



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



LLESIANT
CENEDLAETHAU'R DYFODOL
WELL-BEING OF
FUTURE GENERATIONS

Consultation – Summary of Responses

Shaping Wales' Future: Using National Milestones to measure our Nation's progress (wave two)

Proposals for setting the second wave of national
milestones for Wales

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Overview

The purpose of this consultation was to seek views on setting the second wave of national milestones for Wales that will assist Ministers in assessing progress towards achieving the seven well-being goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Action Required

This document is for information only.

Further information and related documents

Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

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Additional copies

This summary of response and copies of all the consultation documentation are published in electronic form only and can be accessed on the Welsh Government's website.

Link to the consultation documentation: [Shaping Wales' Future](#)

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Introduction

The seven well-being goals for Wales contained within the Well-being of Future Generations Wales Act 2015 (the Act) provide a description of an economically, socially and environmentally just Wales. As a government we are committed to making our contribution to these goals, and in ensuring the well-being of future generations' framework continues to drive better decision making for current and future generations.

The Act includes three measures that help provide a shared understanding of our country. The national indicators which measure progress, the national milestones that indicate the scale and pace of change, and the future trends report that sets out the factors that may affect progress towards achievement of the well-being goals, combined, these three mechanisms will help shape Wales' future.

The purpose of this consultation was to seek views on setting the second wave of national milestones for Wales that will assist Ministers in assessing progress towards achieving the seven well-being goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Consultation period

As required by the Act, the Welsh Government proactively engaged with the specified public bodies, the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales ("the FGC") and wider stakeholders.

Public consultation

The consultation ran from 21 June 2022 to 12 September 2022. The consultation paper was issued electronically to a wide range of stakeholders and was also made available on the Welsh Government website. A consultation letter to Public Body Chief Executives (or equivalent) was issued by the Minister for Social Justice inviting their views on the proposed national milestone values

Detail of responses

In total 89 responses were received, this included:

- 34 submitted by e-mail;
- 55 submitted via the online form;

The Welsh Government commissioned Wavehill Ltd to independently analyse the responses received. Their comprehensive report is being published alongside this document.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of respondents. Respondents were assigned a category as part of the consultation analysis. A full list of organisational respondents is available as part of the independent consultation analysis report.

Table 1 – Profile of consultation respondents

Sector	Number of responses
Public Sector	21
<i>Local Authority</i>	6
<i>Welsh Government Sponsored Public Bodies (WGSPBs)</i>	0
<i>Health Boards</i>	3
<i>Other public sector</i>	7
<i>Partnership board</i>	0
Third Sector	15
<i>Charity or not for profit</i>	8
<i>Membership organisation</i>	7
Other	53
<i>Individual</i>	33
<i>Public appointment</i>	0
<i>Higher Education</i>	0
<i>Trade Union</i>	0
<i>Elected officer</i>	0
<i>Political party</i>	0
<i>Not known</i>	20
Total	89

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who responded to the consultation and those who attended the webinars, meetings and events for their contributions.

Next steps

Having considered the responses to the consultation:

- 8 new national milestones were laid in the Senedd in November 2022
- Work is ongoing to further promote and support the embedding of the full suite of national milestones in Welsh Government and Public Bodies.

Format of the Government response

This document provides the Welsh Government response to the consultation, based on the independent analysis carried out by Wavehill Ltd and other feedback. The purpose of this document is not to respond to every individual suggestion made.

Section 1 - National milestones

The consultation asked for views on eight proposed national milestone values. This section summarises the Welsh Government's response to the comments received.

We were very pleased to find the independent analysis report clearly indicates there was 'broad support for all of the national milestone values proposed in the consultation'.

Universally, each national milestone was positively received by respondents. This suggests there exists broad consensus on the importance of the issues outlined within the proposals, and the priorities that they seek to advance.

Healthy Life expectancy

Overall, there was strong support for the focus and intention of the national milestone surrounding healthy life expectancy, with 83 per cent of respondents indicating that they approved of the approach.

Some responses highlighted the complex nature of health inequalities. These responses felt that tackling health inequalities required a broader focus, including on social and economic inequalities that can shape and determine health and well-being outcomes.

The Welsh Government is committed to taking action on inequality and the updated Programme for Government contains a well-being objective to move to eliminate inequality in all its forms.

Healthy Lifestyle Behaviours

This national milestone was intended to complement the wave one national milestone focusing on healthy behaviours amongst children in Wales. Together, these national milestones will serve a fundamental purpose of the Act, i.e. to safeguard the health and well-being of the people of Wales. By promoting the adoption of two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours, it is anticipated that this will ensure that everyone in Wales has longer, healthier and happier lives.

Overall, there was overwhelming support for the inclusion of the milestone, with 78 per cent of respondents voicing support for it.

A small group of responses suggested that national milestone should be more ambitious. Suggestions included increasing the number of healthy lifestyle behaviours that adults are expected to have, as well as shortening the timescale.

Welsh Government have considered the relative scope for the Welsh Government and partners to encourage/drive higher uptake of healthy lifestyle behaviours amongst adults when compared with children. We consider that the scope and opportunities to influence the uptake of healthy lifestyle behaviours for adults is lower

than for children and consequently, the national milestone will aim to increase the percentage of adults with healthy lifestyle behaviours to more than 97% by 2050.

The Welsh Government will continue to consider how this work is progressed and is committed to our vision set out in A Healthier Wales that everyone in Wales should have longer, healthier and happier lives and we know that ensuring people have two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours can contribute to making this a reality.

Mental Well-being

The suggested milestone on mental well-being was widely supported and 77% of respondents answered that they agreed with the proposed approach.

Many responses highlighted the importance of supporting mental well-being, with eleven respondents citing a range of concerns surrounding poor mental well-being. The importance of the issue of mental well-being was felt to require significant focus and attention and, therefore, more specific and focused targets.

The Welsh Government recognises that this national milestone is subject to influence from external factors that could affect well-being (e.g. the war in Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis). With this in mind and aligning to our commitment to reduce health inequalities the proposed milestone has no specific mean mental well-being score to aim for, but rather the ambition to eliminate the gap in mean mental well-being between the most and least deprived quintiles of Wales, currently approximately 3 points and also improve the mean mental well-being score of the whole population.

Gross Disposable Household Income

Again, there was overwhelming support for the intention and focus of the national milestone. In total, 76 per cent of respondents answering the question agreed with the overall approach.

Some respondents mentioned that a fairer tax and benefit system would help the Welsh Government to support progress towards this national milestone with respondents calling for more support for those currently with the lowest GDHI, who, they feel, would benefit the most from the support.

Welsh Government are continuing to seek to influence reserved employment rights, duties and protections that will have an impact on workers and workplaces in Wales. However, we are aware that a number of the significant influences on GDHI such as taxes, benefits, pension provision and the measures to control inflation such as interest rates remain outside the direct control of the Welsh Government.

Income Poverty

There was strong support for the intention and focus of the national milestone with 82 per cent of respondents answering the question agreeing with the approach.

Some respondents as with the above milestone highlighted the limitations of the Welsh Government to fully address some of the underlying causes of income poverty in Wales. This included the ability of the Welsh Government to shape taxation and benefit levels, as well as the important role that the private sector has in determining wages.

The Welsh Government recognises that it does not hold the primary policy and fiscal levers that would enable us to deliver the change needed to bring about a significant reduction in levels of poverty in Wales.

However, Welsh Government is committed to developing an ambitious but realistic alternative approach, where our focus is on those aspects of poverty that Welsh Government and public bodies across Wales can directly influence and which we feel would be more achievable. Work will continue to refine a milestone which will outline a clear ambition to reduce the poverty gap in the medium term, between people in Wales with certain key and protected characteristics (which mean they are most likely to be in poverty) and people without those characteristics. The milestone will also commit to setting a specific longer term value target for reducing that gap, based on the latest data and aligned to our cross government and cross-public body approach to tackling poverty

People who volunteer

Perceptions of this national milestone were also positive, with 63 per cent of respondents agreeing with the proposal.

It was suggested by four respondents that a more appropriate measure was that of volunteering hours and that volunteering was a personal choice that individuals should not feel compelled to make.

Welsh Government recognises using “number of hours” as a metric has many benefits for policy making (particularly around data comparison for different groups and because of the advantages it also offers as a proxy measure of the societal and environmental benefit delivered, i.e., the object of volunteer action).

However, we are also aware that the current data collection around volunteering hours is insufficient for our needs and would therefore be at risk of not capturing a significant amount of volunteering activity. We recognise the importance of setting a milestone that is based on existing data and robust data collection process (e.g. National Survey data) whilst accounting for the impact of single year anomalies (e.g. hitting a target accidentally because of an emergency event).

Consequently, we feel that using a “percentage of people who volunteer” figure is currently the most appropriate approach to setting our long-term ambition and target.

Home Energy Performance

The majority of respondents agreed with the proposed national milestone, with 75 per cent of respondents who answered the question responding positively.

Fuel poverty was a key concern for twelve respondents. Ensuring that all homes had adequate energy performance was, therefore, of great importance. The importance of these issues warranted more urgent action for some with six respondents suggested that 2050 constituted too long a timescale.

In order to support the people of Wales in managing the costs of heating their homes, and to deliver on the Welsh Government's legal commitment to meeting its net zero targets, it is important that we change and improve the way people use energy in their homes. This milestone balances the need to make changes to Welsh homes in order to tackle the Climate Change emergency, with protecting Welsh residents from huge increases in costs to their energy bills. The programmes of work already in place will support delivery of this milestone, while recognising that, in such a rapidly changing area, where new technologies and ways of providing energy are emerging, it would not be appropriate to make longer-term commitments on specific routes to delivery.

Biodiversity

As was the case with the other national milestones, there was widespread support for this, with 79 per cent agreeing with the proposed target.

Similar to some other national milestones, some respondents felt that a shorter timescale could be implemented. This was due to potential issues such as preventing biodiversity loss becoming more difficult and more expensive to correct over time, as well as the potential negative impact of solutions to other issues.

The Welsh Minister's Nature Recovery Action Plan sets out our ambition to 'reverse the decline in biodiversity, for its intrinsic value, and to ensure lasting benefits to society'. A commitment for there to be an improvement in the status of species and ecosystems by 2030 will align this milestone to the UN Global Biodiversity framework reporting period in 2030; and will be an important checkpoint to track the trajectory to recovery by 2050.