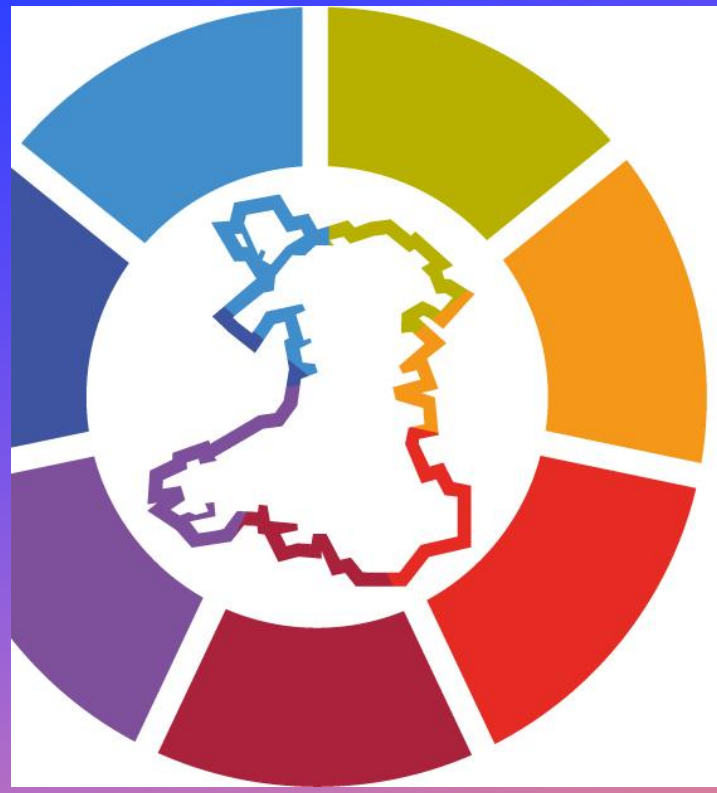
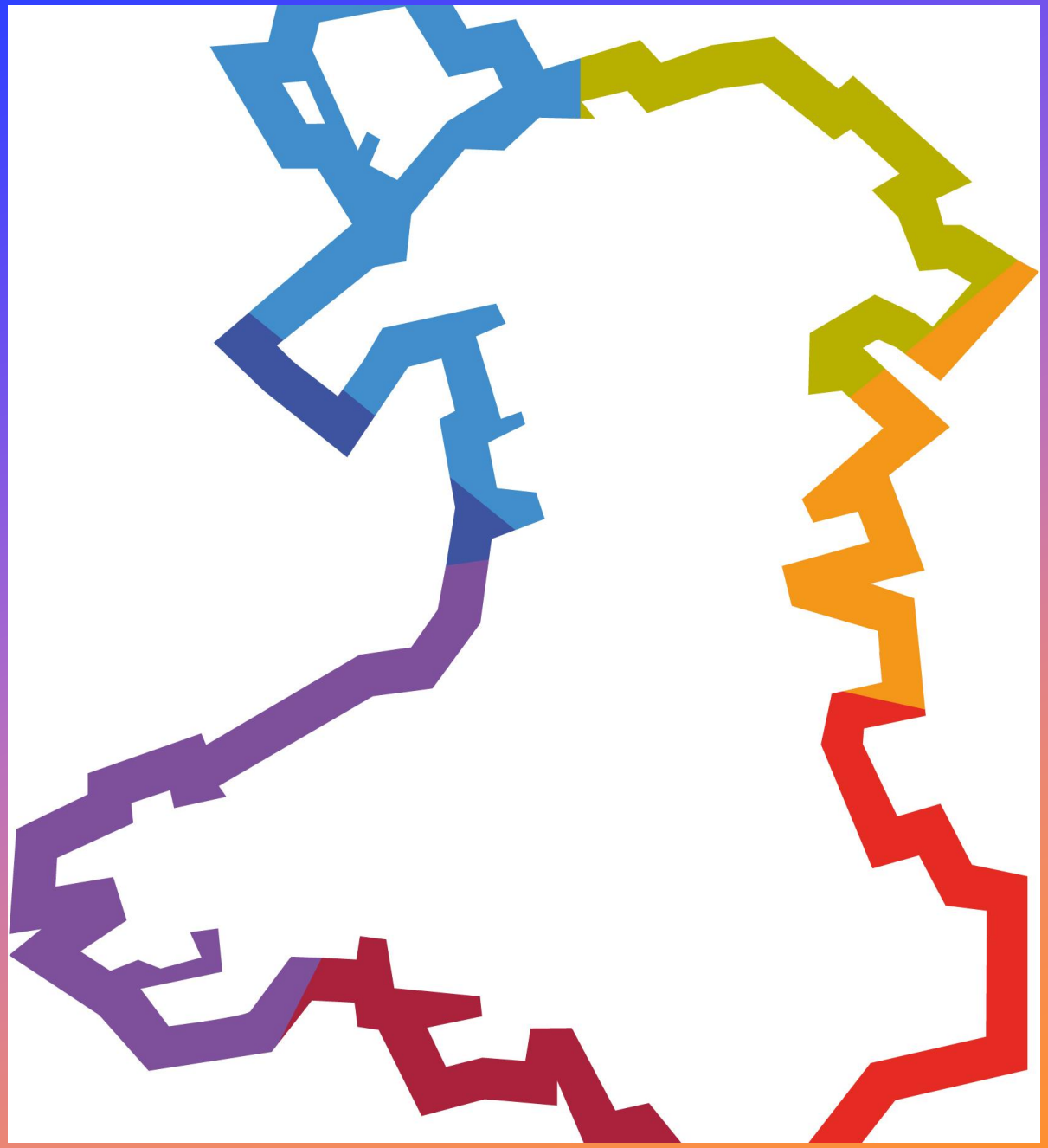


LLESIANT CENEDLAETHAU'R DYFODOL
WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

WALES – 10 YEARS OF THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT: PUTTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE INTO LEGISLATION

Sustainable progress driven by innovative policy leadership

Rae Cornish – Deputy Director: Sustainable Futures in Welsh Government



WALES LEADING THE WAY

Pioneering SDG Legislation

Wales was the first country to legally embed the Sustainable Development Goals through the Well-being of Future Generations Act in 2015.

Key Practices and Lessons

Over 10 years, Wales has gained valuable insights and developed effective practices in implementing the SDGs.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Wales emphasizes partnerships to advance sustainability goals and share successes globally.

EMBEDDING SDGS IN LEGISLATION

Seven National Well-being Goals

The act defines seven national well-being goals aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals to guide policy decisions.

Five Ways of Working

The legislation introduces long-term thinking, prevention, integration, collaboration, and involvement as core working principles.

Statutory Duty for Sustainability

Sustainable development is established as a legal requirement, making it mandatory for future governance and planning.

The seven well-being goals ('the goals') show the kind of Wales we want to see. Together they provide a shared vision for the public bodies listed in the Act to work towards. They are a set of goals; the Act makes it clear the listed public bodies must work to achieve all of the goals, not just one or two.

Prosperous

An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing fair work.

Resilient

A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).

Healthier

A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

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More Equal

A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

Globally Responsible

A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

Cohesive Communities

Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

Sustainable Development Principle

The Act puts in place a 'sustainable development principle' which tells organisations how to go about meeting their duty under the Act.

In this Act, any reference to a public body doing something "in accordance with the sustainable development principle" means that the body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Public bodies need to make sure that when making their decisions they take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future.

There are 5 things that public bodies need to think about to show that they have applied the sustainable development principle. Following these ways of working will help us work together better, avoid repeating past mistakes and tackle some of the long-term challenges we are facing.

Collaboration

Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.

Integration

Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.

Involvement

The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

Long-term

The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the long-term needs.

Prevention

How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.

Well-being of Future Generations Act Architecture

National Well-being Goals (Sustainable development)

- Prosperous
- Resilient
- Healthier
- More Equal
- Cohesive Communities
- Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language
- Globally Responsible

Understanding Wales

- National Indicators

- Milestones

- Future Trends

Making it Happen (Well-being duty)

- Individual Duty — Public Body
- Collective Duty — Public Services Boards
- Community councils

5 Ways of Working (Sustainable Development Principle)

- Collaboration

- Integration

- Involvement

- Long-term

- Prevention

Enabling the Change (Accountability)

- Future Generations Commissioner for Wales
- Auditor General for Wales

INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATIONS

Public Services Boards

Public Services Boards unite local authorities, health boards, and partners to foster collaboration and coordinated action.

Future Generations Commissioner

This world-first role acts as a guardian to ensure policies consider impacts on future generations.

Embedding SDG Principles

New structures integrate Sustainable Development Goals into decision-making across all levels of governance.

PROGRESS ON NATIONAL WELL-BEING GOALS

WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS WALES

National Well-being Indicators Framework

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WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

01	Healthy babies	3 4
02	Healthy life expectancy	3 4
03	Healthy lifestyle (adults)	3 4 5 6
04	Air quality	1 2 3 7
05	Healthy lifestyle (children)	3 4 5
06	Young children developing the right skills	1 4 5 6
07	School leavers with skills and qualifications	1 4 6
08	Adults with qualifications	1 3 4
09	Productivity	1
10	Disposable household income	1 3 4
11	Innovative businesses	1 2 7
12	Renewable energy	1 2 5 7
13	Healthy soils	1 2 7
14	Global footprint	1 2 7
15	Waste not recycled	1 2 5 7
16	Fair pay	1 3 4 7
17	Pay difference	1 4
18	People living in poverty	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19	People living in material deprivation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
20	Pay set by collective bargaining	1 3 4
21	People in work	1 3 4

22	People not in education, employment and training	1 3 4 5
23	People feeling involved	4 5 7
24	Satisfaction with access to facilities and services	3 4 5
25	Feeling safe	3 4 5
26	People satisfied with where they live	2 3 5 6
27	Sense of community	2 3 4 5 6 7
28	Volunteering	5 6 7

29	Mental well-being	3 4
30	Loneliness	3 4 5
31	Hazard free homes	2 3 4 5
32	Reducing flood risk to homes and businesses	2 3 4 5
33	Energy efficiency of homes	1 2 3 7
34	Homelessness	1 3 4 5
35	Participation in arts, culture and heritage	1 3 4 5
36	People speaking Welsh every day	5 6 7

37	People able to speak Welsh	5 6 7
38	Participation in sporting activities	2 3 5 6 7
39	Professional standards in heritage collections	6 7
40	Looking after our cultural heritage	2 6 7
41	Greenhouse gas emissions	1 2 3 7
42	Greenhouse gas emissions from global goods and services	1 2 3 7
43	Healthy ecosystems	1 2 3 5 6 7
44	Biological diversity	1 2 5 6 7
45	Water quality	2 3 5 6 7
46	Active global citizenship	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
47	Confidence in the justice system	4 5 7
48	Journeys by walking, cycling or public transport	1 2 3 4 7
49	Housing costs	1 4 5 6
50	People digitally included	1 4 5

Further information: **https://gov.wales/wellbeing-wales-national-indicators**

Mapping the national indicators to the well-being goals helps communicate that indicators tell a story of progress against more than one goal. This mapping is provisional and will be reviewed soon.

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LIGHT UP THE FUTURE!

On 20 March 2025 the Welsh Government marked the 10th anniversary of the Act receiving Royal Assent with the Light up the Future event in the Temple of Peace in Cardiff. We welcomed people from across Wales to think creatively about the power and possibility of the future.

The day was full of collaboration and futures thinking. It reinforced and revitalised the passion and drive within Wales to deliver towards Wales's 7 well-being goals.

https://youtu.be/7OVcWYSmR5U

Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol

The Well-being of Future Generations

LLESIANT CENEDLAETHAU'R DYFODOL WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

LESSONS LEARNED

Importance of Engagement

Active engagement is crucial for successful project outcomes and stakeholder collaboration.

Continuous Learning

Ongoing learning drives improvement and adaptation in dynamic environments.

Addressing Data Gaps

Identifying and closing data gaps remains a key challenge for effective measurement.

WALES ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

International Model Sharing

Wales promotes its governance and policy models through global platforms like the United Nations and World Health Organization.

Global Legislative Inspiration

Wales' policies have inspired similar laws internationally, reflecting its influence on global legislative practices.

CALL TO ACTION

Living Lab for Sustainability

Wales serves as a practical example of sustainable development for global learning and adaptation.

Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing

Encouraging cooperation and exchange of ideas to promote sustainability worldwide.

Future-Oriented Action

Consider the world we want in 2050 and take meaningful steps today to achieve it.

WALES LEADING THE WAY –

A Decade of SDG Implementation through the Well-being of Future Generations Act

Wales was the first country in the world to legislate for the SDGs, through the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act in 2015.

This presentation will share practices, lessons, and opportunities for collaboration.

- Embedding SDGs in legislation
- Institutional innovations
- Good practices & lessons learned

Explore the SDGs