avoid catastrophic ecosystem collapse.



Nature's recovery is at the heart of Welsh Government's policy agenda. We agree with Ministers who are demanding that all parts of society and the public, private and third sectors work collaboratively to drive sustained action for nature.

In the run-up to COP 15 in Montreal in December 2022, Welsh Government led the Biodiversity Deep Dive, developing a series of collective actions to protect and effectively manage 30% of our land, freshwater and sea for nature by 2030. Welsh Government has also committed in the longer-term to develop statutory nature recovery targets.

The Global Biodiversity Framework, agreed in December 2022, sets out four long-term goals for 2050 and 23 targets to be achieved by 2030 to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity by 2030. We have mapped our steps to take against these Welsh and global commitments.

As the environment body for Wales, we provide the single, integrated voice on nature and natural resources. We will lead the drive for action by sharing our knowledge and expertise, drawing on the insights and experience of others, leading by example as we manage the land in our care.

We will harness the power of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and use our convening power to bring different people and organisations together, identifying opportunities for action and monitoring and assessing the impact.

We will prioritise action so that by 2030, [nature's recovery](#) will be secured by:

- nature being protected
- nature being restored
- nature being respected and valued in decision-making
- nature, people and communities being reconnected
- NRW being an exemplar nature positive organisation



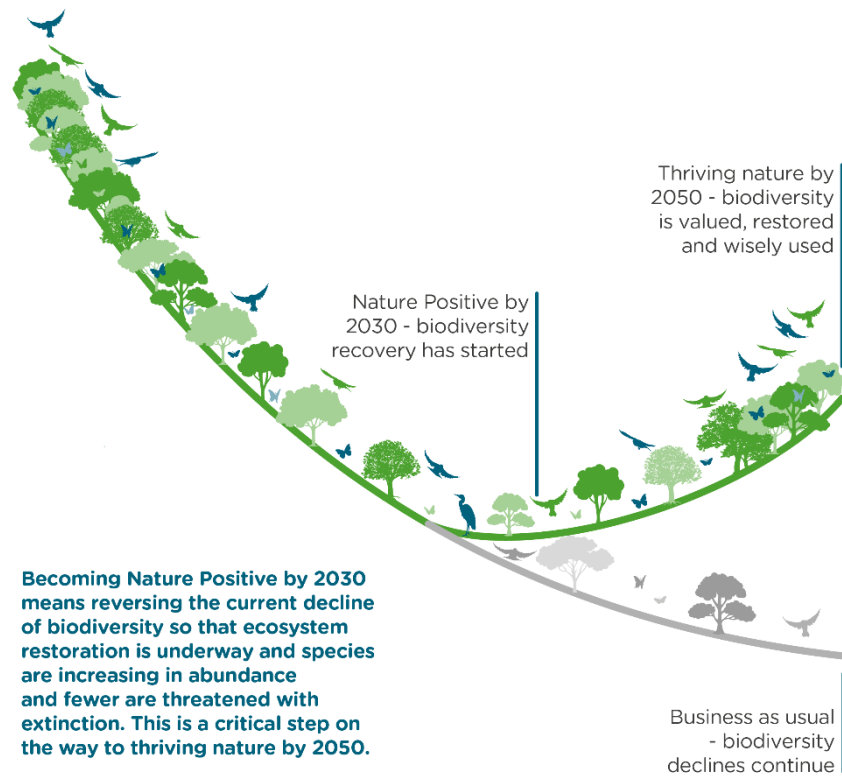


Image taken from the Nature Positive 2030 report, published by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, NatureScot and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

We will be protecting nature by:

- improving the condition of features at protected terrestrial, marine and freshwater sites through using our advisory and regulatory tools, financial incentives and undertaking monitoring to evaluate effectiveness;
- extending the protection and management of at least 30% of land, freshwater and sea for nature through identifying opportunities to enlarge and better connect the series of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);



- understanding how ecosystems respond and adapt to climate change, through developing our evidence to inform our approach and identifying reforms to our regulatory approaches, tools and delivery mechanisms;
- building ecosystem resilience into the strategic planning system for land and sea, including Future Wales and other development plans, Planning Policy Wales and the Welsh National Marine Plan, through strengthening our provision of advice and guidance;
- influencing the right development in the right place to secure the protection and resilience of priority habitats and species across land and sea, through making the case for changes to development plans at local and regional scale and individual planning applications;
- protecting species at the greatest risk of extinction through using our advisory and regulatory tools, working in partnership and monitoring to evaluate effectiveness
- preventing the introduction and spread of invasive non-native species, pests and diseases through coordinated action with strategic partners;
- reducing the risks to nature from incidents such as bird flu, or those impacting protected sites or species, through preparing for and responding as a Category 1 responder; and
- preventing air and water pollution from impacting protected sites through identifying and evaluating the key contributors, such as ammonia and working with key sectors to take action.



We will be restoring nature by:

- accelerating improvements to the condition of the Marine Protected Area Network through robust monitoring and investigations, evidence, advice and working with others on project delivery;
- building the resilience of terrestrial, freshwater and marine protected sites transforming them into bigger, better and more effectively connected networks, using our advisory and regulatory tools, financial incentives and undertaking monitoring to evaluate effectiveness;
- accelerating action for nature's recovery at a landscape-scale through sharing our evidence and expertise with National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and other partners;
- scaling up [nature-based solutions](#) in urban and rural areas to build connectivity between habitats, securing multiple benefits for nature and people through working with planners and developers to embed in developments; and
- evaluating the effectiveness of what we do to restore and connect nature through monitoring and sharing the data with others, establishing a series of demonstration platforms.



We will be ensuring nature is respected and valued in decision-making by:

- optimising opportunities for nature's recovery by embedding it in all NRW policies, strategies, plans, programmes and projects;
- meeting the needs of specific audiences to stimulate action for nature through collecting, synthesising, evaluating and communicating our own and others' evidence;
- mainstreaming nature recovery in all public bodies by collaborating to define the guidelines and opportunities to drive action;
- identifying opportunities to optimise the collective action and impact of the public sector, through using SoNaRR and Area Statements to work with the PSBs, public health and local authorities;
- delivering multiple benefits and opportunities for nature, people and the rural economy through supporting Welsh Government in the development and implementation of the Sustainable Farming Scheme, providing evidence and expertise;
- stimulating action for scalable nature positive management of land and water, through collaborative working with key sectors to define effective solutions;
- identifying opportunities for investment by the public, private and third sectors through developing a platform, or platforms, to share our evidence in an integrated way at different spatial scales.



We will be re-connecting nature and people by:

- engaging with people to take action, creating opportunities for being in, learning about and becoming advocates for nature and climate, through working with the education, physical activity and health sectors;
- inspiring people to take action, empowering and transforming their relationship with nature through working with creative industries and the cultural sector;
- ensuring local communities benefit from equitable access to green and blue spaces and act responsibly, through providing guidance and support, working collaboratively with strategic partners such as Visit Wales and local authorities;
- ensuring social and environmental justice, equity and inclusion inform and strengthen our decision-making for nature's recovery through the review of current mechanisms and development of guidance;



- involving different communities and sectors in our work, through applying behavioural insights to inform our approaches;
- creating opportunities for individual and collective action on nature through delivering a sustained communications campaign;
- ensuring a diverse range of people are taking action for nature, through sharing the vision and outcomes from Nature and Us to expand our networks and increase involvement;
- building the capability and capacity of the Welsh workforce to support nature’s recovery through working with others to advocate for green skills and jobs;
- delivering landscape-scale nature recovery through developing collaborative partnerships, building on the learning from the Upper Conwy Catchment Project and Natur am Byth.



We will be an exemplar nature positive organisation by:

- building the resilience of high nature-value sites on the land in our care, especially our National Nature Reserves and other protected sites, and contributing to the 30 by 30 target, through managing soil, water, vegetation and other aspects to create ecological processes that sustain the high nature value;
- ensuring nature’s protection and recovery is integrated into NRW's financial and business decisions through applying the lessons learnt from others on effective tools and frameworks;
- ensuring nature’s recovery is driven throughout our supply chains, grant programmes and land management agreements through inclusion in our procurement and funding frameworks;
- ensuring partners are delivering against our strategic commercial approach through nature positive certification in commercial products and services;
- investing in the skills and capability of our colleagues to be ambassadors through providing a training programme for nature and climate literacy.



How we will recover nature in our communities

To support nature’s recovery, we will build on our network of partnerships across Wales, reflecting the diversity of Wales’ communities and natural resources.

In our seven places we have made commitments through our active engagement with PSBs in the development of their well-being plans, and through involving communities in the development of our Area Statements.

Find out more about how we are tailoring our work to recover nature in our place-focussed areas.

South East Wales

In South East Wales, partnership working will be key to achieving the ambition to halt and reverse biodiversity decline across the extraordinary Gwent landscape. In support of the 10-year Greater Gwent Nature Recovery Action plan, we will empower partners to work together to tackle the main drivers of biodiversity loss, build ecosystem resilience at a landscape and local level and increase the diversity of the species and habitats we find here.

Building on the legacy of our work as part of the [Living Levels Landscape Partnership](#), we will also invest in the relationships we have cultivated with the local community and our partners in this area, and work together to protect, enhance and reconnect people with the natural environment in this special place.



South Wales Central

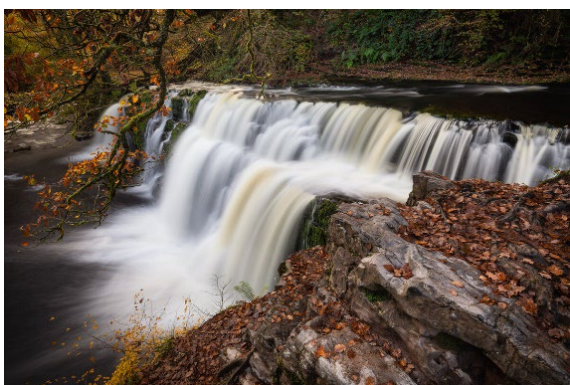
Across the South Wales Central area, we will manage our woodlands sustainably and with our local communities in mind. One third of Wales' population borders urban woodland, providing places to explore and connect with nature, as well as trees absorbing noise and greenhouse gas emissions. We will work with local communities to maximise the benefits the Welsh Government Woodland Estate can bring. In areas like the North Cardiff Woodlands, we will take a landscape approach to how we manage the Estate and our wider recreation offer to ensure we can enhance ecosystem resilience and manage visitor pressures, whilst also bringing multiple health and well-being benefits to Cardiff's communities.

Maximising the delivery of the sustainable management of natural resources through landscape partnerships will also be a key focus in this part of Wales. We will use our convening powers and leverage our Area Statement evidence to support new ways of working that support the development of multiple Resilient Ecological Networks (RENs), such as the Bridgend landscape partnership, to achieve multiple environmental and socio-economic benefits. This evidence will be used to connect, protect and enhance the green infrastructure that make up the urban areas across South Wales Central.

South West Wales

From Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) to our National Nature Reserves, improving the condition of our protected areas to underpin nature recovery will be a key focus for our teams in South West Wales. Working with landowners and partners, we will pursue opportunities to develop a wider network of resilient ecosystems, concentrating on semi-natural grasslands in the area. Our work to restore ancient woodland sites and precious peatlands on the Welsh Government Woodland Estate will continue, and we will ensure land we lease to others is managed sensitively and responsibly.

Mid Wales



Work to recover nature in Mid Wales will focus on fostering the resilience of ecosystems and improving habitats across protected and designated sites. Working in partnership with the Canal and River Trust, we will protect designated plants and invertebrates within the Montgomeryshire Canal Special Area of Conservation. We will also work alongside Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and other partners to review visitor safety management responsibilities in Waterfall Country, whilst also ensuring the protection of the special

characteristics of the National Park.

North East Wales

Our work with PSBs will be instrumental in how we deliver our ambitions to make communities in North East Wales more resilient to the challenges they face. Conwy and Denbighshire PSB will operate at a strategic level to influence the agendas of partners and others and will focus on a single well-being objective: *a more equal place with less deprivation*. The plan will seek to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the area by making communities more resilient to the climate and nature emergencies and the rising costs of living.



Action plans designed to deliver more equal access to the countryside and coast and to enhance biodiversity and natural habitats in Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham will further benefit the health and well-being of those who live and work in North East Wales.

Our successful partnerships will be the foundation stone of nature recovery focussed projects, such as the development of integrated catchment management in the Vale of Clwyd, where a volunteer forum and partners will come together to work on upland management. We will also

work with regional partners, such as the North Wales Research and Insight Group to increase understanding of the nature and climate emergency through collaborative engagement and the sharing of knowledge and research to inform our decision-making and improve our ways of working.

North West Wales

In North West Wales, we will continue our multi-theme ‘Llifo’ approach to project development on Anglesey and the Conwy Valley, where we will work with partners to focus on commonalities between the PSB well-being objectives, the opportunity catchment priorities and our North West Area Statement. We will build on the opportunities this approach brings to enable us to collaborate more effectively, to think innovatively, to do things differently and to effect change.

We will continue to develop our understanding of what ecosystem resilience in the face of the nature emergency means for the area, using the habitat maps we have developed as a foundation for

engagement with our partners as we look to continue our work to restore ecosystems in North West Wales. Wherever possible, we will initiate multi-partner projects across the area, focussing on locations which will support our aspirations to support nature’s recovery, whilst also delivering on the priorities of our partners, our Area Statement themes and PSB priorities.



Marine

Through our membership of the Wales Coasts and Seas Partnership (CaSP Cymru), we will work with a range of partners on our shared priorities to improve marine resilience in Wales. This will include improving people’s understanding of how collective and individual actions impact the sea’s health, and how the sea’s health impacts our own lives through the implementation of an Ocean Literacy Strategy.

We will work alongside our coastal communities to build capacity to address the impacts of the climate and nature emergencies, and explore innovative funding mechanisms that can support nature’s recovery and build the resilience of our seas and coastlines.



We will build on our work to improve the condition of the Marine Protected Area network in Wales which supports some of the most diverse wildlife and habitats in Europe. To reduce the pressures of the climate and nature emergencies on these areas, we will deliver a diverse programme of activity which will include locating and managing, wherever possible, the removal of derelict vessels. We will also look to strengthen our understanding of the reasons why some key coastal habitats, such as mearl and sandbanks are in poor condition. Doing so will enable us to put plans in place to manage the restoration of these important features. We will also develop robust

biosecurity plans for marine sites that will help prevent the spread of invasive non-native species around our coasts and deliver saltmarsh restoration work at Rhymney Wharf in Cardiff.

Well-being objective 2: Communities are resilient to climate change

This means taking urgent action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and accelerate action to adapt to climate change, reducing the risks and impacts to all sectors of the economy whilst contributing to the Welsh Government ambition for a carbon neutral public sector by 2030, and a net zero Wales by 2050.

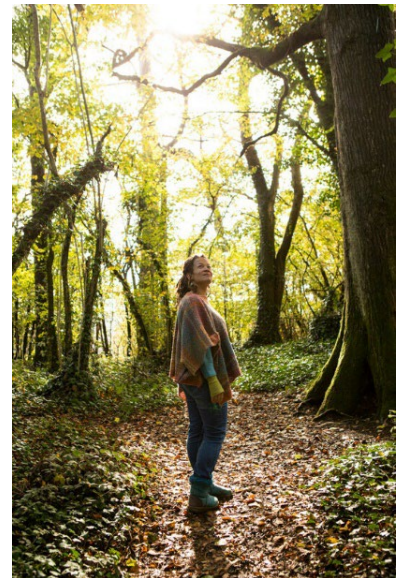
Welsh Government has defined the strategic direction in [Net Zero Wales to 2025](#), setting out how Wales will reduce its emissions as a country, with 120 policies and proposals identified across all Ministerial portfolios and sectors.

In December 2022, Welsh Government published the final statement for the first carbon budget, including a suite of 100 Wales-specific indicators for the monitoring, reporting and verification of the carbon budget, including some related to NRW's remit. The national adaptation plan for Wales sets out the priority risks and actions to manage the impacts of climate change, with a new plan including indicators proposed for 2024. Taken together, these provide real clarity for all parts of the public, private and third sectors on the actions needed.

Nature that is thriving stores carbon and provides protection from the impacts of a warming world. Action to support the recovery of nature strengthens our collective response to climate change.

We will prioritise action so that, by 2030, [community resilience to climate change](#) will be secured by:

- nature-based solutions being widely adopted
- the risks of climate change being managed and adapted
- climate emissions being reduced
- sustained action on climate change being taken by people, communities and businesses
- NRW being an exemplar organisation for a carbon neutral public sector.



We will be scaling up delivery of nature-based solutions by:

- restoring peatland through the National Peatland Action Programme (NPAP) working with delivery partners, including on the land in our care, using a range of advisory and regulatory tools, financial incentives and undertaking monitoring to evaluate effectiveness;
- creating new woodlands and restoring ancient woodlands through working with delivery partners, using a range of advisory and regulatory tools, financial incentives and undertaking monitoring to evaluate effectiveness;
- creating new woodlands and restoring ancient woodlands on the land in our care, through only acquiring land for woodland creation to compensate for woodland permanently converted to other land-uses, and gradually changing the trees on planted ancient woodland sites to species that better reflect their nature conservation and cultural value;
- stimulating restoration of marine and coastal habitats such as saltmarsh, sand dunes, seagrass and native oyster reef through working with delivery partners, using a range of advisory and regulatory tools, financial incentives and undertaking monitoring to evaluate effectiveness;
- maintaining, improving and restoring terrestrial and freshwater habitats to build ecosystem resilience and deliver societal benefits, through using our advisory and regulatory tools, financial incentives and undertaking monitoring to evaluate effectiveness;
- mitigating the impacts of floods and droughts and improving water quality through identifying opportunities for integrated management of land and water at the catchment scale;
- enhancing the resilience of urban and rural communities and their connection with nature through strengthening the design and accessibility of urban green and blue infrastructure, working with planners and developers to embed in developments.



We will be adapting to the risks and impacts of climate change by:

- building climate resilience into the strategic planning system for land and sea including Future Wales and other development plans, Planning Policy Wales and the Welsh National Marine Plan, through strengthening our provision of advice and guidance;
- ensuring all future developments are resilient to climate change through making the case



- for changes to local and regional development plans and advising on planning applications;
- reducing the risk to life from flooding through managing our flood assets and infrastructure for current and future flood risk, and planning for change through maintaining and adapting the flood assets and infrastructure we are accountable for;
- reducing the risk to life from flooding to people and communities from main rivers, reservoirs and the sea, through the delivery of flood alleviation schemes;
- reducing the risk to life from flooding through issuing flood warnings that meet the changing needs of communities, and maintaining and improving the 24/7 Flood Warning Service;
- reducing the risks to nature and people from floods and droughts through preparing for and responding to incidents as a Category 1 responder;
- building the resilience of communities, local authorities and businesses to current and future flood risk through improving and sharing our evidence to stimulate action;
- reducing the risk to life from reservoir failure through regulating reservoir safety;
- ensuring water companies maintain security of water supply to customers through scrutinising and reporting to Ministers on their water resource management plans, drought plans and infrastructure investment plans;
- reducing the risks to the natural resources on the land in our care from drought, disease and pests, wildfires and storm damage through diversifying tree species, restructuring woodland and other habitats, and greater tree thinning;
- reducing the risks to the assets we manage on the land in our care such as spoil tips, reservoirs, major culverts and bridges through maintaining and upgrading infrastructure;
- ensuring that regulated facilities and activities are resilient through providing evidence and advice to inform assessments of climate risks, impacts and adaptation actions.



We will be contributing to the reduction in carbon emissions by:

- stimulating adoption of alternative low carbon and carbon capture technologies in industry, through providing specialist advice and guidance to inform either planning permission or permit applications;
- strengthening emission standards through making the case for change to Welsh Government through providing evidence;
- stimulating development of sustainable renewable energy schemes on the land in our care through applying our strategic commercial approach;



- supporting the development of sustainable offshore and onshore renewable energy through our evidence, advice and regulation, building a common understanding of the standards required in the statutory planning and permitting processes;
- securing the timber producing potential of the Welsh Government Woodland Estate through providing harvestable timber, meeting global standards of sustainable forest management;
- protecting carbon stocks and optimising opportunities for sequestration through sustainably managing the land in our care;
- stimulating action for carbon neutral management of land and water through collaborative working with key sectors to define effective solutions.



We will be enabling people, communities and businesses to take sustained action on climate change by:

- engaging with people to take action, creating opportunities for being in, learning about and becoming advocates for nature and climate through working with the education, physical activity and health sectors;
- inspiring people to take action, empowering and transforming their relationship with nature through working with creative industries and the cultural sector;
- identifying opportunities to optimise the collective action and impact of the public sector, through using SoNaRR and Area Statements to work with the public service boards, public health and local authorities;
- ensuring social and environmental justice, equity and inclusion inform and strengthen our decision-making for climate change through the review of current mechanisms and development of guidance;
- involving different communities and sectors in our work, through applying behavioural insights to inform our approaches;
- creating opportunities for individual and collective action on climate change through delivering a sustained communications campaign;
- ensuring a diverse range of people are taking action for climate through sharing the vision and outcomes from Nature and Us to expand our networks and increase involvement;
- building the capability and capacity of the Welsh workforce to support climate action through working with others to advocate for green skills and jobs; and
- meeting the needs of specific audiences to stimulate action for nature through collecting, synthesising, evaluating and communicating ours and others evidence.



We will be an exemplar organisation for a carbon neutral public sector by:

- strengthening our strategic approach to decarbonisation through developing and delivering an organisation-wide net zero plan, building on the lessons learnt from partners;
- changing our ways of working through completing climate change risk and vulnerability assessments to inform an integrated adaptation action plan, sharing our learning with others;
- ensuring NRW's financial and business decisions integrate climate change, through applying the lessons learnt from others on effective governance, tools and frameworks;
- increasing energy efficiency and deployment of renewables in all our buildings and assets, through reviewing current systems and taking action;
- reducing our carbon footprint through monitoring our usage and taking action as we transition to a hybrid working model;
- reducing vehicle emissions through the use of ultra-low emission vehicles wherever possible, using biodiesel and fuel efficiency measures in the interim;
- investing in the skills and capability of our colleagues to be ambassadors through providing a training programme for climate and nature literacy;
- ensuring actions for climate are driven throughout our supply chains, grant programmes and land management agreements through inclusion in our procurement and funding frameworks.



How we will make nature and communities resilient to climate change

To support the resilience of communities to climate change, we will build on our network of partnerships across Wales, reflecting the diversity of our communities and natural resources.

In our seven places we have made commitments through our active engagement with PSBs in the development of their well-being plans, and through involving communities in the development of our Area Statements.

Find out more about how we are tailoring our work to make nature and communities in our place-focussed areas more resilient to climate change.

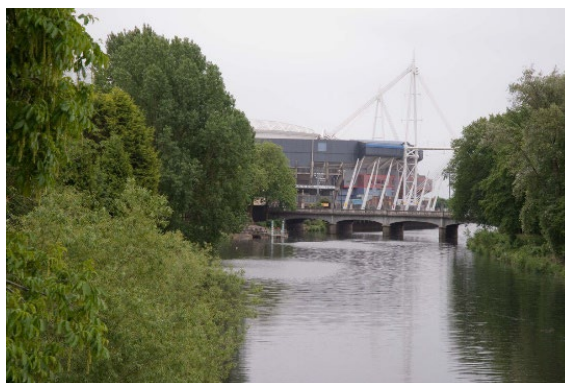
South East Wales

In South East Wales, we recognise the important role the area's network of open green and blue spaces can have on enhancing people's well-being and quality of life. As a partner of the Gwent Green Grid regional



partnership, we will develop a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the area, putting in place the mechanisms to deliver a regional network made up of the natural and semi-natural features and green and blue spaces that connect Gwent's villages, towns and cities. The ambition will be to provide more green jobs, skills development and volunteering opportunities within the region. It will also stimulate community cohesion that will bring benefits for nature and people alike and help tackle the climate emergency.

We will also continue to work with partners, including the Woodland Trust and the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to restore ancient woodland sites in the Wye Valley and deliver nature-based solutions that will increase our forests' resilience to climate impacts and deliver health and well-being benefits for those who live and work in the community.



South Wales Central

The steep-sided valleys and urban locations that make up the landscape in South Wales Central make this area vulnerable to surface water and river flooding. In consideration of the accelerating climate impacts, we will deliver a Strategic Flood Masterplan for the River Taff, taking a whole catchment approach to flood risk management in this area. As the leading flood risk management authority for this geographical area, we will lead and collaborate with other authorities to ensure multi-source flood risk, and how we manage those risks, is considered at every stage, and that we take every opportunity to maximise additional benefits for nature and communities in this area through developing a common vision.

We will also work across communities in South Wales Central to develop more sustainable landscapes and increase their resilience to the impacts of flooding, wildfires and pollution and ensure people have clean air to breathe, clean waters to swim in and equal access to green spaces.

South West Wales

South West Wales' diverse and varied landscapes include farmlands and rugged uplands, extensive coastlines and industrial valleys which each bring opportunities, risks and priorities that we will address to build the resilience of nature and communities in this area.

Home to some of the largest CO₂ emitters in Wales, we will work with regulated industry in South West Wales to help them to reduce their emissions and play their part in helping Wales to achieve its ambitions to transition to a low carbon economy.



We will also look to further harness Wales' potential to deliver more green energy by unlocking the potential of the Welsh Government Woodland Estate to facilitate renewable energy schemes. This includes the proposed windfarm developments at Bryn and Margam Forest and third party

access to developments on adjacent land. We will also work to the Welsh Government's Renewable Energy Developer (RED) programme to identify future sites suitable for delivering the 250MW renewable energy generation targets by 2030.

Mid Wales

Our work to increase communities and nature's resilience to climate change in Mid Wales will focus on the strength of our partnerships in this area. Taking a landscape-scale approach, we will work alongside our partners as part of the Welsh Water-led Brecon Beacons Mega Catchment (BBMC) project to explore new ways of working to support the development of flood mitigation opportunities.

We will also leverage our role as partners in both Powys and Ceredigion PSBs to collaborate in the delivery of the Well-being Plans 2023-28, sharing the lead on the implementation of decarbonisation projects in Ceredigion and taking a place-focussed approach to climate change adaptation across the area.



North West Wales

We will continue to work with strategic partners across North West and North East Wales through the North Wales Regional Leadership Board and the CEO group, where decarbonisation is one of our priority discussion areas. We are already having important conversations about how we work together to tackle the difficult issues at hand, and where changes might be needed in our approach to think differently and more creatively to meet the demands of both the climate and nature emergencies, and to ensure North Wales has a resilient future.

Sensitively managing the special landscapes at Newborough on Anglesey will be a key focus for our North West teams. Newborough's location makes it more susceptible to climate change impacts on our coastline. Recognising the value local communities place on this area, we will work closely with them to plan our work around biodiversity and forestry. Through our work with Anglesey Council, we will put this area at the heart of joint planning to ensure it becomes more resilient as the climate changes. This work at a local level will help inform the wider regional approach to tackling climate change being addressed across North Wales' PSBs.



North East Wales

Our work with PSBs will be instrumental in how we deliver our ambitions to make nature and communities in North East Wales more resilient to climate change. We will also commit to progressing a range of partnership projects in this area, including the creation of a community level resilience plan at Pengwern near Llangollen, leading the vision for the Wrexham Forests Partnerships, the development of integrated catchment management in the Vale of Clwyd, and support initiatives that connect people to nature through Green Social Prescribing and the North Wales Healthy Travel Charter.



Marine

Our Marine teams will work with partners to harness the power of our seas through our Offshore Renewable Energy Programme (OREP) and facilitate the sustainable deployment of offshore renewable energy development in Wales.

Through this programme we have been developing and testing new approaches, seeking to manage uncertainties around the potential environmental impacts of new technologies.

With climate change-related sea level rise and changing coastal protection levels in mind, we will also deliver a Coastal Adaptation Programme (CAP) to deliver the best outcomes for communities most at risk. This work addresses priorities identified across all our Area Statements. We have identified a range of sites where there are opportunities for strategic outcomes and sustainable flood risk management options. These sites, which currently include Dinas Dinlle and Tan Lan in North Wales, the South West Dyfi estuary in Mid Wales and Mwche in South Wales are under detailed review.

Well-being objective 3: Pollution is minimised

This means taking action to minimise those things that harm human health, biodiversity and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, while simultaneously driving down waste by ensuring the reuse and substitution of materials in key sectors of the Welsh economy.



We are the principal environmental regulator in Wales. We are accountable for controlling pollution through issuing permits and enforcing compliance. Our data shows an increase in the

number of pollution incidents over the last five years, and in parallel, heightened public awareness and concern about the impact of pollution on the environment.

We are constantly striving to improve how we work with businesses and sectors to control and minimise pollution and waste using our existing statutory powers and duties.

Avoiding pollution and waste underpin the Welsh Government's circular economy approach to net zero, with a suite of 14 indicators to track progress.



Encouraging businesses to improve their effectiveness and efficiency, thereby reducing their costs, is central to Welsh Government's strategy "[Beyond Recycling](#)". The wider public also need to recognise their role as consumers and demand more from the businesses and supply chains they purchase goods from, signalling their intolerance of pollution and waste.

We will prioritise action so that, by 2030, [nature and people will be protected from the impacts of pollution](#) by:

- effective use of regulatory tools and approaches
- incident response being risk-based
- resource efficiency and the use of alternative materials being widely adopted
- sustained action to minimise pollution being taken by people, communities and businesses
- NRW being an exemplar organisation for zero pollution and waste

We will be effectively using our regulatory tools and approaches by:

- ensuring the sectors we regulate, including illegal non-permitted activities, take effective action to control and minimise pollution and increase resource efficiency through the provision of advice and guidance that effectively sets out the standards required to ensure compliance;
- minimising pollution and waste through working collaboratively with industry and others to identify how legislation and Welsh Government policy need to change;
- avoiding pollution and waste through exploring innovative approaches using all our regulatory tools, including experimental powers;
- improving poor local environmental quality through working with local authorities to understand the issues and develop shared action plans;
- improving environmental performance of those we regulate through advising poor performers on prevention measures and identifying star performers to share lessons learnt and good practice;



- minimising the risks of pollution from chemicals through adapting our regulatory approach to chemicals in the environment;
- minimising pollution of land and water through collaborative working to stimulate positive action and build effective solutions;
- protecting the environment and improving environmental performance of water companies through effective challenge of their investment programmes to secure action to improve;
- minimising pollution in highly protected and designated waters through identifying the actions required of a range of sectors;
- restoring water quality in catchments affected by the legacy of abandoned metal mines, through using our evidence and working collaboratively to identify priorities for action;
- improving air quality for nature and people through reducing and eliminating emissions to air in our regulation of industry.



We will be taking a risk-based response to incidents by:

- minimising harm from environmental pollution incidents through preparing for, and responding to priority incidents as a Category 1 responder;
- minimising the harm from specific sectors and within specific geographic areas through using evidence to take action to improve compliance;
- minimising the harm from serious environmental crime through investigating incidents and taking strong and decisive action;
- minimising the harm from illegal waste through taking action with local authorities and third sector partners to prevent fly-tipping.

We will be encouraging the adoption of resource efficiency and the use of alternative materials by:

- minimising waste through implementing new regulatory requirements such as extended producer responsibility and non-domestic and public sector recycling;
- ensuring the efficient use of resources, meeting sector-specific standards through the provision of advice and guidance to water companies and other industries;
- stimulating supply chains to use timber grown in Wales through using our position as the dominant supplier of sustainably harvested timber in Wales.



We will be enabling people, communities and businesses to take sustained action to minimise pollution by:

- scaling up nature-based solutions in urban and rural areas to support pollution minimisation, securing multiple benefits for nature and people through working with planners and developers to embed in developments;
- creating opportunities for individual and sector-specific action through delivering a sustained communications campaign;
- identifying opportunities to optimise the collective action and impact of the public sector through using SoNaRR and Area Statements to work with the PSBs, public health and local authorities;
- meeting the needs of specific audiences to stimulate action for nature through collecting, synthesising, evaluating and communicating our own, and others' evidence;
- minimising illegal waste through development and implementation of a joint strategy for Landfill Disposal and Unauthorised Disposal with the Welsh Revenue Authority;
- engaging with people to take action, creating opportunities for being in, learning about and becoming advocates through working with the education, physical activity and health sectors;
- inspiring people to take action, empowering and transforming their relationship with nature through working with creative industries and the cultural sector;
- ensuring social and environmental justice, equity and inclusion inform and strengthen our decision-making for minimising pollution through the review of current mechanisms and development of guidance;
- involving different communities and sectors in our work, through applying behavioural insights to inform our approaches;
- ensuring a diverse range of people are taking action to minimise pollution through sharing the vision and outcomes from Nature and Us to expand our networks and increase involvement;
- building the capability and capacity of the Welsh workforce to support pollution minimisation through working with others to advocate for green skills and jobs.

We will be an exemplar zero pollution and waste organisation by:

- ensuring that NRW's financial and business decisions integrate zero pollution and waste through applying the lessons learnt from others on effective tools and frameworks;
- maximising the reuse, recycling and recovery of materials through monitoring and taking action when replacing key items such as ICT equipment and PPE;
- ensuring action on pollution minimisation is driven throughout our supply chains, grant programmes and land management agreements through inclusion in our procurement and funding frameworks;

- reducing the risk of harm to the environment from pollution incidents on the land in our care through high standards of operational management, and dealing effectively with any incidents that do occur;
- investing in the skills and capability of our colleagues to be ambassadors, through providing a training programme for climate and nature literacy.

How we will work to minimise pollution in our communities

Taking a place-focussed approach to minimise pollution will protect people and nature from harm.

In our seven places we have made commitments through our active engagement with PSBs in the development of their well-being plans, and through involving communities in the development of our Area Statements to minimise pollution in our places.

Find out more about how we are tailoring our work to minimise pollution in our place-focussed areas.



South East Wales

In South East Wales, we will focus on the health of our rivers by delivering pollution prevention actions in the Central Monmouthshire Opportunity catchment. This will include working with landowners and farmers to deploy nature-based solutions to improve water quality in the lower Usk and Wye catchment, and undertake more compliance activity to help minimise the environmental impact of farming activities.

South Wales Central

We will also take a catchment-scale approach to improve the ecology and quality of our waters in the predominantly heavily modified urban rivers in South Wales Central. The river Ely opportunity catchment provides us with an opportunity to take a landscape approach in how we use our regulatory powers and to work with partners to take a more proactive, collaborative approach to tackling common issues such as water pollution from sources such as construction sites. We will also seek to restore catchment processes for the benefit of the environment and our communities.



As the Cardiff Capital Region continues to grow, we have an important role to play in preventing pollution from urban developments. We will use our regulatory powers to ensure industry compliance to improve air quality, and we'll use our influence and statutory role in development

planning to promote a regenerative economy that safeguards and restores the resilience of our ecosystems and the stocks of our natural resources. We will also advocate for transformation in the energy, transport and food sectors in our work with PSBs and the Cardiff Capital Region with the goal of supporting Welsh Government's ambitions for a more prosperous Wales.



South West Wales

Working in partnership with the agricultural community and our regulated sites will also be a focus on how we minimise pollution to safeguard communities and protect the environment in South West Wales. In Pembrokeshire, we will continue to work with farmers, the processing, waste and water industries to improve the quality of our waters, our land and our air and enhance the habitats we find in the Cleddau Rivers Special Area of Conservation.

Our work to monitor and investigate the causes of pollution in South West Wales will also continue apace, using our evidence to drive asset improvements, inform how we take enforcement activity against polluters and to drive policy improvements related to land use in the area.

Mid Wales

In Mid Wales, we will take a catchment-scale approach to improving the ecology and quality of our rivers and coastal waters through the Upper Wye River Restoration Project and our work on the Wye, Usk and Teifi Nutrient Management Plan Boards. Using our evidence base, our advisory and regulatory powers, and the strength of our partnerships, we will work to restore catchments for the benefit of the environment and communities in this area.

North West Wales

In North West Wales, we will look to tackle issues around water quality and quantity, ecological restoration and community well-being alongside the North Wales Wildlife Trust as part of a multi-partner collaborative group. Together, we will develop a landscape-scale National Lottery Heritage Fund project bid based around the catchment of the Anglesey Fens – an area famed for its wetland and fen habitat which supports a wide range of unique plants and species.



North East Wales

We will take a catchment-scale approach to reducing pollution in North East Wales, working with partners such as the Dee Nutrient Management Board and the voluntary Clwyd Forum and Dee catchment partnerships to sustainably manage the land in this area. We will also work with communities and permit holders to ensure the environmental impacts are minimised at the sites we regulate.



Marine

Enhancing the water quality of our coasts and seas will be the focus of our work with partners around Marine Opportunity Catchments. We will continue to build on our work with National Trust Wales, North Wales Wildlife Trust and tenant farmers to invest in projects to minimise nutrient pollution in the Cemlyn Bay coastal lagoon on Anglesey. In South West Wales, we are also using the evidence gathered following poor water quality testing results in mussel fisheries in Swansea Bay to understand the failures and to inform more effective management procedures to prevent reoccurrence.



How we will deliver

From those out in our communities leading the response to pollution incidents or advising on flood risk, to those providing other essential services in procurement, governance, communications and finance, our well-being objectives will be the focus of everything we do.

We recognise that this new focus on three well-being objectives will require changes to the way we work, and will take time to embed. Success will only come when we challenge and evolve established working practices, and take every opportunity to innovate and improve.

The way we govern the organisation is key to the successful delivery of this corporate plan. We are building on our existing governance structure to introduce improvements that will ensure we all adopt the behaviours and ways of working that enable us to be more effective. We will continue to empower, enable and trust our colleagues across the organisation to make well-informed decisions at the more appropriate level of delegated responsibility.

At the Executive and Leadership Team levels, there will be changes to the way meetings are organised and managed. We will establish a new Planning and Resourcing Group (PRG) with oversight of the planning and allocation of resources across the three well-being objectives.

Assurance over the delivery of this plan will be a key role of the Board, its committees and the Executive Team over the coming years. Each well-being objective will have an accountable Director providing vision, momentum and assurance to the wider Executive Team and Board. A new strategic risk register will be developed to reflect the new well-being objectives and ways of working.

We are an organisation of 2,400 employees, managing an annual budget of £230 - £250 million. Through our procurement activity, grants and land management agreements, we also inject between £90 - £100 million a year into the Welsh economy.

Whilst we will always emphatically make the case for increased public investment to tackle the climate and nature emergencies, we are realistic and pragmatic about the availability of additional public funding to deliver the work that we do. The challenges facing public finances at this time are substantial, and there are difficult choices to be made on the spending needed to meet competing policy priorities in Wales.

But the resources we do have are significant. We will make a difference by being astute and innovative in how we align what we have and what we do to achieve the successful delivery of our well-being objectives. Driving efficiency and demonstrating good value for the public money invested will underpin everything we do, ensuring our funding structure is fit to face the demands we face now and has longer-term goals in mind.



Effective programme and project management will be key to delivering on the ground, with the Programme Management Office providing assurances and monitoring and scrutinising delivery.

By improving how we plan our work, simplifying our processes, and using digital technology wherever possible, we will build on and improve the services we provide, driving efficiencies for our colleagues and our customers alike.

Innovation is central to tackling the largest challenges the world faces, including the climate and nature emergencies.

We are committed to adopting innovative approaches in how we deliver our work, doing so in a structured and targeted way. Our people and our partners will be critical to securing these ambitions and we will draw in expertise from outside the organisation to support us.

Only when additional funding becomes available will we scale-up delivery in a structured way, looking at the dependencies across the different services we provide.

Our people

The vision, mission and objectives set out in this corporate plan will only be made real by the passion, expertise and creativity of our people.

We will foster a culture of inclusion that attracts and retains our talent. We will provide an inclusive work environment that promotes and values the diversity of all our colleagues. We will provide opportunities for all our colleagues to develop their potential, skills and capabilities to enable them to become confident advocates of our vision and mission. We will also invest in nurturing resilient and compassionate leaders at all levels of the organisation; and to meaningfully lead on the delivery of our well-being objectives.

We will provide a safe working environment for all - our colleagues, those who work with us, or visit the land in our care - making sure everyone gets home safely at the end of the day. We take a holistic approach to maintaining colleagues well-being, creating an environment where all our people can thrive and perform at their best.

We are proud to serve the people of Wales and will continue to evolve our ways of working to be inclusive, representative and accessible. We embrace our leadership role in the implementation of the [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#), working closely with others across the public sector to make a difference.

We continue to support [Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050](#) ambition to increase the number of Welsh speakers and use of the Welsh Language. We are committed to creating opportunities and building confidence in the use of Welsh across the organisation, supporting engagement in Welsh between colleagues, as well as with partners and customers.

The Covid-19 pandemic fundamentally shifted ways of working and, after extensive consultation, we have rolled out our new hybrid and agile working styles policy to ensure colleagues can maintain and effectively manage a productive work-life balance.



Our Adfywio programme is also allowing us to explore how we can reduce our costs and carbon footprint by rationalising our portfolio of buildings across Wales. When making any changes to where and how we work, we will continue to work in social partnership with the trade unions, and involve our colleagues in our thinking at the earliest opportunity.

We will not stand still. The way we work will continue to flex, evolve and adapt to the opportunities and the challenges the decade will bring.

Using our tools

There is no doubt that meeting the 2030 and 2050 international targets and milestones will demand urgent and innovative action at every level.

Yet some of the legislative levers and tools at our disposal date back to the 1950s and 1960s and are no longer fit to tackle the challenges Wales now faces.

During the life of this corporate plan, we will continue to make the case for effective legislative and policy change at Welsh and UK Government levels, to ensure the tools and levers we do have can bring about the transformational change our natural environment needs.

At the same time, we will place more emphasis on the tools we already have in our armoury to make the biggest impact in the delivery of our well-being objectives, setting us on a strong pathway towards 2050.

We will underpin the delivery of our well-being objectives by focussing on:

- evidence
- advocacy
- working with others
- advice
- leading by example

Evidence

Our evidence-based working practices inform everything we do to plan and make the best decisions for Wales' natural environment. The information we gather, interpret, visualise and share helps build confidence and ensure consistency as we deliver key priorities for our environment and our communities.

Through our monitoring programmes, we collect large amounts of data and evidence that help us paint a picture of the health and condition of Wales' natural resources and biodiversity.

We are committed to sharing this information in an open, transparent and readily accessible way, using cutting-edge analytics to display data in real-time and highlighting areas of concern.

We know that new evidence approaches and collaboration will need to be developed so that our key information can be used more effectively. As such, we will continuously innovate to optimise resources and enhance our understanding of the state of the environment, improving how we meet the needs of our customers.

To help others target action and stimulate change, we will put greater emphasis on the analysis and interpretation of data at different spatial scales to capture the state of our natural resources, current and future changes and the opportunities for integrated action.



Advocacy

In protecting and managing the environment of Wales, we are subject to a wide range of legal standards and principles set out in Welsh, UK and International legislation. As a result, we are

responsible for completing specific tasks within a legal framework which, at times, can restrict what we can say on a public platform.

Yet real progress on the climate and nature emergencies will come not only from individual and collective actions, but from policy shifts and advocacy.



We have not traditionally taken on an advocacy role. But the scale and urgency of the collective challenge to meet the 2030 and 2050 international targets and milestones means we are changing our stance.

We will adopt a greater advocacy role, led by the evidence in SoNaRR and Nature and Us and will target our advocacy to specific systemic issues, developing a clear plan to work with specific organisations and partners across Wales to identify the pathways for transformative change.

Working with others

Energising the movement to catalyse concerted action for nature, climate and pollution will depend on how successfully we harness the collective strength of our partners and customers.

While the work we do makes significant local contribution to these global challenges, we also recognise that we are not the only experts, and we do not have all the answers - or all the resources.

There are now real opportunities to shift gears and do things differently, reflecting the breadth of perspectives, insights and lived experience we, and others have in the way we work. We must actively listen to a range of voices, particularly marginalised voices, to understand and bring people together to build meaningful partnerships.

We recognise that the transition to an economy which responds effectively to the climate and nature emergencies presents both an opportunity and a threat to many of the sectors we work with, from farmers to foresters, to fisheries and industry.

We must work collaboratively with these different sectors to pool our collective insight, knowledge and expertise to build trust and effect real change together. Building and strengthening partnerships will be crucial and, with limited resources, we know we will need to be more purposeful and targeted in our approach if we are to restore and enhance the natural environment we all depend on.



Advice

There is an increasing consensus that people want to know how to play their part in tackling climate change and environmental damage.

Yet moving to a position where action for nature, climate and pollution is the norm requires a significant and concerted shift in culture and behaviours across all parts of society.

Some businesses and industries are already responding to changing consumer demands. Yet others are slower to act, and some will only act in response to government intervention.

To kickstart and support this much needed change, we will work with specific sectors, sharing our evidence and expertise on what good looks like. We will invest time developing our regulatory advice and guidance tools, testing our approach with businesses and sector representatives.

We will continue to modify our regulatory approaches, reflecting customer feedback and the proportionate application of our statutory powers. We will also continue to advise Welsh Government on the opportunities to modernise regulatory policy and legislation.

We always encourage businesses and developers to engage with us early to ensure the needs of the environment are reflected in the design of proposals from the outset. Using the evidence and being clear on the risks and impacts associated with a development will pre-empt issues emerging later when developers seek planning permission or permits.

We will explore alternative delivery models for pre-application advice, while at the same time improving our digital services to make it easier for customers to find the relevant information and access our services.

Leading by example

Driving forward our vision and mission will not be easy, and we are realistic about the scale of the challenge and the difficult choices we will face.

But if we are to achieve our ambitions for Wales' people and the environment, it is now more important than ever that we put the customer at the heart of all we do.

When we consider how we design and deliver our services, we will actively listen to feedback from colleagues, and the people who use our services, on what matters most to them, what is working and what is not. We will act on this feedback, providing a personal and professional service to improve services in line with our customer and digital strategies. To minimise the impact of disruption to our services we will continue to update our business continuity plans, learning from our experience of the Covid-19 pandemic as well as others' experience of cyber-attacks.

We will continue to invest in the improvement of our digital services in line with the [Digital Service Standards for Wales](#), reflecting our commitment to agile, user-centred design to continually improve our digital services.

Any redesign of our services will always be in line with user needs, making it easier and simpler for them to do the right thing, freeing up their time and ours.

We recognise how we can also do more to harness our purchasing power to make an impact.

We spend between £90 - 100m each year on goods and services across Wales, and 80% of our organisational carbon footprint is rooted in our supply chain.

We will go further to ensure our procurement and funding frameworks drive positive action across our supply chains to achieve outcomes that do not harm the natural environment in the process.

Part of that process will include introducing changes to embed decarbonisation at key stages of our end-to-end purchasing and funding cycle, including during contract management.

Building nature's recovery and reducing pollution into these funding frameworks is not as well advanced.

Nevertheless, we are committed to ensuring that we do not displace the biodiversity impacts from our own business activities to other countries. Our ambition is to exclude deforestation from our supply chains, make them free of single-use plastic and we will favour the use of recycled and re-purposed goods and materials as much as is practically possible.



Performance framework

Our well-being objectives have been informed by a range of international and Wales-specific targets and indicators for 2030 and 2050, ranging from the:

- Wales well-being indicators
- Welsh Government targets for a carbon neutral public sector by 2030 and a net zero Wales by 2050
- Welsh Government suite of 100 Wales-specific indicators for the monitoring, reporting and verification of the carbon budget
- Welsh Government Beyond Recycling indicators
- Welsh Government commitment to protect and effectively manage 30% of land, freshwater and sea for nature by 2030, including the development of statutory nature recovery targets
- Global Biodiversity Framework agreement to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2030, with nature thriving by 2050
- assessment of biodiversity included in SoNaRR2020

These indicators and targets set the context for where Wales is now, and set out the trajectory that Wales will need to follow to meet the global targets for 2030 and 2050. While Welsh Government will be accountable for meeting these targets and indicators, it will require a collective effort across the public, private and third sectors.

We have documented how these indicators and targets align with our well-being objectives, but recognise we are one of many organisations who will contribute to achieving them.
























































In this corporate plan, we recognise we need to focus on measuring our own performance and impact in delivering *our* well-being objectives and steps to take, so we can be held to account by Ministers and the people of Wales.

We believe our indicators need to capture and represent the broader multiple benefits that are realised through our work for people, nature, climate and to minimise pollution.

For example, nature-based solutions, such as restoring peatland and creating woodland under the climate well-being objective, will bring wider benefits for nature and people. This includes cutting carbon emissions, providing climate adaptation benefits, as well as providing opportunities for people to engage in and with nature. This wider, integrated perspective must inform our choice of indicators.

Nature based solutions

How nature-based solutions can bring wider benefits for nature, for climate and for people.

Ecosystem restoration	Benefits for nature	Benefits for climate action	Benefits for people
Peatland restoration	 Habitat improvement will help birds like golden plover, curlew, hen harrier and dunlin	 Healthy peatland keeps carbon locked up in soil	 Improved quality of water supply and less treatment needed to clean up discoloured water
	 Improved habitat will filter airborne pollution and improve river water quality	 Reduced risk of erosion and loss of soil	 Alleviation of flooding to properties downstream
	 More reliable water supply for freshwater habitats	 Rewetting of peatland and revegetation of bare moor reduces risk of wildfires	 Sustainable livestock production produces food and fibre (wool)
Woodland creation and restoration	 Woodland creation and restoration leads to better ecosystem connectivity	 Carbon storage in new woodland	 Slowing the flow - good for drought and flood alleviation
	 Increased biodiversity such as bats, dormice and birds like the pied flycatcher and rook	 Cooling along river corridors - important for freshwater habitat	 Sense of place and recreational opportunities deliver physical and mental well-being benefits
	 Improved water availability and nutrient cycling adds to soil biodiversity to support ecosystem function	 Timber building materials substituting for high carbon ones	 Woods near urban areas reduce noise and air pollution
Coastal and marine habitat restoration	 Seagrass meadows and kelp forests will store more carbon and provide habitats for species like seahorses and otters	 Increased carbon storage in seagrass and kelp	 Reduced risk of flooding of coastal properties
	 Improved coastal water quality for wildlife	 Managed retreat helps adaptation to climate change	 Managed realignment and restoration of salt marshes provides livestock grazing
	 Managed realignment benefits wading birds like ringed plover, redshank, oyster catchers	 Increased flooding alleviated by saltmarshes, dunes and seagrass	 Coastal recreation and tourism
Semi-natural grassland restoration	 Reducing runoff of polluted water protects freshwater and marine habitats and species	 Habitat regeneration reduces risk of wildfires	 More reliable supply of drinking water
	 Benefits for soil biodiversity, bees, butterflies, small mammals and birds	 Greater plant species diversity helps greater carbon storage	 Reduced risk of flooding
	 Better management will help with control of invasive species like Himalayan balsam	 Increased carbon storage particularly in acid grasslands	 Improved soil quality benefits farming
Integrated catchment management	 River restoration to 'slow the flow' will benefit salmon, trout, water voles, frogs, toads, and newts	 Slowing the flow of water through the catchment reduces risk of erosion	 Improved quality of water supply
	 Wetlands, such as floodplain meadows support amphibians and reptiles and wading birds such as Curlew and Lapwing	 Cooling along river corridors benefits freshwater biodiversity	 Reduced risk of drought and loss of water supply for people
	 Habitat regeneration leads to improved air quality	 Increased ecosystem connectivity helps adaptation to climate change	 Reduced risk of river flooding to properties
Urban Green Infrastructure	 Developments built with wildlife such as swifts and bats in mind	 Green infrastructure reduces stormwater runoff and urban flooding	 Sustainable urban drainage reduces risk of flooding to properties
	 Improved quality of freshwater habitat	 Sustainable urban drainage systems incorporated in new development	 Improved access to greenspace brings physical and mental well-being benefits
	 Altered management of gardens, parks and verges benefits birds, bees, insects and butterflies	 Urban cooling from trees, parks and green roofs	 Improved air and water quality brings human health benefits
			 Regeneration attracts inward investment

Nature and people thriving together
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We know we need to challenge ourselves to select indicators that drive the change we want to see stemming from our well-being objectives. This means making a radical shift to our approach, moving away from areas where we readily have data, to reflect this broader perspective. There is a real risk that by applying single-issue indicators simply because we have the data, we will fail to highlight the areas that matter most, therefore undermining our focus on optimising the multiple benefits for nature, people, climate, and how we minimise pollution.

We believe the combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators, and supporting narrative, will provide an integrated perspective of the impact and benefits our work will have.

We must be able to draw out the multiple benefits that result from what we do. As such, indicators to monitor delivery of this corporate plan will be reported to Ministers in six months, with a sub-group of the NRW Board leading the development work. We will then publish the performance indicators as an addendum to our corporate plan.

Over the course of the next 12-18 months, we will be working with Welsh Government to shape and influence targets and indicators, recognising that our performance framework will need to respond to the outcome of:

- our commitment to social and environmental justice, and the work we will be doing to understand the social impacts of our work;
- the development by Welsh Government of performance indicators related to the four aims of sustainable management of natural resources, due in 2024;
- the development by Welsh Government of statutory nature recovery targets;
- the development by Welsh Government of climate adaptation indicators in 2024;
- the publication of the interim SoNaRR2025 in December 2024.

Our performance management approach and indicators, metrics and milestones will provide the line of sight from the corporate plan to the annual business plan and service level agreements (SLAs), and will be reported in the quarterly performance reports and annual report.

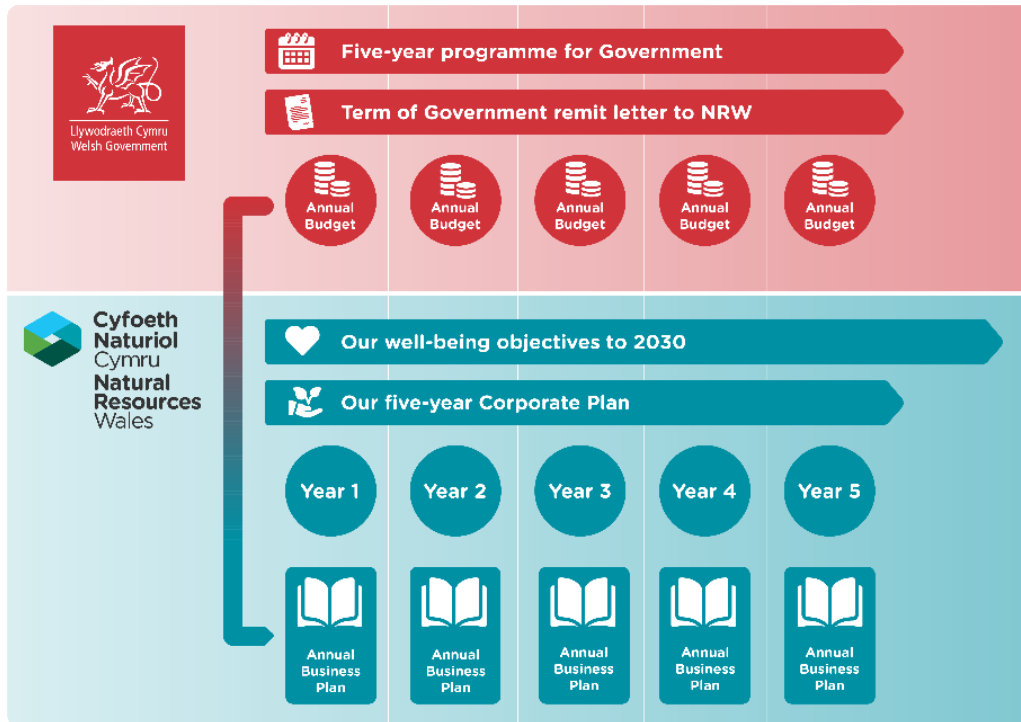
Performance framework hierarchy

- **Corporate plan objectives:** Three well-being objectives
- **Corporate plan strategic indicators:** Each well-being objective to have indicators highlighting the issues that matter most, not those easily measured.
- **Annual business plan metrics and milestones (define pathways to achieving the strategic indicators):** Aligned to each step to take, reflecting a combination of qualitative and quantitative storytelling.
- **Annual report commitments (no need to be measurable):** Reflect ways of working, including working with others. Narrative description reflected in our annual report.

Annual planning

This corporate plan sets out our strategic direction to 2030 and aligns with the strategic objectives Welsh Government outlined in the term of government remit letter issued to us in December 2022.

In line with the Welsh Government Framework Document, we will receive an annual budget settlement, which will inform our annual budget and business plan.



To ensure alignment, and transparency of delivery against the well-being objectives, we are streamlining our annual planning and performance framework.

Building on our work with Welsh Government through the baseline exercise, we will continue to work with them to develop service level agreements (SLAs) to cover all areas of our work and use them to inform negotiations on budgets.

Our expectation is that once we receive confirmation of the annual budget from Welsh Government, we will use the SLAs to allocate the budget, the level of service we will deliver across our different services and inform the annual business plan, performance metrics and milestones. We will apply this approach in the 2024/25 annual business planning cycle.

