



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Our Valleys,
Our Future

Valleys Taskforce Engagement Plan

Context

The Valleys Taskforce delivery plan, ‘Our Valleys, Our Future’, has been developed as a result of ongoing engagement with valleys communities. The taskforce wanted to meet people who live and work in the valleys in order to develop a plan based on what people actually need and not what Government thinks they need.

The plan contains initial proposals for more than 60 actions to be delivered in the three priority areas. Many of these actions are interconnected and will only be achieved if communities are fully involved in their design and delivery. This underlines the need for continued engagement with people living and working in the South Wales Valleys and the importance of working collaboratively across the region.

To make the plan a success, it is essential that the taskforce brings together all the resources of the Welsh Government and its many partners. The taskforce must continue to engage with a wide number of public sector organisations including the Welsh Government; local authorities; the two city deals; the NHS; schools and universities. In order to deliver the actions outlined in the plan third sector partners and private businesses must work together.

The plan has been divided into three priority areas:

- **Priority 1:** Good-quality jobs and the skills to do them
- **Priority 2:** Better public services
- **Priority 3:** My Local Community.

Within these priorities working groups have been established, each workstream is led by a taskforce member.

Workstream leads are:

- **Business growth and start-ups** – Andrew Diplock
- **Employability** – Fiona Jones
- **Foundational economy** – Martin Mansfield
- **Strategic hubs** – John Howells

- **Community hubs** – Andrew Morgan
- **Valleys Landscape Park** – Jocelyn Davies
- **Digital** – Ann Beynon.

During the delivery phase of ‘Our Valleys, Our Future’ engagement will focus on working across government, as well as with communities and other stakeholders, to develop the actions set out in the plan.

Engagement

This engagement plan supports ‘Our Valleys, Our Future: Delivery Plan’ and sets out the methods which will be used to continue to engage and empower people in communities throughout the South Wales Valleys to ensure that the taskforce meets people’s needs and expectations.

The engagement plan is supported by a communications and marketing strategy which is outlined below.

Communications and Marketing

This will include the delivery of a campaign to raise the profile of the Valleys – building on local pride in the region and improving the perception of the valleys outside the area. One of the main outcomes of this campaign will be to see an increase in inward investment, tourism and migration to the South Wales Valleys.

The campaign will look to engage with a variety of people from different demographics, including:

- Local businesses and residents in the valleys
- Stakeholders including public, private and third sector organisations who are involved in the delivery of the plan
- National businesses with an interest in investing in the area
- Adults outside the region who might consider migrating to the area.

The campaign will raise awareness of the assets and opportunities the Valleys have to offer. We will engage with communities, stakeholders and other partners to support the delivery of the actions set out in 'Our Valleys, Our Future'.

We will make use of local channels to share stories, highlight role models and share ideas, this will help to empower local communities and encourage pride in the valleys.

We will also work with the "Love the Valleys" campaign to coordinate messages and ensure that the work of the Valleys Taskforce is able to gain wider exposure.

The campaign will develop a higher profile social media presence and work with local and national media outlets to encourage the use of more positive imagery when discussing the valleys.

Annex A of this document outlines opportunities to get involved with helping the taskforce to take this work forward.

Community engagement

The success of the delivery plan is reliant on empowering people who live and work in the Valleys to bring about their own changes. In order to achieve this, communities must have a voice that is heard and responded to.

It is essential that the taskforce does not duplicate the good work that is already taking place in communities across the Valleys. We will map engagement which is already taking place and work within these networks to develop many of the actions set out in the delivery plan.

Initially we will be engaging with the following networks, however, if any have been missed please get in touch and let us know about your local networks.

Local Authorities

Health Boards

Public Service Boards (PSBs)

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)

County Voluntary Councils (CVCs)

Community and Town Councils.

The taskforce will look to engage with communities using a variety of methods which are outlined below:

- **Focussed public meetings** – we will ask networks to invite local people to meet with the taskforce to discuss specific actions which are set out in the delivery plan. Initially these meetings are likely to focus on the Valleys Landscape Park concept. The success of this concept will depend on projects which have been conceived and developed at a local level. For this reason, local people must be involved in the development of the concept.
- **Citizen journalism** – the taskforce are working with researchers at University of Wales Trinity Saint David to use the SenseMaker® tool and Cynefin Centre methodology to engage with local communities. This process involves gathering and understanding the local narrative through the Valleys Pathfinder projects in Ferndale, Glynneath/Banwen and Llanhilleth. The community is fully involved in this process so that they 'own' the data and are empowered to use it as part of their own development journey.
- **Newsletters** – The taskforce has developed a monthly newsletter outlining latest developments and opportunities for getting involved. The newsletter is shared with our contacts and local networks, we ask our contacts to disseminate the newsletters to their contacts in order to reach as many people across the valleys as possible.

Stakeholder engagement

In order to ensure that we can meet the challenges set via community engagement it is vital that the Taskforce also fully engages with other stakeholders across the valleys, including:

Local Businesses

Local Authorities

Education and skills providers

Local Health Boards

Third sector.

We must ensure that we are working with each of these organisations collectively and encouraging them to work together to achieve the actions set out in the delivery plan.

For example, if the proposed strategic hubs are to succeed we need to work with Local Authorities, businesses and education and skills providers. This will ensure that local people are able to acquire the skills they will need for the jobs that will become available. Without this kind of collaborative working the strategic hubs are less likely to provide the benefits to local communities that we hope to see.

The main method of engagement with stakeholders during the next phase of engagement will be through the seven workstreams identified in the in 'Our Valleys, Our Future: Delivery Plan'.

The role of the seven workstream leads identified will be to work with stakeholders with an interest in their particular workstream to deliver the actions set out in the plan. Leads will engage through a variety of methods including:

- **Seminars** – led by local authorities or other key partners and attended by stakeholders with the greatest interest in the particular workstream
- **One to one meetings** – between workstream leads and stakeholders
- **Meetings with relevant Cabinet Secretary's and Ministers** – the workstream lead will feed back what they have learnt and developed with stakeholders
- **Meetings with relevant Welsh Government officials** – workstream leads will develop relationships with key Welsh Government officials and work with them to try and influence Welsh Government policy based on their discussions with external stakeholders.

Welsh Government internal engagement

The taskforce is led by the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services. He is supported in his role by the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport, the Leader of the House and Chief Whip and the Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language. Within the Welsh Government, the taskforce is supported by the Valleys taskforce board. Their role is to provide clear, realistic, evidence-based advice and recommendations to inform and steer the work of the taskforce to help achieve the ambition and vision set out in "Our Valleys, Our Future".

Membership of the taskforce board includes senior Welsh Government officials from the departments which will have the greatest impact on the success of the delivery plan. There are also a number of external members who are able to provide advice and expertise in their specific field.

The taskforce and taskforce board are supported by the Welsh Government Valleys taskforce team. The team work across government to support the development of the delivery plan, this includes supporting taskforce members in their work on the workstreams ensuring there is a truly cross-government aspect to the work of the taskforce.

Annex A

The taskforce advertises opportunities to get involved in the work of the taskforce through our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/talkvalleys/> or via Twitter using the hashtag [#ourvalleys](#).

If you have previously attended one of our events or contacted us and provided your email address you will be added to our database and receive the Valleys Taskforce monthly newsletter. The newsletter provides updates on the progress of the delivery plan and details of upcoming events.

We appreciate that there are many people who live in valleys communities who may not be able to access social media or have an email account. For this reason we will work closely with community venues to advertise events using posters and via word of mouth.

We will also utilise partnerships with Local Authorities, third sector organisations and business groups, and ask them to share information about events and opportunities for involvement with the taskforce within their existing networks.

If you would like to be involved, added to our database or if you have any thoughts or ideas around other ways to engage with communities in the valleys you can get in touch in the following ways:

Post:

Valleys Taskforce
Education and Public Services
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

e-mail: Ourvalleys@gov.wales