

Marine Nitrates Development Taskforce – Meeting 6 10 December 2025

1. Overall Summary

Some key milestones have now been achieved, including the development of the Nutrient Calculator – deployed the same day – and a notably productive workshop with DTA Consultants on 1 December. Many actions on the action log were positively resolved, including examples of productive working between Local Authorities and the arm's-length bodies.

The second half of the meeting focussed on house builders, with representatives from Community Housing Cymru and House Builders Federation invited to join the group and present a paper outlining the position of home builders and developer-led mitigation.

2. Action log and progress review

There was a systematic update of the action log and progress against the items pursued or outstanding. These are updated below on a per item basis.

3. DTA Workshop

An update on the workshop held with DTA Consultants was provided. The overall feedback from the session was extremely positive, and contributions from participations throughout the Taskforce emphasised the importance of the workshop and potential opportunities arising from it. Discussion also emphasised the need to ensure that the resource from DTA was limited and should be used strategically, perhaps through combining Local Authority asks.

The workshop particularly advanced the potential use of *de minimis* to allow some applications to proceed, including housing. Some further actions and areas for reassurance have been subsequently identified and group members agreed to pursue these at pace.

ACTION: NRW to consider and, if possible, amend their existing nitrates guidance to ensure that LPAs have the option to take a threshold-based approach if appropriate.

ACTION: Welsh Government to exploring sharing the legal advice on the DTA guidance that was shared with Natural Resources Wales on a lawyer-to-lawyer.

ACTION: Natural Resources Wales to consider if a consistent definition for *de minimis* can be provided – and, if so, what that level may be.

ACTION: DTA Consultants' report to be provided as soon as possible and no later than end of January. Welsh Government senior officials to discuss the capacity and effective use of DTA in an internal meeting.

4. Discharging Outside Catchments

An update on the discharge outside catchments from NRW was circulated to participants prior to the meeting and no further questions arose.

5. GIS Layers and Sharing Mapping

An action arising from the previous meeting about sharing mapping information with developers and prospective applicants was discussed. DCWW were able to confirm that information could be used in the way requested and the action closed positively.

6. Individual Commercial Case

An action arising from the previous meeting about a large and urgent commercial development in Swansea was discussed, and it was noted that Natural Resources Wales met with Swansea County Council and the applicant and that a positive resolution was achieved.

ACTION: Swansea County Council to share learning from this case with group members at a future meeting.

7. Changing Approaches to Determining Applications

Pembrokeshire County Council updated members to indicate that after a positive meeting with DTA and the other ongoing work of the Taskforce, they were no longer intending on changing the approach to determining applications in the immediate future.

8. Local Development Plans

The development of the policy caveat letter and approach was discussed, noting that the draft was being amended to reflect discussion from the DTA workshop. LPAs reiterated the importance of this letter and wish for it to be delivered as quickly as possible.

ACTION: Policy caveat letter for LDPs to be delivered.

9. Nutrient Calculator

An update on the development, including the expedited verification of data for the nutrient calculator was provided – noting that it was due to be published today, 10 December.

ACTION: *Welsh Government to inform LPAs when the Nutrient Calculator is live.*

10. Consolidation of Existing Groups

There was a brief discussion of the existing groups based on the powerpoint structure circulated to the meeting. It was noted that some of these groups have purposes that extend beyond nitrates, and some may have a statutory basis.

It will be important that when the Taskforce concludes, each item considered and any ongoing areas of work are moved to an appropriate home. Some groups may be streamlined or combined.

ACTION: *The Welsh Government to write to members of the Taskforce to identify who owns each group, whether it needs to exist, whether they can merge, and whether the membership is appropriate. Members to also consider any gaps when the Taskforce concludes.*

11. House Builders

Representatives from Community Housing Cymru and Home Builders Federation joined the meeting, and summarised the paper they had produced with input from the Federation of Master Builders.

There was a constructive discussion about ensuring that the lessons from phosphates and from nitrates in England were being learned and acted upon, and house builders were reassured that examples from England have been considered by the Taskforce and other groups.

The development of a Handbook by Local Planning Authorities was welcomed by representatives, who also asked to engage with its development when possible to ensure it would be as effective as possible for developers.

ACTION: *Carmarthenshire officers to engage with house builders, when possible, in the development of the Handbook.*

An update on the Nutrient Credit Trading Group was also provided and it was agreed that group would be mindful to keep developers involved in the engagement and development process.

There was discussion about Section 106 agreement clauses and mitigation solutions. It was noted that standardised S106 agreements are being taken forward as part of the Affordable Housing Taskforce Implementation Group, but house building representatives believed that it would be possible to develop clauses specifically related to nutrient mitigation quicker than the wider standardisation reform – and have agreed to progress this.

ACTION: *House builders to explore standardised nutrient clauses in England and adapt for Welsh context, and engage with Affordable Housing Taskforce Implementation Group – updating the Taskforce – to implement them.*

The Home Builders' paper also discussed Package Treatment Plans and there was a helpful discussion with representatives from DCWW on this. It was agreed that this was an area that may benefit from further exploration and should be considered at a future meeting of the Taskforce.

ACTION: *The potential of PTPs, particularly as a developer-led solution, to be discussed at the next Taskforce meeting.*

There was also helpful discussion of the long-term difficulties associated with using water treatment as the principle method of tackling the issue, including the high number of WWtW and the capital expenditure associated with upgrading them for TN removal.

Finally, there was a productive discussion on future engagement with home builders and developers. Alongside regular updates from senior Welsh Government officials already in place, and set-piece engagement with the sector such as the webinar where Welsh Government provided sector updates, it was agreed that an update would be provided at the next sector update in January.

ACTION: *Welsh Government to ensure Nitrates is on the agenda at the Housing and Regeneration Subgroup in January.*

The next meeting is scheduled for 13 January and it was noted that a Written Statement would be issued on 17 December to give a public update on progress, with Welsh Government officials meeting in the interim to ensure progress continues.

Action	Owner	Date
NRW to consider and, if possible, amend their existing nitrates guidance to ensure that LPAs have the option to take a threshold-based approach if appropriate.	<i>[information redacted]</i>	13 January
Welsh Government to explore sharing the legal advice on the DTA guidance that was shared with Natural Resources Wales on a lawyer-to-lawyer.	<i>[information redacted]</i>	13 January
Natural Resources Wales to consider if a consistent definition for de minimis can be provided – and, if so, what that level may be.	<i>[information redacted]</i>	13 January (update)
DTA Consultants' report to be provided as soon as possible and no later than end of January. Welsh Government senior officials to discuss the capacity and effective use of DTA in an internal meeting.	<i>[information redacted]</i>	31 January
Swansea County Council to share learning from the development case with group members at a future meeting.	<i>[information redacted]</i>	31 January
Policy caveat letter for LDPs to be delivered.	<i>[information redacted]</i>	31 January
Welsh Government to inform LPAs when the Nutrient Calculator is live.	<i>[information redacted]</i>	15 December
The Welsh Government to write to members of the Taskforce to identify who owns each group, whether it needs to exist, whether they can merge, and whether the membership is appropriate. Members to also	<i>[information redacted]</i>	31 January

consider any gaps when the Taskforce concludes.		
Carmarthenshire officers to engage with house builders, when possible, in the development of the Handbook.	<i>[information redacted]</i>	Ongoing
House builders to explore standardised nutrient clauses in England and adapt for Welsh context, and engage with Affordable Housing Taskforce Implementation Group – updating the Taskforce – to implement them.	<i>[information redacted]</i>	31 January
Welsh Government to ensure Nitrates is on the agenda at the Housing and Regeneration Subgroup in January.	<i>[information redacted]</i>	18 January
The potential of PTPs, particularly as a developer-led solution, to be discussed at the next Taskforce meeting.	<i>[information redacted]</i>	13 January

Attendees

Welsh Government

- *[information redacted]*
- *[information redacted]*
- *[information redacted]*
- *[information redacted]*
- *[information redacted]*
- *[information redacted]*
- *[information redacted]*
- *[information redacted]*
- *[information redacted]*
- *[information redacted]*
- *[information redacted]*

PEDW

[information redacted]

Local Authorities

- *[information redacted]* – Swansea
- *[information redacted]*– Carmarthenshire
- *[information redacted]*– Carmarthenshire
- *[information redacted]*– Pembrokeshire County Council
- *[information redacted]* - Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
- *[information redacted]*– Neath Port Talbot
- *[information redacted]*– Neath Port Talbot
- *[information redacted]* - Neath Port Talbot
- *[information redacted]* – Neath Port Talbot

Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water

- *[information redacted]*
- *[information redacted]*

Natural Resources Wales

- *[information redacted]*

House Builders – from 10.45 (item 11)

- *[information redacted]* – Home Builders' Federation
- *[information redacted]* – Community Housing Cymru