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Natural Resources Wales Corporate Plan 2014 - 2017

Working Draft for 12th February 2014
3rd February 2014

DRAFT

Foreword

Wales's environment is our most valuable asset. Cherished by the people of Wales and beyond for its wildlife, landscapes and seascapes, it is vital for the range of services it provides – food and water, energy, even the air that we breathe. Our environment is where we live, work and play: it is part of our culture and key to our economic prosperity and sense of community. We all have a responsibility to care for Wales's environment, both now and for future generations.

But these are challenging times – the effects of climate change, declining biodiversity and the status of our rivers sit alongside issues like improving people's health and well being, tackling poverty and green growth - creating more sustainable jobs for Wales. We need to be able to use our natural resources wisely and efficiently to improve the quality of life for the people of Wales, while at the same time enhancing the resilience and diversity of our environment.

We in Natural Resources Wales believe that there is a great opportunity to respond to these challenges – not alone, but by working with partners like the Welsh Government, the private and voluntary sectors and local communities. With sustainability as a central principle, together we can help make Wales a more prosperous, joined up and resilient nation.

To develop this Corporate Plan, we have gathered as much information as possible from our staff, our stakeholders, our customers and the people of Wales. Last year, we ran a series of events and a public consultation on our ideas, priorities and how we can work better together in future. We were pleased with the level of response and the broad support for our proposals. We have used this information to develop our Corporate Plan. This important feedback will be also be used in our future work.

We are a new organisation - we're just a year old and this is our first Corporate Plan. We are on a long journey - and this is just the start. We have a focus on delivery. In the first year we will concentrate on integrated and collaborative working, and designing and embedding the ecosystem approach. We will be reaping the benefits set out in the Business Case for creating Natural Resources Wales over the next ten years or so. We will deliver our purpose - ensuring that the environment and the natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, sustainably enhanced and sustainably used, now and in the future.

We hope that you find our Corporate Plan interesting and informative. And we hope to work with you in the future for the benefit of our environment and the people of Wales.

Professor Peter Matthews
Chairman

Dr Emyr Roberts
Chief Executive

Introduction

Our Corporate Plan 2014 -17 sets out what we plan to achieve over the next three years, together with a set of indicators showing wider environmental trends in Wales.

We explain our purpose, who we are and what we do, and how we work and who we work with. We then give an overview of what we intend to do over the next three years, organised across five work programmes, with a set of high level indicators for each programme, showing relevant trends across Wales.

We have a one year Business Plan with targets and measures to accompany the Corporate Plan and provide more detail – together these will form our Performance Framework so that we can monitor both what we do ourselves and wider effects in Wales.

Please get in touch if you would like to work with us or have any comments.

Email: corporate.planning@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk

Our Purpose...

is to ensure that the environment and natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, sustainably enhanced and sustainably used, now and in the future.

We want Wales...

to be a place where our air, land and water are managed sustainably and we use

- **Good Knowledge:** gaining wisdom and understanding of our natural resources and how we affect them – using evidence and applying learning from experience, so that we make good decisions

so that what we do is

- **Good for the Environment:** ecosystems are resilient and secured for the future, wildlife and landscapes are enhanced, and the use of our natural resources is carefully managed
- **Good for People:** people enjoying, valuing and benefitting from our natural resources and understanding their relevance in our day to day lives
- **Good for Business:** a 'location of choice' for business and enterprise and a place where best practice environmental management is adopted and encouraged

and that we are a

- **Good Organisation:** well led and managed, with suitably skilled and experienced staff, and effective systems and processes - transparent in our decision making and continuously improving our service to customers and our relationships with stakeholders and partners.

These five 'Goods' give rise to the five Corporate Programmes that we use to organise our work and which we explain later in the plan. They are interdependent and cross cutting – work we do in one 'Good' programme helps to achieve our work in the others.

Who we are and what we do

Natural Resources Wales is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body and came into being in April 2013, largely taking over the functions of the Countryside Council for Wales, Forestry Commission Wales and the Environment Agency in Wales, as well as certain Welsh Government functions.

We have a wide range of roles and responsibilities:

- **Adviser:** principal adviser to Welsh Government, and adviser to industry and the wider public and voluntary sector
- **Regulator:** protecting people and the environment including marine, forest and waste industries, and prosecuting those who contravene the regulations we're responsible for
- **Designator:** for Sites of Special Scientific Interest, areas of particular value for their wildlife or geology, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and National Nature Reserves.
- **Responder:** to some 9,000 reported environmental incidents a year as a Category 1 emergency responder and
- **Statutory consultee:** to some 9,000 planning applications per year
- **Manager / Operator:** managing 7% area of Wales including woodlands, National Nature Reserves, water and flood defences, and operating our visitor centres, recreation facilities, hatcheries and laboratory
- **Partner, Educator and Enabler:** key collaborator with the public, private and voluntary sectors, providing grant aid and helping a wide range of people use the environment as a learning resource
- **Evidence gatherer:** monitoring our environment, commissioning and undertaking research and developing our knowledge
- **Employer:** of over 1,900 staff, plus supporting other employment through contract work.

Our People

We have over 1,900 full time equivalent staff located throughout Wales – scientists, engineers, foresters, environmental managers, recreation and education experts, people working with local communities, as well as many others who enable our organisation to work effectively and efficiently.

We are a new organisation. We know what sort of organisation we we'd like to be, but it will take time for us to get there. Talking with our staff, we have developed the following set of values, which describe the type of organisation and people that we want to be:

- **Passionate and ambitious** about our work and the positive impact we will have
- **Disciplined and focussed** in our prioritisation and delivery
- **Trusted and professional** in our relationships with stakeholders, staff, and their representatives
- Taking a **common sense** approach to our work and being **responsible** and **accountable** for our actions.

Our People Strategy describes how we intend to improve our capability and performance, work more flexibly and develop our organisation in line with our business. We also have a workforce plan that shows how our workforce will change over time. True partnership with the trade unions is essential – with shared objectives and trusted and open relationships.

We know – because we have asked our people – that they fully appreciate the need for change in how we work. Our priority is to sustain employability through high quality jobs and investment in learning and development. Over the next three years we expect to see:

- A net reduction in our workforce in line with our efficiency savings targets
- An increase in retraining and re-skilling as we offer our staff opportunities to change the work they do
- An ageing workforce that has a wealth of experience which means we need to plan carefully for the future and consider entry level schemes for key roles.

To change and grow with our changing business priorities everyone will need to be flexible, responsive and clear about our performance expectations. A new, simple approach to performance management will seek continuous improvement, exemplifying our values of being focussed and ambitious.

Many of our staff across Wales are fluent in both Welsh and English. Our Welsh Language Scheme is helping us to strengthen our bilingual capability further.

We are committed to being close to our communities in Wales and want to reflect the communities we serve. Valuing and supporting diversity and action to ensure equality for

people with protected characteristics – of different race or faith, gender, age or people with disabilities, for example - is vital and will form the cornerstone of our Equalities Plan.

We wish to be an employer of choice, with pay and conditions that reflect our business needs and is affordable – and agreed with trade union representatives in true partnership.

Our Strategic Risks, Pressures and Opportunities

We have an innovative purpose and significant short-term challenges in developing our standalone capability in Wales. The case for our formation identified a range of benefits and financial efficiencies that we will need to show clear delivery against.

In addition to our unique challenges, we also share the wider pressures affecting the public sector across Wales and the UK. Managing in an era of austerity is an added responsibility, as will be the wider economic prosperity of those we serve and work with who will have their own priorities.

Despite this backdrop, we have some fantastic opportunities to exploit to help us meet these challenges, manage the pressures and reduce the delivery risks of failing to deliver. Our unique differences as an organisation can be used to make the difference that is demanded of us. We have a genuinely innovative purpose and a remit that will help us adopt an ecosystems approach to inform all our decisions at all levels - whether we are setting priorities or delivering specific operational activities.

We also have fabulous assets in Wales' natural resources and environment, many of which are under our direct management. These assets can help us deliver our priorities through our own management and by supporting the delivery of others; and can directly contribute towards our financial stability through the generation of income through enterprise opportunities that support our purpose.

Despite the challenges, we are very optimistic that we can deliver against the expectations of us. The priorities set out in this Corporate Plan are a key step in this direction.

Our Finances

The current Corporate Plan has been developed against a backdrop of a challenging financial environment. Public sector austerity has been a reality for the last couple of years and is predicted to continue for the foreseeable future.

The Welsh Government Business Case to establish Natural Resources Wales identified the delivery of total benefits of £158m over 10 years. These benefits included cash realisable benefits (£127m), non-cash realisable benefits, and a range of qualitative benefits.

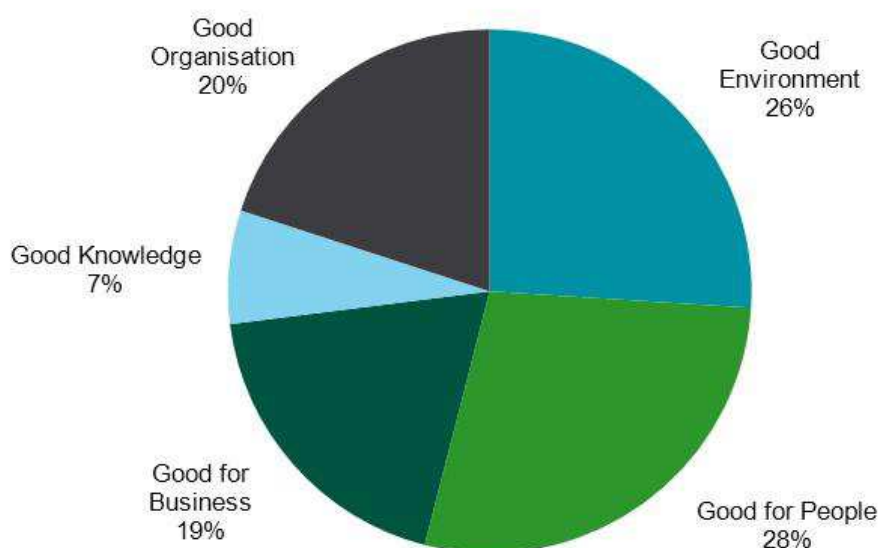
The financial focus of the initial Corporate Plan is on funding the set-up and transition of Natural Resources Wales into a standalone organisation. After this initial investment the benefits will increasingly be delivered over future years so that the focus of the next Corporate Plan will be on how these savings can be reinvested in additional environmental outcomes.

To achieve our outcomes in these challenging financial times we will need to:

- **Deliver** significant cash releasing efficiencies to achieve the benefits targets set by the Welsh Government over our first 10 years
- **Maximise** income opportunities by developing innovative approaches to enterprise
- **Develop** joint working to make best use of resources and expertise, and maximise benefits delivered with our partners
- **Prioritise** our activities and consider different ways that we can fund them.

Our resources have been deployed to our five 'Good' Programmes in 2014/15 as follows:

Total funding by Programme (%)



Over the period of the Corporate Plan we will drive down our corporate services costs to achieve 'best in class' benchmark standards. We will also undertake a significant programme of work to establish our standalone capability as we move from the old organisational systems into our New Natural Resources Wales systems. Savings made from this will then be reinvested into our front line delivery.

We will also attribute service and costs of change to our other programmes where appropriate, so that our 'back office' costs are a true reflection of that area of our work.

Welsh Government has confirmed our Grant in Aid allocation for 2014/15 for planning purposes and our indicative allocation for 2015/16. The revenue settlement is in line with our baseline Grant in Aid in 2013/14. The capital settlement includes additional Flood Risk funding for the next two years from the Wales Infrastructure Improvement Programme.

We also receive significant income from regulated business charge schemes and from commercial sources, such as timber sales.

Our total estimated funding position is £180m in 2014/15 and £178m in 2015/16.

How we work and who we work with

We work with a wide range of people and organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors in a variety of different ways: from farmers and land managers to business, industry, planners and developers; from national and local government to interest groups and local communities, scientists and academic institutions. We make an important contribution to virtually all aspects of life in Wales.

We are ambitious but realistic. The financial situation is causing us to reassess our priorities. We've had great feedback during the consultation process and this Corporate Plan gives us the opportunity to ensure that we focus our efforts on delivering our outcomes through our five 'Good' programmes.

So that we can provide clear direction to our business and where possible reinvest in new activities and new ways of working, we've identified areas where we will seek to streamline our activities. These are shown in the introduction to each 'Good' programme.

How we work with Welsh Government

We are a Welsh Government Sponsored Body. We have functions which are independent of Government but recognise the need for us to work closely together. For that reason, we have agreed a set of shared outcomes. Everything we do needs to contribute to one or more of these, which are:

- Enhancing our environment
- Protecting people
- Supporting enterprise and jobs
- Improving the nation's health
- Viable and vibrant places
- Delivering social justice
- Supporting skills and knowledge.

They also lie at the heart of the priorities for action set out in 'Shaping a more Prosperous and Resilient Future', the 2013 autumn statement made by Alun Davies AM, Minister for Natural Resources and Food. These priorities are delivering **green growth, managing our natural resources more efficiently and effectively, tackling poverty** and **enhancing the resilience and diversity** of our natural resources.

These shared outcomes lock us into the wider life of Wales, provide us with an enduring focus, and connect us with a wide range of partners. Our work not only contributes to plans and strategies dealing with the environment, climate change and the transition to a low carbon economy, but also those strategies dealing with health and wellbeing, poverty, education, equality and diversity, and building resilient communities.

We also have our own five outcomes, linked to our five 'Good' programmes. In achieving our own outcomes we can make a significant contribution to the outcomes shared with Welsh Government

We receive a Remit Letter at the start of each financial year setting out what the Welsh Government wants us to achieve during that year. The current Remit Letter can be found in the publications section of the Welsh Government website.

How we will change

In order to become the organisation we want to be, we will need to change. We need to reorganise the way we work and deliver our business while ensuring that we keep providing good services to our customers. We are committed to learning as we develop and to working out solutions with our partners.

The business case that supported the decision to establish Natural Resources Wales identified the benefits that we will be expected to realise over our first decade. These efficiency and benefits targets are an integral part of our business and corporate planning and they are spread across our five 'Good' programmes. We are expected to deliver three types of benefits:

- **Better delivery for Wales:** so that we align our work more clearly with Wales' priorities, with sustainable development at the heart of all that we do
- **Better outcomes for Wales:** so that we provide joined up advice and clearer guidance in our roles as adviser and statutory consultee as a single organisation
- **Better value for money:** we expect to generate benefits of £158 million over our first 10 years through the greater efficiencies gained by bringing three organisations into one.

We will monitor these closely against the business case and have already begun to deliver these benefits.

Our five 'Good' programmes

As a delivery body, it is important that we connect our outcomes and commitments to the work that we carry out on the ground, completing a 'golden thread' from our shared outcomes with Welsh Government, via our own outcomes and corporate and business plans, right through to individuals' work contributions. We will use a programmes approach to manage our work. Our five 'Good' programmes will capture the crosscutting nature of our work, where many of our activities help to deliver multiple outcomes across a number of the programmes.

Our five 'Good' Programmes are:-

- Good Knowledge
- Good for the Environment
- Good for People
- Good for Business
- Good Organisation

Our 'Good' Programmes will be the link between delivery of outcomes for Wales, and organising ourselves to deliver the necessary tasks.

Integrated Natural Resource Management and the Ecosystem Approach

In both our Corporate Plan and our Business Plans we have referred to *Integrated Natural Resource Management* and the *Ecosystem Approach*. The Ecosystem Approach has been defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity as 'a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way'.

Adopting the ecosystem approach in Wales will mean considering and regulating the environment as a whole, rather than dealing with individual aspects separately; weighing up and setting priorities for the many competing demands on our natural resources. In development of the approach to Integrated Natural Resource Management in Wales we will try to make the approach 'real' for people and organisations, so that it will become a cornerstone of our work in Natural Resources Wales and all decision making in Wales.

The next section of this Corporate Plan sets out the content of each Programme, including:-

- The need for change / current status
- The measurable outcomes we are aiming to achieve
- Indicators which will track changes across Wales
- Our commitments / 'we wills' and examples of the work we intend to do
- Costs and staff resources per programme

More detail on the areas we will be focussing on under each programme can be found in our Business Plan.

Good Knowledge

Our outcome: gaining wisdom and understanding our natural resources and how we affect them – using evidence and applying learning from experience, so that we make good decisions.

Challenges and Opportunities:

Knowledge is fundamental to the successful delivery of all our work. It is important that all decisions taken that affect the Welsh environment are based on sound evidence. We have an important role to play in this, contributing to the evidence base, sharing our information with others, and facilitating a more joined up approach to evidence gathering. Improving the ways in which we manage and share our knowledge and experience is essential to improving the delivery of our outcomes and the services we provide, and for those of our partners. Our knowledge is the basis of our credibility and accountability for our decisions and actions.

We need to become more innovative, efficient and effective in the ways that we generate and use data if we are to work at our best within our budget. Working extensively in partnership, we will ensure that we use the 'collect once, use many times' principle. This means we will be an evidence-based organisation, making transparent and timely decisions for Wales, based on our knowledge, evidence and experience, underpinned by using the ecosystems approach for decision making.

How we will work differently:

- In partnership with others, we will develop the ecosystem approach and integrated natural resource management so that our natural resources can continue to support us into the future. We will showcase this work so that others can use what we've learned and apply it to their own work.
- In partnership with others, we will build our evidence base, make it available and keep it under review, working with Welsh Government, academia and the voluntary sector.
- By understanding our role in providing evidence, we will generate information where appropriate and help others if they are better placed to undertake research or gather relevant evidence.

What we will do less of:

- We will rationalise our monitoring programme where appropriate so that we can concentrate on the essentials, and look at innovative ways to bolster our information. We'll use others information if it is 'fit for purpose'.
- We will streamline our processes to improve efficiency. Working collaboratively with others to monitor the natural resources of Wales, we will support others to deliver where they are better placed.

- Using available science and research in line with our priorities, we will only use our resources where we are the right organisation to fill any gaps.
- Our modelling will be fit for purpose and we will encourage academia and the private sector to invest in strategically assessing, reviewing and developing new modelling capability.

Good Knowledge:

Our outcome: gaining wisdom and understanding our natural resources and how we affect them – using evidence and applying learning from experience, so that we make good decisions

Indicator K1: Development of the Ecosystem approach and Natural Resource Plans

- Number of Natural Resources Wales approaches (subject areas considered) produced that reflect the needs of Wales based on a single view of natural resources management principles and their application
- The area covered by natural resource plans will be a longer term indicator as the approach is developed and the proposed Environment Bill is adopted.

Indicator K2: Our data is used by others for decision making

- Number of raw datasets, covering the extent of a feature across Wales, that are published for re-use by us or on our behalf
- Number of Access to Information requests

Indicator K3: Building our expertise

- We build our evidence base, securing and using the intellectual capital of our organisation through increasing the level of qualification, professional membership and Continuing Professional Development.

K1: We will develop Wales' approach to natural resource management, using the ecosystem approach as a basis for decision making, by for example:-

- Working with Welsh Government and other partners to develop the overall approach
- Developing a 'toolkit' to embed the ecosystem approach and integrated natural resource management planning in our work, running 3 trials in the Dyfi, Rhondda and Tawe areas
- Working with Welsh Government to help ensure that integrated Natural Resource Management provisions in the proposed Environment Bill are supported in other legislation, such as the Planning and Future Generations Bills

K2: We will ensure we have a good understanding of our environment, economy and people in Wales, and of Wales' place in the world, and will continue to review our evidence to ensure that it is fit for the challenges facing the natural resources of Wales by for example:-

- Working with Welsh Government and others to map trusted sources of evidence to understand what is available, where there are gaps, and where we can collaborate to fill these gaps
- Reviewing our monitoring strategy and apply recommendations to our operational work
- Working with Welsh Government on the delivery of a State of Natural Resources report and our progress in making ecosystems more resilient

K3: We will develop and manage a sound evidence base to support our strategic and operational decision making and informed decision making by others by for example:-

- Developing our modelling and forecasting capability, working with others to increase our use of futures techniques such as horizon scanning and scenario planning
- Developing our social and economic capability and evidence base to provide information for our natural resources management and ecosystem approaches
- Developing our ability to better explain and communicate complex issues to a wide range of stakeholders, using a wide range of communication tools

including guidance
Resources for 2014/5:-
Expenditure: £13m Staff: 185 FTEs (Full Time Equivalents)

Good Environment

Our outcome: ecosystems are resilient and secured for the future, wildlife and landscapes are enhanced, and the use of our natural resources is carefully managed.

Challenges and Opportunities:

Our environment in Wales faces many challenges: the effects of climate change, pests and diseases, loss of biodiversity, pollution, and competing uses for land and water. We must manage our natural resources to meet these challenges and increase ecosystem resilience, ensuring we meet our national and international responsibilities.

Climate change is real and Wales must play its part. We must reduce our contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and protect and enhance our carbon sinks. Wales must also adapt to the consequences of climate change that will affect people directly and have a major impact on Wales's environment and natural resources. Outbreaks of pests and diseases, such as *Phytophthora ramorum* in larch trees, are increasing perhaps aggravated by climate change.

Many of our habitats and wildlife species are in trouble, as highlighted in the State of Nature report (2013): we need to help slow and, where possible, reverse habitat and biodiversity loss.

During 2012, there were around 130 air, land or water pollution incidents; only 36% of our surface waters were classed as having good or better ecological status; 90% of bathing waters were classified as good or excellent.

The challenges are huge – achieving progress will not be easy and we do not have the resources to tackle all of these issues by ourselves. By making the most of opportunities to working collaboratively and focusing our efforts we will have the best chance of sustainably managing our environment.

How we will work differently:

- Prioritising our efforts where they can make the biggest difference
- Applying the ecosystem approach and integrated natural resource management as it develops
- Using the land and water we manage to demonstrate this approach
- Accept that the spread of non-native species or disease outbreaks can be unpredictable and may require additional resource if we are to halt their spread.

What we will do less of:

- We will review our land management and operational activities and use the ecosystem approach to deliver more with less and in partnership with others.

- We will review our work on air quality, provide strategic advice to local authorities, and use our regulatory role to ensure the best performance from those that we regulate.
- We will focus our most robust enforcement, inspection and permitting activity on those who operate below a level of compliance. We will use earned recognition and lighter touch approaches with those whose performance is at or goes beyond compliance.
- We will reduce the frequency of inspections and monitoring visits, using a risk based approach.
- We will review our approach to salmon stocking in Welsh rivers

Good Environment:

Our outcome: ecosystems are resilient and secured for the future, wildlife and landscapes are enhanced, and the use of our natural resources is carefully managed

Indicator E1: Water quality

- Compliance with good status under Water Framework Directive

Indicator E2: Sustainable forest management

- Sustainable woodland management: Woodland known to be managed to UK Forestry Standard (UKFS)

Indicator E3: Increasing or declining populations

- Bird population indices

Indicator E4: Climate change

- Greenhouse gas emissions in Wales

Indicator E5: Marine environment

- Condition of features of marine Natura 2000 sites

E1: We will ensure the land and water we manage directly is sustainably managed and help others do the same by, for example:-

- Using the ecosystem approach and integrated natural resource management principles to develop plans for the land and water we manage directly
- Ensuring the sustainable management of land and water we manage including:-
 - Welsh Government Woodland Estate
 - National Nature Reserves we own / manage directly
 - Flood defence works and assets
 - River Dee conservancy
- Delivering sustainable fisheries and its associated programmes, subject to funding

E2: We will help protect and improve the quality of our air, land, sea and water by, for example:-

- Considering innovative approaches for implementing EU, UK and Wales policy and Directives, such as the Water Framework Directive and Habitats Directive
- Working with Welsh Government to respond to risks and issues from pests and diseases and Invasive Non Native Species
- Contributing to the development and implementation of the Welsh Government Marine Transition Programme and Marine and Fisheries Strategic Action Plan.

E3: We will play our part in halting biodiversity loss in order to help ensure that, by 2020, ecosystems are more resilient by, for example:-

- Delivering annual biodiversity action plan targets on the designated sites we manage, using external funding where appropriate
- Delivering the LIFE project reviewing Natura 2000 sites to establish how we can improve delivery in the future, focussing on actions which will yield the best outcomes
- Improving the connectivity and restoration of priority habitats (such as deep peat) and their linkages as part of area based natural resource management plans

E4: We will help to make Wales more resilient to climate change and other impacts, as well as supporting global efforts to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by, for example:-

- Understanding our contribution to mitigating the effects of climate change using the land and water we manage and our other assets, aiming to be an exemplar in carbon management
- Ensuring climate change adaptation is embedded in all areas of our work
- Delivering our approach to flood risk management in the light of climate change, identifying areas that may be at risk from flooding in the future, and publishing up to date flood maps

Resources for 2014/5:-

Expenditure: £46M

Staff: 571 FTEs (Full Time Equivalents)

Good for People

Our outcome: people enjoying, valuing and benefitting from our natural resources and understanding their relevance in our day to day lives.

Challenges and opportunities:

There is a huge potential to use our environment and natural resources to improve people's health and local surroundings, support communities and local jobs, and to provide opportunities for recreation. We also need to help protect people from environmental incidents such as flooding and pollution. This has been brought into focus recently with serious coastal flooding: 220,000 homes in Wales are at risk of flooding.

Healthy life expectancy varies hugely across Wales (57.1 years in Blaenau Gwent to 68.2 years in Monmouth). Increased activity can improve both physical and mental health, while experiencing the natural environment can also be beneficial. Encouraging more people to get more active using the outdoors has the potential to have positive effects on people's health and well being.

Tackling poverty is a key priority for Welsh Government: the environment is an important generator of jobs and green growth. 80% of our population live in towns and cities and the number is rising. Although poverty is often thought of in an urban context, rural poverty is also an important issue.

The Welsh environment is a great place to learn in and learn about; schools, universities, colleges and the general public all use our natural resources as a fantastic learning resource. Helping people understand the importance of our natural resources and their relevance to day to day living, and raising awareness of environmental issues, can help people make better informed decisions and help protect our environment for the future.

It is essential that the opportunities that we provide, or help others to provide, are as inclusive as possible, considering people of different ages, of different races or faiths, with disabilities, or any of the other protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010. We want to cater for a wide range of people and provide opportunities for the communities we serve.

How we will work differently:

- Ensuring that we integrate the recreation opportunities on the land we offer with other providers, complementing them rather than competing with them
- Building on our existing work in urban areas to ensure areas of greenspace are valuable assets for our towns and cities
- Working more closely in partnership with communities, and focus our efforts on the most deprived communities.

What we will do less of:

- We will focus our access and recreation development activities on those sites which are the most popular with people or are in our poorest communities.
- We will reduce more costly visitor infrastructure where demand might suggest a more user – led, lower key approach, supported by good information provision
- We will embed our role to educate in our core delivery activities and support educational professionals in our reach work.
- We will streamline and automate our flood warning processes so they are simpler to operate and more efficient. We will work more in partnership with others.

Good for People:

Our outcome: people enjoying, valuing and benefitting from our natural resources and understanding their relevance in our day to day lives

Indicator P 1: Flood risk and management

- % Properties at risk benefitting from flood risk management works

Indicator P 2: Recreation and health and well being

- % of people living in Wales using outdoors for recreation for the minimum advised levels of physical activity required for a healthy life

Indicator P 3: Proximity of greenspace

- % of population with access to natural green space, such as woodland, parks and open space

Indicator P 4: Volunteering in the environment

- Number of volunteers directly hosted by Natural Resources Wales or facilitated through Woodlands and You (and successor approaches)

Indicator P 5: Education, Learning and sector skills

- Number of Educational settings supported by Natural Resources Wales to use the environment for education, learning and sector skills

Indicator P 6: Economic impacts

- Benefits and economic impact of recreation in Wales using Coastal Path as an example
- Value of local small scale commercial opportunities enabled by Natural Resources Wales on the land and water it manages

P1: We will deliver an effective and co-ordinated response to environmental incidents and risks such as flood events, pollution and disease outbreak, and help decrease the risk of flooding to people and properties by, for example:-

- Building, maintaining and operating flood defences and raising people's awareness of their flood risk and what actions they need to take
- Reducing the number of serious pollution incidents using a prioritised, risk based approach
- Maintaining our liabilities to help ensure public safety in our forests, National Nature Reserves and the flood defences we manage

P2: We will provide and enable recreation and access opportunities which contribute to improving people's health and wellbeing by, for example:-

- Developing and delivering our recreation and access strategy, covering all aspects of our recreational functions and relevant business outcomes
- Using recreational opportunities on the land and water that we manage to improve people's mental and physical well being, with a programme of activities agreed with our stakeholders
- Implementing initiatives on behalf of the Welsh Government including the Wales Coast Path Development Programme

P3: We will help ensure people are able to live, work in, and visit a good quality environment, including those in urban areas and those in our most disadvantaged communities, channelling economic benefit to help tackle poverty by for example:

- Working with other organisations to develop a programme of projects, including the Welsh Government Cynefin project, to improve local environmental quality and provide opportunities for disadvantaged communities, including urban regeneration projects
- Working with local communities to get more people involved in place based decisions and developing future plans together using a principle of community ownership and co-production, particularly close to land and water we manage
- Maximising the economic benefits of our work, focussing particularly on Communities First areas and other communities with evidence of deprivation

P4: We will provide and enable opportunities for people to learn in, and about, and enjoy the environment by for example:-

- Providing opportunities for the delivery and development of education, learning and sector skills, in and about the environment, through curriculum linked and themed visits for all ages and abilities; also through advice and guidance, training for educational professionals, networks, placements and resources.
- Establishing links with the Welsh Government to ensure curriculum linked educational material and visits are appropriate and Welsh Government priorities are addressed
- Developing our approach to volunteering working in partnership with others

Resources for 2014/5:-

Expenditure: £50M

Staff: 428 FTEs (Full Time Equivalents)

Good for Business

Our outcome: a 'location of choice' for business and enterprise and a place where best practice environmental management is adopted and encouraged.

Challenges and Opportunities

Our stakeholders have told us that most of the businesses we work with share our environmental aims and would welcome a more collaborative and streamlined approach. This means working together right from the start and looking for solutions and timely responses, while protecting and improving the environment. We need to use our natural resources more efficiently and effectively as we move towards a low carbon economy.

Green Growth is a priority for action in the Minister's Autumn statement, and is key to Wales' future. As well as economic growth, it creates local opportunities for community renewal, and the ability to use our natural resources to deliver on the Welsh Government's key priorities of creating jobs and growth and tackling poverty. As well as jobs, the environment can provide opportunities for training and skills development which can lead to employment in other sectors.

Some 1,700 industrial, waste and water sites are regulated across Wales; 48% of commercial and industrial waste is currently reused or recycled, while there are 36,000 instances of fly tipping each year. Waste can be a valuable resource – providing energy, or material for construction, for example.

We market over 878,000 cubic metres of timber each year, fulfilling 300 harvesting contracts, and providing employment through our contractors and the businesses that add further value to the timber that we sell. We also generate income through car parking and other visitor facilities at our principal recreation sites. We run a permit charging scheme which works on a cost recovery basis and we also host business and enterprise on the estate we manage. These include renewable energy such as wind farm developments and hydroelectric power. As well as looking to further develop these opportunities, we are also looking at new ways to generate income, which we can then reinvest for the benefit of our natural resources and environment.

How we will work differently

- We aim to increase our use of a risk based ecosystems approach that will involve new ways of working with our customers and within the organisation.
- Providing well evidenced clear planning advice and decisions in good time will help achieve the highest environmental standards and the sustainable management of our

natural resources. This will mean that we will focus more on influencing strategic national and local plans and less on tactical responses.

- We will develop and implement a new regulatory strategy that will encourage improved environmental performance by regulated businesses and reduce the number of unpermitted sites posing significant risk to the environment.
- We will work with others to identify new business and jobs opportunities, especially in disadvantaged areas, and grow our income to re-invest in our highest priorities. The sustainable management of our directly managed natural resources will enable and support innovative business development and investment.

What we will do less of

- We will provide strategic local and strategic national planning responses, relying on standing advice and whole area approaches for most individual planning applications.
- We will streamline our permitting processes, relying on simpler permits for those whose performance is compliant with the standards required.
- We will consolidate and enhance the management of protected sites so that they are as effective, resilient and diverse as they can be before seeking new ones. WE will also streamline the process for their designation.
- We will consult on proposals for charging for pre-application advice and ensure our regulatory charges comply with the polluter pays principle and cover the cost of regulation in its widest sense.

Good for Business:

Our outcome: a 'location of choice' for business and enterprise and a place where best practice environmental management is adopted and encouraged

Indicator B1: Applications processing

- Determination of permit/licences/consent applications within statutory timescales

Indicator B2: Managing sites

- Proportion of sites carrying out regulated activities with improving environmental performance

Indicator B3: Bringing sites into management

- Number of unpermitted sites posing significant risk to the environment brought into a permitting regime, or closed down.

Indicator B4: Our role as statutory consultee

- Proportion of planning consultations responded to within agreed standard of service

Indicator B5: Generating income

- Net income from NRW enterprise activities

B1: We will, as a regulator, provide evidence based advice and clear decisions in good time to enable businesses in Wales to operate effectively and achieve the highest environmental standards by, for example:-

- Continuing to develop our Customer Care Centre as a single point of contact for our customers and continuously increase our knowledge base
- Developing our regulatory systems to streamline the service and lower costs for customers
- Reviewing the designation process for Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves

B2: We will work with business, industry and government to support the development of critical infrastructure and encourage development in the right places to ensure the sustainable management of our natural resources by, for example:-

- Developing a single permitting, licensing and consenting service, based on common standards and processes
- Implementing our transition plan for Town and Country Planning including our new approach to planning consultation advice
- Advising on Local Development Plans, Regional Strategies and the emerging Welsh Government Development framework

B3: We will work closely with others to identify, develop and support new business opportunities and new opportunities for jobs and training to create a skilled workforce in Wales by, for example:-

- Facilitating new business opportunities, developing our enterprise capability and working with Welsh Government and others to support schemes and future plans
- Supporting the wind energy programme on land we manage
- Delivering our hydropower programme on land we manage

B4: We will grow our income within our purpose, reinvesting that income to provide further public benefit by, for example:-

- Completing our feasibility studies for new ideas in our Enterprise Framework, looking at motor sports, value added timber, housing, telecommunications, visitor centres, filming, minerals income and recreation
- Marketing timber from the Welsh Government Woodland Estate in accordance with our marketing strategy: some 878,000 m³ over bark standing of which 332,000 m³ will be larch
- Providing a commercial analytical service through our laboratory.

Resources for 2014/5:-

Expenditure: £34M

Staff: 388 FTEs (Full Time Equivalents)

Good Organisation

Our outcome: well led and managed, with suitably skilled and experienced staff and effective underpinning systems and processes - transparent in our decision making and continuously improving our service to customers and our relationships with stakeholders and partners

Challenges and opportunities

As a new organisation, we need to develop ourselves and our ways of working. We need to develop our strategic and technical stand-alone capability, making decisions in Wales for Wales by reducing our dependence on systems provided by the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission. Many of our business challenges can only be tackled by adopting an ecosystems approach to support our decision making. We will need to develop our most critical asset, our staff, to help them understand what this means in practice and then to support them in delivery of this innovative new way of working.

We need to keep improving our service to customers and continue to work ever more closely with stakeholders. We intend exploiting the potential of digital technology to drive down our costs and improve services externally for customers and internally for staff.

Given the current situation on public sector funding, the stability of our financial position is a significant risk. In order to maximise the resources we have available for our work we need to become more efficient, entrepreneurial and innovative. We need to generate more income to reinvest in our services, where we can exploit opportunities that are in line with our purpose and priorities. We need to work with our staff and unions to create shared expectations of performance and commitment to our values and purpose

We have a significant programme of change to establish our full standalone capability as well as to develop our culture, ways of working, systems and processes, and ensure that we make the savings and efficiencies that we need to over the next ten years. We want to be an organisation that is flexible in its approach, responsive to the needs of customers, and delivering outcomes in the most cost effective way. When we have made these changes, improvements in the quality of our service delivery and increased efficiency will be apparent across all of our business.

How we will work differently

- We will have a sharp focus on delivering our business priorities for Wales; our decision making, allocation of resources including investment in our people, and our performance management will all be aligned to achieve this
- Joining up our services internally will help us improve our efficiency
- We will become more entrepreneurial in our approach to both the delivery of our 'core' services and also in the development of new opportunities that are in line with our purpose
- We will look at different ways of delivering our business support services that are more efficient and joined up with other partners and organisations.

What we will do less of

- We will reduce the multiple points of contact with our organisation or internal facing approaches that are inefficient and unfriendly
- Less reliance on process and more reliance on empowering and trusting our staff to deliver our priorities
- Fewer paper based transactional systems investing in digital approaches which are more efficient and effective
- Less non-statutory publishing that does not directly support the delivery of our priorities
- We will review our financial governance models and streamline them so that we are easier to do business with and our processes are simpler to run. Wherever possible, we will seek to meet or better Cabinet Office benchmark levels for our support staff.

Good Organisation:

Our outcome: well led and managed, with suitably skilled and experienced staff and effective underpinning systems and processes - transparent in our decision making and continuously improving our service to customers and our relationships with stakeholders and partners

- **Indicator O1:** Customer and stakeholder satisfaction index
- **Indicator O2:** Staff engagement index
- **Indicator O3:** Progress towards WG/CO Benchmark targets for support services including accommodation (expressed as an index)
- **Indicator O4:** Achievement of revised Business Case tracking cash and

non-cash releasing benefits • Indicator O5: Reduced organisational carbon footprint
O1: We will continuously improve our services to customers and our relationships with stakeholders and partners through open and collaborative approaches by, for example:- • Providing efficient and effective business support and customer care to both staff and customers • Ensuring that our communications and work with stakeholders is effective and aligned to our Business Plan • Delivering our Welsh Language Scheme
O2: We will work more efficiently and grow our income (within our purpose) so that we can use these savings to provide greater public benefit by for example:- • Implementing a 'self serve' and digital approach to our services to customers where this improves performance and reduces cost • Delivering our strategies on fleet, facilities management, security and accommodation, to ensure that we provide the most efficient and customer focussed service • Gaining and maintaining ISO 14001 accreditation for our environmental management and be an exemplar in areas such as carbon use, waste and water

O3: We will develop a culture that supports our values, increases our skills base, enhances our flexibility and diversity, and improves our standards of health and safety by, for example:-

- Developing the organisation, helping staff reflect our desired values, diversity and culture
- Enhancing the overall capability of the workforce, including strategic leadership through investment in learning and development
- Continuing to provide high quality skilled jobs in Wales through ongoing development of existing staff and continuation of apprenticeship schemes, working in partnership with learning and training providers to promote and develop employment in the environment sector.

Resources for 2014/5:-

Expenditure: £37M

Staff: 301 FTEs (Full Time Equivalents)

How well are we doing? Reporting our progress

As a delivery organisation, we need to be able to demonstrate how well we have performed, both individually and in conjunction with our partners, and whether people and communities are better off as a result.

Our conversations with our stakeholders and staff have given us clarity about what our customers want us to do, what success will look like, and have allowed us to develop a set of indicators to demonstrate our contribution to our shared outcomes with Welsh Government. Our Corporate Plan includes these high level indicators.

We will also publish a set of performance measures, derived from our Business Plan, to show how much we have done, how well we have done it, and what the results are. We will publish this as our Corporate Dashboard.

Directorate Delivery Plans for each of our Directorates, and individual contribution statements for each member of staff, sit below the Business Plan and Corporate Plan so there is a clear link from our own outcomes and those shared with Welsh Government right through to the job of an individual member of staff.

The Corporate Plan with its indicators and the Business Plan with its Corporate Dashboard together provide us with a Performance Framework to monitor our work and its impact on our environment.

We will be open about reporting our delivery against our Corporate Plan and Business Plan. We will publish results in our Annual Report and our Board will publicly discuss performance at least three times a year.

For any further comments or queries, or to obtain this document in an alternative format, please contact corporate.planning@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk



**Cyfoeth
Naturiol
Cymru**
**Natural
Resources
Wales**

Published by:
Natural Resources Wales
Cambria House
29 Newport Road
Cardiff
CF24 0TP

0300 065 3000 (Mon-Fri, 8am - 6pm)

enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk
www.naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

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