

Future Wales

Our national plan for Wales – to 2040



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

April 2021



Young people's summary

We all plan... ➡



Planning is important... it sets your direction and helps you make decisions.

In Wales, we plan the way we use resources and land, what we build, and where we build.

This planning system works:

- **locally** – local councils write a Local Development Plan
- **across areas** – councils and other organisations work together to make regional plans

The Welsh Government also makes plans to support all of Wales. We plan because we want Wales to be sustainable and prosperous.

Sustainable – something that can last and keep going into the future.



Future Wales is our national plan for the next 20 years through to 2040.

It sets out:

- **our goals for Wales**
- **where development should happen**
- **developments that will help Wales adapt and respond to climate change**

To help us write this plan we:

- involved people who work in planning
- talked to communities
- looked at evidence and research from other places



How the planning system works

Local and regional plans have to include lots of different things.

When planners make decisions about new development proposals, they think about:

- will it support or harm communities?
- is it the best use of money and resources?
- is it needed?
- will it grow the economy?
- will it support innovation and promote new business?
- how many jobs will it bring?
- can the area cope with the change?
- how much extra **infrastructure** it will need?
- will it put a strain on services like health centres or schools?
- will it protect and promote Welsh language, culture and heritage?
- will it protect or harm the environment?
- is the community involved in the plans?
- is it resilient to changes in our climate?

Infrastructure – systems and networks of transport, water, power, services and facilities.

We want local and regional plans to include what's right for their area and what's right for Wales.

The Future Wales plan helps councils and others make sure their plans fit together and help us reach our goals.

- It doesn't replace local plans.
- It doesn't replace regional planning.
- It works with other laws and policies across Wales.

Why is planning important?

Wales faces lots of different challenges. We need to plan how to:

- deal with climate change
- look after nature and the environment
- grow the economy and create jobs
- look after our communities and people's wellbeing
- prepare Wales for the future



Facts about Wales

Population



Over 3 million people live here

People are living longer.

From 1998 to 2018:

- the population aged 65+ grew
- the population 15 and under fell



By 2043 we will have **65%** more people aged **75+**

Large parts of Wales are rural

40% of the population live in places with fewer than 10,000 people



The people

Life expectancy is:



82.3
years for females



78.3
years for males

General health is different across Wales.



People in **Gwynedd** have the highest rates of good or very good general health



People in **Blaenau Gwent** the lowest

Over 562,000 people speak Welsh

Our aim is to get to **1,000,000** Welsh speakers by 2050



The land

In the past we used our coal and iron resources – these weren't sustainable



Now we use wind, solar and tidal resources – these are sustainable

Agriculture, farming and forestry are a big part of Welsh life



We have:



beaches and coastal communities



mountains and valleys



lakes and rivers



three National Parks



World Heritage sites



Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Our Economy

Our economy now is more **service based**



Small and medium sized businesses are an important part of our economy and are growing

In **2019** the majority of businesses had fewer than 10 employees



Half of workplace employment is based in the south east

In 2019:

- We exported **£17.8 billion**
- We imported **£18.1 billion**



The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 means we have to think about how the decisions we make now, protect Wales for the future.

Our 11 goals for the next 20 years

- 1** A Wales where people live and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places that everyone can be a part of.



- 2** A Wales where people live in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services.



- 3** A Wales where we tackle health, poverty and inequality through growth.



- 4** A Wales where the Welsh Language is thriving.



- 5** A Wales where people live and work in cities and towns that are growing.



- 6** A Wales where people live in places that promote wealth, new ideas and culture.



Good planning can make communities:

- **connected** – with the right transport, internet and phone networks
- **inclusive** – meeting people's needs whatever their background or age
- **healthy** – with the right homes, jobs, services, leisure and public spaces

Good planning can make rural places:

- **sustainable** – full of life, activity and able to face the future
- **great for all ages** – meeting people's needs
- **balanced** – building new things while protecting character and heritage

Good planning can:

- **bring opportunities** – attracting businesses, better homes and jobs
- **improve people's lives** and reduce poverty
- **focus on each region's strengths** and what they need to thrive

Good planning can:

- **protect Welsh speaking communities** and promote new development which encourages people to speak Welsh

Good planning can:

- **create jobs and opportunities**
- **reduce pollution**
- **use investment in the right ways**

Good planning can:

- **bring businesses, jobs and activities**
- **explore new technologies**
- **attract people from all over the world**

More outcomes:

7

A Wales where travel is sustainable.



Good planning can:

- **develop better transport networks**
- **improve public transport** – reducing the need to use cars
- **reduce pollution**

8

A Wales where people can connect to great digital infrastructure.



Good planning can:

- **make sure everyone can get superfast and ultra-fast broadband**
- **develop better phone networks**

9

A Wales where places manage natural resources and reduce pollution.



Good planning can:

- **protect and enhance natural resources** – including the coastline, forests, water and minerals
- **reduce pollution** and improve people's lives

10

A Wales where there are biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems.



Good planning can:

- **value and protect nature** – our forests, wildlife, flowers and insects
- **reverse the harm done to nature and help it to thrive**

11

A Wales where people live in places that are decarbonised (create less carbon pollution).



Good planning can:

- **face the challenges of the climate crisis**
- **promote opportunities** for renewable energy and electric vehicles
- **improve people's health and wellbeing**

Ecosystems – plants and animals that are connected and living together.

Biodiversity – different plants, animals and micro-organisms living in one area.

Where Wales will grow

Some areas can manage change better than others.

Supporting urban areas

Cities and towns have the infrastructure and resources to cope more with change.

They have a mix of things close together:

- homes and hotels
- shops and restaurants
- health and education services
- transport and tourism
- leisure and culture

This is an opportunity to look at how we plan towns and city centres. Their role is changing. They are now places where people live, shop, relax, work and get support from services.

Larger developments of buildings in one place makes the best use of land and protects rural areas.

Types
of places

Cities

Towns

Villages

Hamlets

Placemaking

Planning should involve people who live and work in the area. They have community knowledge. They use the space and know how it works.

Placemaking has lots of benefits and helps planners discover resources, strengths, and opportunities.

Supporting rural areas

Smaller towns and villages are important. They don't always have the infrastructure and resources to cope with change when it happens too quickly. This is an opportunity to help them grow and become more sustainable.

What we want to see in Wales

Growth in the right places

- 1 We want development and growth in all parts of Wales. But we want it to be sustainable. It should meet needs now and the future.**

We want development around larger city and town areas to include employment opportunities, housing and investment in infrastructure.

Growth in smaller towns and rural communities must support local needs and their hopes for the future.

Growth of the right things

- 2 We support development in town and city centres that support people's health and wellbeing.**
This needs to include a mix of different things like housing, shops, services, good transport links and **green infrastructure**.

Green infrastructure – planned and unplanned natural places like parks, allotments, community gardens and public green spaces.

Land used in the right ways

- 3 We support councils and public bodies using their land and resources to make places sustainable.**
They should use their land to meet people's needs. This includes building schools, colleges, hospitals, affordable homes and other things to improve people's lives.

Support for rural communities

- 4 We want growth to support and protect rural communities.**
Plans should meet people's needs for affordable housing, transport links, work and services and help people of all ages.
- 5 We want plans to support the rural economy.**
Plans should support things that bring work and money to rural areas like food and drink production, renewable energy, and tourism.



What we want to see in Wales

Support for town centres



6 We want plans to focus new development in town centres first.

Plans should:

- support development that brings life and jobs to the town
- support good public transport and infrastructure links
- help people be active and healthy

More homes

7 We want more affordable, good quality homes across Wales.

Plans should include building enough affordable houses to meet needs.

Less flooding

8 We want to reduce the risk of flooding.

Plans should:

- focus development for housing and other things away from areas that could flood
- promote natural ways of reducing flooding like restoring river bends
- help the environment and reduce climate change

More green infrastructure

9 We want to protect and enhance our biodiversity and have more green infrastructure.

Plans should:

- value and protect nature
- find areas to protect or turn into places for ecosystems
- include more green infrastructure



What we want to see in Wales

Better connections



10 We support development that connects Wales to the rest of the world.

Plans should:

- support Cardiff Airport
- support the seaports in Holyhead, Milford Haven, Pembroke Dock and Fishguard
- invest in transport links to the airport and seaports
- include ways to reduce pollution and reach our climate change targets

11 We support plans that improve connections across Wales.

Plans should:

- support people to use public transport
- help people use electric vehicles by having more charging points
- improve rail, bus and road networks
- improve the National Cycle Network

12 We support plans that improve connections across the regions.

Plans should:

- support people to use active travel – cycling and walking
- improve bus and rail links
- include ways to develop metro links – South East Metro, South West Metro and North Wales Metro
- support people to use electric vehicles

Better digital infrastructure

13 We support better digital infrastructure.

Plans should improve the digital infrastructure for superfast or ultrafast broadband.

14 We want mobile action zones so there's better phone coverage for everyone.

We will identify areas in Wales where there is no mobile phone signal.

Plans should focus on increasing phone signal.

More trees and a new National Forest

15 We want to develop a National Forest.

Plans should spot sites that can be used to plant trees and support the growth of a National Forest.



What we want to see in Wales

More renewable energy



16 We support District Heat Networks.

Plans should:

- identify areas where heat networks could work
- look at ways to include these in larger developments

17 We support renewable and low carbon energy technology and its infrastructure.

Plans should:

- support our goal to generate 70% of our electricity from renewable sources by 2030
- include details of how they benefit local communities

18 We support larger renewable and low carbon energy developments

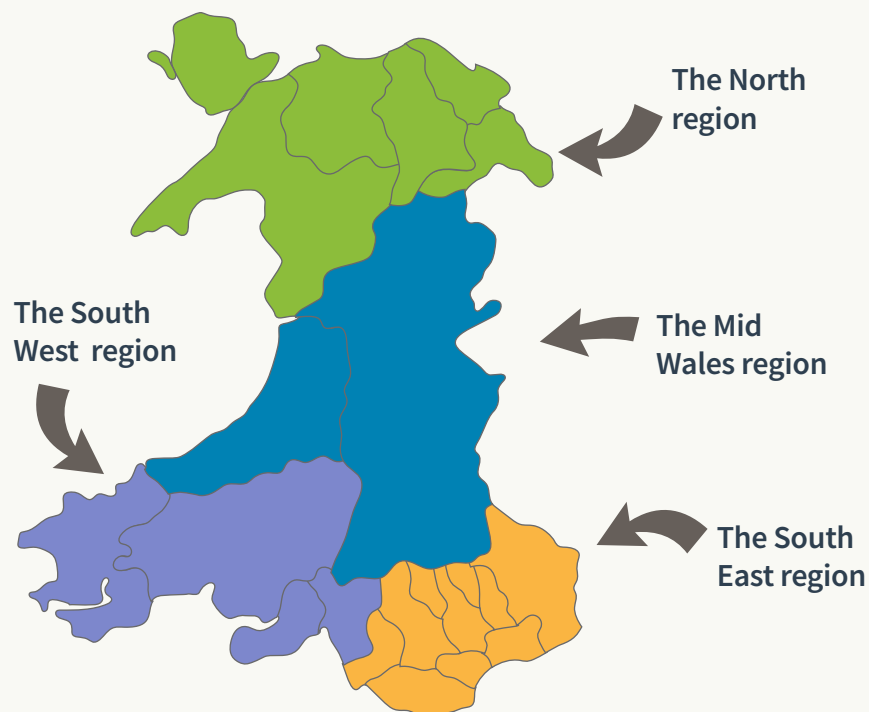
Plans should:

- deliver wind energy in areas agreed for larger development
- protect local communities and the environment from harm
- link energy to homes and jobs through a better network

District Heat Networks – supply heating and hot water to lots of buildings from one place. They work well in urban areas — they cost less and use less carbon.



Planning across the regions



For this vision to work, counties need to work together and plan regionally.

19 We want councils and others to work together and make regional plans. They must involve and listen to communities. Listening helps make the right decisions.



The North region



700,000 people
live here



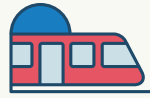
204,400
speak Welsh



Along the coast
there's a risk of
flooding



It has lots of
rural areas



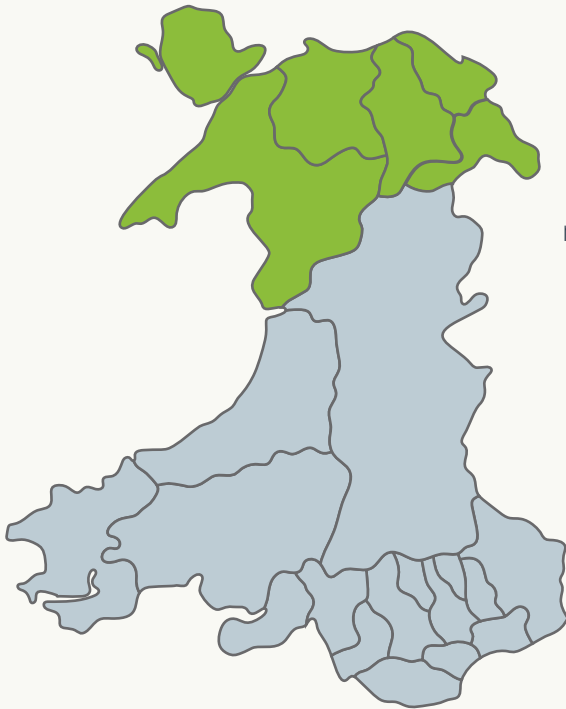
There are good road
and rail links along
the coast



The rest of the
region is mainly road
based



It has major ports
at Holyhead and
Mostyn



20 We support focusing
development around
Wrexham and Deeside.

23 We support the
development of a North
Wales Metro.

21 We support managed
growth in the towns
and cities along the
coast from Holyhead to
Prestatyn.

24 We support North West
Wales as a location for
new energy development
and investment.

22 We support a new
green belt area around
Wrexham and Deeside to
manage growth. These
should connect with
ones close to the border
in Cheshire West and
Chester.

Green belt – an area of
open land where you're not
allowed to build.

The Mid Wales region



205,000 people
live here



It has lots of
opportunities for
renewable energy



59,000
speak Welsh



It has **39%** of the
land of Wales but
only around **7%**
of the population

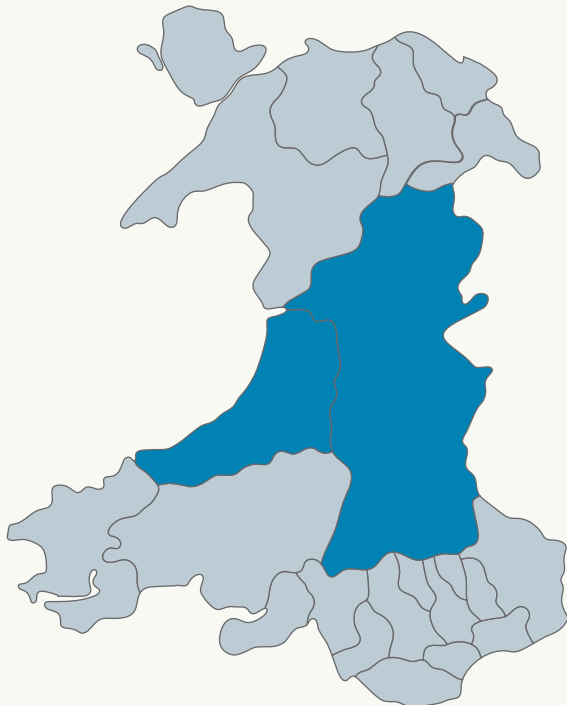


It's a large area which includes:

- some of the most rural areas of the UK
- the Brecon Beacons National Park
- lots of farming areas



It has lower levels of
public transport and
connection than other
parts of Wales



25

We support managed growth in the Teifi Valley towns, Llandrindod Wells, Builth Wells, Welshpool, Brecon and the Border, Newtown and Aberystwyth.

26

We support growth that is sustainable, helps the local economy and brings new job opportunities.

27

We support development and investment in transport links to improve movement across Mid Wales.

The South West region



700,000 people
live here



148,000
speak Welsh



It has lots of
rural areas



Swansea is Wales' second biggest city



It's a large area which includes:

- lots of small towns
- built up industrial and business areas



It has transport links
to Mid and South East
regions and Ireland



It has major ports at
Fishguard, Milford Haven,
Pembroke Dock,
Port Talbot and Swansea

28 We support focusing
development around
Swansea Bay and Llanelli.

31 We support the
development of a South
West Metro.

29 We support managed
growth in Carmarthen
and the four Haven
Towns (Haverfordwest,
Milford Haven, Pembroke
and Pembroke Dock).

32 We support renewable
and low carbon energy-
related development, and
investment at the Haven
Waterway.

30 We support a new green
belt area to manage
growth around Swansea
Bay and Llanelli.

The South East region



Over
1.5 million
people live here



151,000
speak Welsh



The population
grew by over **9%**
between 1998-2018



The area brings in
50% of the total
economic output of
the Welsh economy



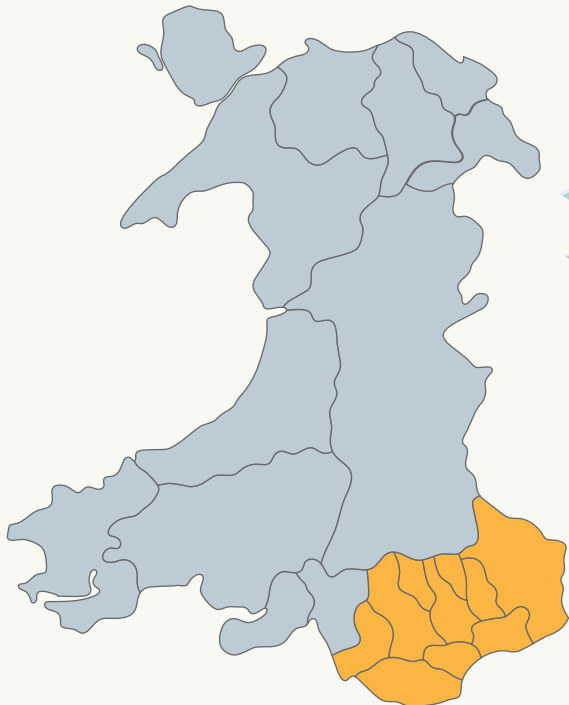
It has major
ports at Cardiff,
Newport and
Barry



The region has
an airport



The area has 50% of
housing needs in Wales



33 We support focusing development around Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys.

34 We support a new Green Belt area in the South East, around Newport, north of Cardiff and the east part of the region. It should connect to the green belt around Bristol.

35 We support the Valleys Regional Park and associated new developments that benefit the area.

36 We support the development of a South Wales Metro.

Next steps

We have to use the resources we have in the right ways. Every five years we will check this plan is working and preparing Wales for the future.

Reaching our outcomes for Wales will make our cities, towns, and rural areas better places. It will also improve people's lives.

Future Wales is 20-year plan and it will take time to achieve the strategic change. Wales is always changing so this plan might need to change too. We will use these seven questions to help us check the plan is working.

Has Future Wales:

1. supported decarbonisation?
2. supported preparation of strategic and local development plans?
3. supported the delivery of renewable energy?
4. helped meet housing needs in the right places?
5. made places healthier?
6. helped strengthen ecosystems and enhanced biodiversity?
7. supported an economy that delivers prosperity for all?

Thanks for reading

The full plan is available here:

gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/future-wales-the-national-plan-2040.pdf



This document is a summary of the full plan. It has no legal status and should not be used for decision making.

This document is also available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

OGL © Crown Copyright 2021
Digital ISBN 978-1-80195-241-5
WG42342