



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

GUIDANCE, DOCUMENT

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: the essentials

Guidance on our law to improve social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being.

First published: 23 June 2015

Last updated: 1 July 2024

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What is the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act?

What is it?

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

The Act gives a legally-binding common purpose – the 7 well-being goals – for national government, local government, local health boards and other specified public bodies. It details the ways in which specified public bodies must work, and work together to improve the well-being of Wales.

It will make the public bodies listed in the Act think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.

This will help us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future.

Well-being goals

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales



Why do we need this law?

Wales faces a number of challenges now and in the future, such as climate change, poverty, health and wellbeing, coronavirus, jobs and economic activity.

To tackle these we need to work together.

To give current and future generations a good quality of life we need to think about the long term impact of the decisions we make.

This law will make sure that our public sector does this.

How does it work?

Sustainable development

Sustainable development is about improving the way that we can achieve our economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being.

The Act starts by giving a definition of what we mean by sustainable development.

In this Act “sustainable development” means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals.

For Wales to be sustainable it is important that we improve all 4 aspects of our well-being. Each is as important as the others.

Well-being duty

The Act places a duty that the public bodies will be expected to carry out. A duty means they have to do this by law. The well-being duty states:

Each public body must carry out sustainable development.

The action a public body takes in carrying out sustainable development must include:

- a. setting and publishing objectives (“well-being objectives”) that are designed to maximise its contribution to achieving each of the well-being goals, and
- b. taking all reasonable steps (in exercising its functions) to meet those

objectives.

This means that each public body listed in the Act must work to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. To do this they must set and publish well-being objectives.

These objectives will show how each public body will work to achieve the vision for Wales set out in the well-being goals. Public bodies must then take action to make sure they meet the objectives they set.

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)

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

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
- Senedd Cymru

Well-being goals

The 7 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.

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).

Cohesive communities

Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

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.

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.

Which public bodies does the act include?

- Welsh Ministers
- Local authorities (22)
- Local Health Boards (7)
- Public Health Wales NHS Trust
- Velindre NHS Trust
- National Park Authorities (3)
- Fire and Rescue Authorities (3)
- Natural Resources Wales
- The Higher Education
- Funding Council for Wales
- The Arts Council of Wales
- Sports Council of Wales
- National Library of Wales
- National Museum of Wales
- Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust
- Digital Health and Care Wales
- Health Education and Improvement Wales
- Social Care Wales
- Welsh Revenue Authority
- Transport for Wales
- Centre for Digital Public Services Ltd
- Qualifications Wales

National indicators and milestones

To help us know whether we are making progress towards achieving the well-being goals, Welsh Ministers ('Ministers') must set national indicators.

An indicator:

- a. must be expressed as a value or characteristic that can be measured quantitatively or qualitatively measured against a particular outcome
- b. may be measured over such a period of time as the Welsh Ministers deem appropriate
- c. may be measureable in relation to Wales or any part of Wales.

Ministers must also set milestones to show expectations of what the indicators should show at certain points in the future. The Act enables ministers to review and amend the national indicators and milestones so that they stay up to date and relevant. At the start of each financial year ministers must publish an annual progress report setting out the progress made over the last year.

Future Trends report

It's important that we understand the challenges that we will be facing, and have a clear picture of where we are heading. To do this, within the 12 months after a Senedd election, ministers must publish a 'Future Trends Report' containing:

- a. predictions of likely future trends in social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, and
- b. any related analytical data and information that the Welsh Ministers consider appropriate.

In preparing the report, ministers must take account of the United Nations' sustainable development goals and the impact of climate change on Wales.

National Well-being Indicators Framework

1. A prosperous Wales
2. A resilient Wales
3. A healthier Wales
4. A more equal Wales
5. A Wales of cohesive communities
6. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
7. A globally responsible Wales

Indicators

01. Healthy babies

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

02. Healthy life expectancy

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

03. Healthy lifestyle (adults)

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

04. Air quality

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

05. Healthy lifestyle (children)

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

06. Young children developing the right skills

- A prosperous Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

07. School leavers with skills and qualifications

- A prosperous Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

08. Adults with qualifications

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

09. Productivity

- A prosperous Wales

10. Disposable household income

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

11. Innovative businesses

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

12. Renewable energy

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsible Wales

13. Healthy soils

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

14. Global footprint

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

15. Waste not recycled

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsible Wales

16. Fair pay

- A prosperous Wales

- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsible Wales

17. Pay difference

- A prosperous Wales
- A more equal Wales

18. People living in poverty

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

19. People living in material deprivation

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

20. Pay set by collective bargaining

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

21. People in work

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

22. People not in education, employment and training

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

23. People feeling involved

- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsible Wales

24. Satisfaction with access to facilities and services

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

- A Wales of cohesive communities

25. Feeling safe

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

26. People satisfied with where they live

- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

27. Sense of community

- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

28. Volunteering

- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

29. Mental well-being

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

30. Loneliness

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

31. Hazard-free homes

- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

32. Reducing flood risk to homes and businesses

- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

33. Energy efficiency of homes

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales

- A healthier Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

34. Homelessness

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

35. Participation in arts, culture and heritage

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

36. People speaking Welsh every day

- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

37. People able to speak Welsh

- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

38. Participation in sporting activities

- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

39. Professional standards in heritage collections

- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

40. Looking after our cultural heritage

- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

41. Greenhouse gas emissions

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

42. Greenhouse gas emissions from global goods and services

- A prosperous Wales

- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

43. Healthy ecosystems

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

44. Biological diversity

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

45. Water quality

- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

46. Active global citizenship

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

47. Confidence in the justice system

- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsible Wales

48. Journeys by walking, cycling or public transport

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

49. Housing costs

- A prosperous Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

50. People digitally included

- A prosperous Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

Further information - [Wellbeing of 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.

Shaping Wales' Future, National milestones for Wales

02. Healthy Life Expectancy

Milestone

To increase the healthy life expectancy of adults and narrow the gap in healthy life expectancy between the least and the most deprived by at least 15% by 2050.

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

03. Adult healthy lifestyle behaviours

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Milestone

To increase the percentage of adults with 2 or more healthy lifestyle behaviours to more than 97% by 2050.

05. Children healthy lifestyle behaviours

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

Milestone

To increase the percentage of children with two or more healthy behaviours to 94% by 2035 and more than 99% by 2050.

08. Adult qualifications at different levels of the National Qualifications Framework

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales

- A more equal Wales

Milestone

75% of working age adults in Wales will be qualified to Level 3 or higher by 2050.

Milestone

The percentage of working age adults with no qualifications will be 5% or lower in every local authority in Wales by 2050.

10. Gross Disposable Household Income per Head

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

Milestone

Improve GDHI per head in Wales by 2035 and commit to setting a stretching growth target for 2050.

14. The global footprint of Wales

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

Milestone

Wales will use only its fair share of the world's resources by 2050.

17. Pay difference for gender, disability and ethnicity

- A prosperous Wales
- A more equal Wales

Milestone

An elimination of the pay gap for gender, disability and ethnicity by 2050.

18. Income poverty

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

Milestone

Reduce the poverty gap between people in Wales with certain key and protected characteristics (which mean they are most likely to be in poverty) and those without those characteristics by 2035. Commit to setting a stretching target for

2050.

21. Percentage of people in employment

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

Milestone

Eradicate the gap between the employment rate in Wales and the UK by 2050, with a focus on fair work and raising labour market participation of under-represented groups.

22. Percentage of people in education, employment or training

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

Milestone

At least 90% of 16-24 year olds will be in education, employment, or training by 2050.

28. Percentage of people who volunteer

- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

Milestone

Increase the percentage of people who volunteer by 10% by 2050, demonstrating Wales's status as a volunteering nation.

29. Mean mental well-being score

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales

Milestone

To improve adult and children's mean mental wellbeing and eliminate the gap in adult and children's mean mental wellbeing between the most deprived and least deprived areas in Wales by 2050.

33. Percentage of dwellings with adequate energy performance

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales

- A globally responsible Wales

Milestone

All homes in Wales will have adequate and cost-effective energy performance by 2050.

37. Number of people who can speak Welsh

- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

Milestone

A million Welsh speakers by 2050.

41. Emissions of greenhouse gases within Wales

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

Milestone

Wales will achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

44. Status of biological diversity in Wales

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

Milestone

To reverse the decline in biodiversity with an improvement in the status of species and ecosystems by 2030 and their clear recovery by 2050.

[Shaping Wales' future blog](#)

Transparency

It is important that public bodies apply the sustainable development principle in their work, and that they can show people that they are making progress towards achieving the well-being goals.

The Act puts in place a number of steps to make sure that the public bodies listed in the Act are doing this:

Well-being statement

Public bodies must publish a statement when setting their well-being objectives explaining why they feel the objective will help them achieve the goals and how

it has applied the sustainable development principle. They must also make sure that they involve people interested in achieving the goals and that those people reflect the diversity of their area.

Annual reporting

Each year public bodies must publish an annual report showing the progress they have made in meeting their objectives.

Responding to the Future Generations Commissioner

Where the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales has made recommendations to a public body, they must publish their response. If the public body does not follow a recommendation they must say why, and what alternative action they will take.

Public services boards

The Act establishes Public Services Boards (PSBs) for each local authority area in Wales.

The members of each Public Services Board must include:

- a. the local authority
- b. the Local Health Board for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area
- c. the Welsh Fire and Rescue Authority for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area
- d. the Natural Resources body for Wales.

In addition to these members, each PSB must also invite the following people to participate on the Board who become 'invited participants' if they accept the invite:

- Welsh Ministers
- The Chief constable for a police area, any part of which falls within the local authority area
- The police and crime commissioner for a police area
- Certain Probation Services
- At least one body representing relevant voluntary organisations.

PSBs can also invite other people who carry out public functions.

Each PSB must improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area by working to achieve the well-being goals. It will do this by:

- assessing the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area, and
- setting objectives that are designed to maximise the PSBs contribution to the well-being goals.

They must do this in accordance with the sustainable development principle.

Each PSB must prepare and publish a plan setting out its objectives and the steps it will take to meet them. This is called a Local Well-being Plan. It must say:

- why the PSB feels their objectives will contribute within their local area to achieving the well-being goals, and
- how it has had regard to the Assessment of Local Well-being in setting its objectives and steps to take.

Each PSB will publish an annual report showing progress against their local well-being plan.

When producing their assessments of local well-being and Local Well-being plan, PSBs must consult widely.

Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' role is to act as a guardian for the interests of future generations in Wales, and to support the public bodies listed in the Act to work towards achieving the wellbeing goals. The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales has a range of actions they can carry out:

Advise, encourage and promote

The commissioner can provide advice to public bodies and Public Services Boards and promote and encourage them to work to meet their well-being objectives.

Research

The commissioner may carry out research including into the wellbeing goals, the national indicators and milestones, and the sustainable development principle and how public bodies apply it.

Carry out reviews

The commissioner may conduct a review into how public bodies are taking account of the long-term impact of their decisions, and make recommendations based on the findings.

Make recommendations

The commissioner can make recommendations to a public body about the steps it has taken or proposes to take to set and then meet its well-being objectives. Public bodies must take all reasonable steps to follow the recommendations made by the commissioner.

Future Generations report

The commissioner must publish, a year before a Senedd election, a report containing the commissioner's assessment of the improvements public bodies should make to achieve the well-being goals.

Auditor General for Wales

The Auditor General for Wales may carry out examinations of the public bodies listed in the Act to assess:

... the extent to which a body has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when:

- a. setting well-being objectives, and
- b. taking steps to meet those objectives.

The roles of the Auditor General and the Future Generations Commissioner will help to ensure that the public bodies are held to account for their performance in relation to the Act's requirements.

Find out more

[The Well-being of Future Generations](#)

[Future Generations Commissioner for Wales](#)

[Auditor General for Wales](#)

[United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#)

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