



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

OPEN CONSULTATION

# Noise and Soundscape Plan for Wales 2023-2028

We want your views on our national strategy on soundscapes.

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# Contents

[Overview](#)

[Introduction](#)

[How to respond](#)

[Further information and related documents](#)

[Contact details](#)

[UK General Data Protection Regulation \(UK GDPR\)](#)

[Your rights](#)

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# Overview

We would like to hear your views on Welsh Government policies concerning the airborne sound environment. We have set out a summary of the evidence, our current policies and our priorities for the next five years in the draft Noise and Soundscape Plan 2023-2028. Once adopted, this will serve as our national strategy on soundscapes until its next review and update, which is expected to occur in 2028.

## Introduction

Noise, meaning unwanted or harmful sound, affects health and well-being in a number of ways, including sleep disturbance, annoyance, impacts on learning, decreased productivity, hearing loss and increased risk of cardiovascular disease. It can arise from a wide variety of human activities including domestic, commercial and transportation sources.

Soundscape is defined as the acoustic (or sound) environment as perceived or experienced and/or understood by a person or people, in context. It includes the sounds people do want to hear as well as the noises they don't. **Planning Policy Wales** lists appropriate soundscapes, meaning the right sound environment in the right time and place, among our National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes.

In 2018, we published the **Noise and Soundscape Action Plan 2018-2023** (NSAP), which reframed noise policy in Wales in terms of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WFG Act"). It resulted in Wales being recognised as the first nation to include soundscapes in national policy, and it was referenced in the **United Nations Environment Programme's Frontiers**

## 2022 report.

Earlier this year, we introduced the Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Bill, which will require us to produce a national strategy on soundscapes. In 2018, we did this voluntarily in the form of the NSAP, but we believe giving the new Noise and Soundscape Plan 2023-2028 a more solid legal foundation will raise its profile and increase its effectiveness in guiding informed decision-making.

The draft Noise and Soundscape Plan 2023-2028 retains and refines the core messages of the NSAP, which include:

- our ambition being appropriate soundscapes;
- our commitment to embed the five ways of working in the WFG Act; and
- our commitment to join up action on noise and air quality wherever it makes sense to do so.

The draft Plan covers new topics that have come to the fore within the last five years, such as issues around remote working, aural diversity, air source heat pumps, changes in speed limits, and fireworks. It also sets out what we have delivered over the last five years, such as noise mitigation works completed on the trunk road network.

Developments in planning policy and guidance, notably work towards publishing and implementing a new Technical Advice Note (TAN 11) and related soundscape design guidance, on which we recently consulted, are also included in the Plan, as are our latest noise maps and results from the National Survey for Wales 2021-22.

People will experience the benefits of a transition from traditional noise control to a more inclusive soundscape-based approach when they can see public bodies taking on board local communities' views on their sound environments, in terms of both what they value and what they think needs to be improved.

## How to respond

Send your views on this consultation to [environmentalnoise@gov.wales](mailto:environmentalnoise@gov.wales) by 2 October 2023.

There are several ways to respond:

- complete our [online form](#)
- download, complete our consultation [response form](#) and email it to: [environmentalnoise@gov.wales](mailto:environmentalnoise@gov.wales)
- download, complete our consultation [response form](#) and post to:

Noise and Soundscape Plan consultation  
Environmental Protection Division  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

## Further information and related documents

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

## Contact details

Email: [environmentalnoise@gov.wales](mailto:environmentalnoise@gov.wales)

Post: Noise and Soundscape Plan consultation

Environmental Protection Division  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
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This document is also available in Welsh

## **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)**

The Welsh Government will be data controller for Welsh Government consultations and for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation.

Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. The lawful basis for processing information in this data collection exercise is our public task; that is, exercising our official authority to undertake the core role and functions of the Welsh Government (Art 6(1)(e)).

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. In the case of joint consultations this may also include other public authorities. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses then this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing.

You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation and that the Welsh Government may be under a legal obligation to disclose some information.

If your details are published as part of the consultation response then these published reports will be retained indefinitely. Any of your data held otherwise by Welsh Government will be kept for no more than three years.

## Your rights

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the UK GDPR, please see contact details below:

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Data Protection Officer:

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The contact details for the **Information Commissioner's Office** are:

Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Tel: 0303 123 1113

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