



11 March 2026

Dear colleagues,

### **Approval of the Planning (Wales) Bill and the Planning (Consequential Provisions) (Wales) Bill**

I am pleased to announce the 'Planning (Wales) Bill' and the supplementary 'Planning (Consequential Provisions) (Wales) Bill' were approved by Senedd Cymru on 10 March, marking significant milestone for planning law in Wales.

These Bills mark a significant step in Wales's devolution journey. Once commenced, our reliance on various legislation passed by the UK Parliament will come to an end. For the first time, the full body of Welsh planning law will be accessible in one coherent legal framework that is uniquely designed for Wales. This is the most comprehensive and accessible statement of the legislation governing town and country planning anywhere in the UK.

The Bills have been subject to rigorous Senedd scrutiny. The overwhelming response from stakeholders who engaged in this process was positive, with the Bills also receiving cross-party support from Members of the Senedd.

The Planning (Wales) Bill contains the substantive provisions, bringing together the main pieces of primary legislation that form the foundation of our planning system. While the Planning (Consequential Provisions) (Wales) Bill is a companion Bill that makes the necessary amendments, repeals, transitional and savings provisions in connection with the Planning (Wales) Bill. This avoids burdening the main Bill with lengthy technical schedules that either have a limited lifespan in practice or will be of very limited interest to most readers of planning law.

#### Next Steps

The Bills must now enter a period of intimation. This statutory period lasts four weeks during which time the Counsel General for the Welsh Government or the Attorney General for the UK Government may refer the Bills to the Supreme Court under section 112 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 (GoWA 2006).

Once this period has concluded, the Bills will be presented for Royal Assent from His Majesty, King Charles III, and impressed with the Welsh Seal by the First Minister. This will signify that the Bills have become Acts of the Senedd. However, for the Acts to take effect and become the new legislative framework for planning law in Wales, they must be brought into force together with a suite of subordinate legislation. Until both the Acts and relevant subordinate legislation are commenced, the existing legislative framework will continue to apply.

An implementation plan setting out the steps and timescales to commence the Acts is anticipated to be published in the summer. It will provide clarity on the actions required by the Welsh Government, alongside details of the support to be put in place for stakeholders (particularly Planning Authorities) to prepare for the commencement of the new legislation. As set out in the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bills, commencement is currently expected to take place 18 months after Royal Assent. However, the commencement of the Acts and their timings will be a matter for next Government to consider and agree.

While the final scope of the implementation plan will be determined by the next Government, the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bills highlights that the planning system is underpinned by a substantial and complex body of subordinate legislation, together with an extensive range of guidance and policy documents. To enable timely commencement of the Acts, a phased approach to updating and consolidating this material will be required.

As set out by the Government during the scrutiny of the Bills, it is anticipated that the first phase, which is expected to coincide with commencement of the Acts, will focus on the legislation and guidance most frequently used by practitioners, and on those requiring the most significant amendment as a result of the Acts. This is to ensure stakeholders have the essential tools in place from day one, while maintaining the existing legal effect of the system. The second phase will address the remaining legislation and the wider suite of guidance and policy documents over the medium to long term.

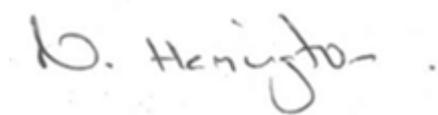
This approach seeks to strike a proportionate balance between the timely commencement of the Acts and the practical constraints associated with updating and amending a substantial and complex body of subordinate legislation, guidance and policy documents and other operational materials.

I want to reassure everyone that this change is not something practitioners need to be concerned about. The effect of the law remains the same, there are no new policies to learn, and organisational practices will not change. While there is some new terminology, the drafting is clear and accessible. Whilst we will be providing support, familiarity will develop naturally as you begin to use the legislation.

The Acts and their supporting information will be made available on [Legislation.gov.uk](https://legislation.gov.uk) shortly after receiving Royal Assent. In the meantime, the Bills, as approved by Senedd, and all supporting documents are available to view on the Senedd's website:

- [Planning \(Wales\) Bill](#)
- [Planning \(Consequential Provisions\) \(Wales\) Bill](#).

Yours faithfully,



**Neil Hemington**  
**Prif Gynllunyydd, Y Gyfarwyddiaeth Gynllunio**  
**Chief Planner, Planning Directorate**

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.