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Cymru

**Future
Generations**
Commissioner
for Wales

The Future Generations Report 2020: Executive Summaries



Let's create the future together

A Globally Responsible Wales



“A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.”

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) (Act 2015)

The daily actions and the decisions that we make in Wales have a direct impact on the World around us. In the words of our Patron Saint David “gwnewch y pethau bychain” (do the small things), our small country has always appreciated how we can collectively make a big difference.

Wales was the first country to become a Fair Trade Nation in 2008, and was a founding signatory of the Under2 Coalition, a global community of national and regional governments committed to ambitious climate action in line with the Paris Agreement. Wales was also the first country in the UK to declare a Climate Emergency.

As the first and only country in the World to legislate for well-being, Wales has a unique story to share with other countries. Internationally, our way of doing things is continuing to inspire and impact change.



Policy Recommendations

Welsh Government should create a vision and plan to ensure Wales becomes the most eco-literate country in the world.

Welsh Government should:

Be proactive in sharing its approach on delivering the Sustainable Development Goals within the rest of the UK and internationally.

Consider implications of the EU Withdrawal Agreement, specifically in relation to the impact it may have on meeting their well-being objectives.

Continue to support and build upon the successes of Wales for Africa and Plant!, that demonstrate Wales' commitment to being globally responsible.

Build links and alliances with other countries who are leading on sustainability and put in place mechanisms to develop new ideas and share best practice.

Ensure it provides clarity to public bodies on how the Social Partnership (Wales) Bill and the socio-economic duty align with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Review its 'Nation of Sanctuary Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan' in light of evidence from the ACE Support Hub, regarding the adversities experienced by child refugee and asylum seekers.

Ensure the International Strategy is implemented by all ministerial portfolios and work with the business and voluntary sector and civic society to maximise its opportunities.



Advice on setting well-being objectives for all public bodies and boards covered by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (including Welsh Government)

Please refer to the chapter on Setting Good Well-being Objectives, but in setting their objectives specifically in relation to this goal, all public bodies and boards covered by the Act should:

- Clearly demonstrate the connections between their well-being objectives and steps on being globally responsible; and other areas such as the natural environment, inequality, community cohesion, procurement, decarbonisation, resource efficiency, organisational development and skills.
- Clearly set out how they understand the definition of the goal of a Globally Responsible Wales.

In setting their steps, public bodies and boards covered by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (including Welsh Government) should focus in the following areas and should:

- Demonstrate global citizenship and leadership by supporting sustainable behaviour and making the connections.
- Play their part to ensure Wales is welcoming, safe and fair to all.
- Commit to fair and ethical investment and divestment - making the right financial decisions now to enable future generations to thrive.
- Ensure supply chains are fair, ethical and sustainable.
- Ensure that they understand the importance of using the earth's resources efficiently in order to contribute to global well-being.

“What Wales is doing today, the World will do tomorrow - action more than words is the hope for our future generations.”

United Nations (2015)

“I would like to see Wales continuing to take a lead in international justice, fair trade, working towards a better World. I would like to see fair trade embedded in the World of business and procurement, as well as climate change being something that the World of commerce and importing takes action on.”

People's Platform



Where are we now? My assessment of progress in achieving A Globally Responsible Wales:

‘A Globally Responsible Wales’ well-being goal is not well understood, and public bodies are not demonstrating clear and credible accounts of their positive contributions on the World.

For example, indicators such as poverty rates and volunteer numbers have been used to illustrate progress against this goal. Whilst these are vital areas for the future well-being of Wales, less evident is a clear understanding of how examples like these are making a positive contribution to global well-being. Similarly, of the [10 Simple Changes](#) I published that public bodies can take to progress towards being globally responsible, responses from public bodies revealed it was one of the lowest adopted of the seven well-being goals, and the lowest adopted amongst local authorities.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act is a World-leading piece of legislation, and we have an important role in helping other nations learn from our approach.

As the first and only country in the World to legislate for well-being, Wales has a unique story to share with other countries. Internationally, our way of doing things is continuing to inspire and impact change. For example, our membership in the Network of Institutions for Future Generations has been instrumental in developing a methodology of sharing best practice between fellow member countries such as Israel, Hungary, Norway, New Zealand, Finland and Canada.

Welsh Government’s International Strategy is an opportunity to promote Wales to the World, but we should all be thinking and acting in a way that is globally responsible.

Welsh Government appointed its first Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language in 2018 - Eluned Morgan, AM. Following this, Welsh Government published its first [International Strategy](#) in January 2020. This builds on existing initiatives demonstrating Wales’ approach to global citizenship such as the Wales for Africa programme. Despite these developments, there are still some important barriers to being fully globally responsible, and Wales does not have all the legislative levers needed. However, Welsh Government should ensure the International Strategy is implemented by all ministerial portfolios, and work with the business and voluntary sector and civic society to maximise its opportunities.

Wales is unique in the World in demonstrating a comprehensive commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals and this has been recognised, but we should accelerate the pace of change to ensure we are recognised for action, and not just words.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted in January 2016 are designed to address urgent global challenges over 15 years, and its progress is reviewed annually. The Well-being of Future Generations Act, with its vision for public services in Wales, provides an early framework for our contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.



Welsh Government published the [Wales Supplementary Report](#) to the United Kingdom's Voluntary National Review. The report is a record of progress in Wales so far and it used the seven well-being goals to illustrate Wales' contribution towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Some of the learning from Wales that is of interest internationally includes: recognising the role of culture as a fourth dimension of sustainable development; focusing on sustainable development as an organising principle and avoid the 'add on'; establishing an independent voice and advocate for sustainable development in the role of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales; and ensuring that global responsibility is an essential part of the political debate and architecture.

In July 2019, the UK Parliament's International Development Committee identified serious failings in the preparation and presentation of the UK's first Voluntary National Review of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. However, the committee stated: "There is clearly rich potential for peer learning within the UK, in particular the way that the UK could learn from the approaches in Scotland and Wales—both to the VNR and to SDG implementation."



Well-being objectives and steps relating to being 'globally responsible' are varied, and do not always reflect the definition of the well-being goal.

They can vary from high level objectives that state: 'To ensure our work makes a positive contribution to global well-being' and steps such as 'Procurement can also have significant global impacts and thought needs to be given to being globally responsible', to examples where public bodies are demonstrating much more systematic and tangible approaches to being globally responsible. For example, Public Health Wales are working with the World Health Organization's Collaborating Centre on 'Investment for Health and Well-being', providing staff with leadership opportunities to work across a four-year work programme, and Powys Teaching Health Board have a link with the Molo Health District in Kenya, focused on improving maternal and newborn health. Public bodies should ensure their objectives and steps are aligned to the definition of the 'Globally Responsible Wales' well-being goal.

Our young people must be educated and prepared for a changing World, and the new education curriculum provides Wales with a once in a generation opportunity to achieve this.

If implemented and resourced effectively, the Curriculum for Wales 2022 applies the principles of the Act to compulsory education, which will help them meet these environmental, social and economic challenges. For example, the new Curriculum for Wales states that 'all our children and young people will be ethical, informed citizens' who, amongst other points, show their commitment to the sustainability of the planet and are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world.



Wales is globally recognised and respected as a mostly welcoming nation, but we should continue to ensure we're creating a safe and peaceful future for all.

Wales has an ambition to be a [Nation of Sanctuary](#). Although we are still waiting for a strategy on how Welsh Government hope to achieve this status, there are clear examples of how Welsh Government and others are already seeking to integrate refugees in Wales. The '[Nation of Sanctuary: Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan](#)' captures a range of actions to improve the lives of people seeking sanctuary in Wales, that can help reduce inequalities, increase access to opportunities and enable better relations between communities.

According to the National Crime Agency, the recorded incidents of potential victims of slavery to the National Referral Mechanism continue to increase each year, with more referrals of survivors from the UK and Wales. [Cardiff Council](#) are demonstrating leadership in this area. For example, their inaugural Modern Slavery Statement forms part of their Corporate Safeguarding Policy and sets out what the Council has done and will do to tackle modern slavery.

But ethnic minorities in Wales are experiencing high levels of hate crime. For example, the majority (75%) of hate crimes reported and recorded in Wales in 2016/17 were motivated by race or religion. This is a particular concern given Britain's exit from the European Union and the spikes in hate crime after the EU referendum. I support a recommendation by [Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team Wales](#) that Welsh Government and the police should review their approach to hate crime, shifting from a responsive/reactive approach to a preventative/proactive one. This will help ensure Wales is welcoming, safe and fair to all, and support those who need it most.

Not enough public bodies are showing signs of commitment to fair and ethical investment and divestment.

It is vital that when thinking about improving the well-being of people in Wales, we are also thinking about our impacts on others. We are global citizens, and we have a responsibility to ensure we are not acting at the detriment to others. This means thinking about life-cycle, fossil fuels and arms divestment and ethical investment. For example, whilst I am seeing encouraging progress, the majority of public sector pension funds continue to invest almost £1 billion each year in fossil fuels which is unsustainable in light of the climate emergency and incompatible with the declarations of many public bodies.

Wales will need to plan effectively for the EU transition period and beyond, and ensure our relationship with the World beyond Brexit is based on positive shared values.

In January 2020, the National Assembly for Wales' External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee published its report on the implications of exiting the EU on Wales, following an initial assessment completed in November 2018. The committee's report sets out one high level recommendation to Welsh Government: "To ensure that Wales is as prepared as possible for the transition period, we recommend that the Welsh Government, working with the UK Government, prepares an assessment of the economic, legal and constitutional implications for Wales arising from our departure from the EU on the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement." I support this recommendation, and the need for the Welsh and UK Governments to provide details of what the Withdrawal Agreement means for the people of Wales.



The £6 billion public purse in Wales is a powerful tool to deliver social, environmental, cultural and economic sustainability. However, value for money (lowest price) is still seen as the key driver of procurement rather than wider value and outcomes.

A few public bodies have highlighted their procurement activities as demonstrating their contribution to being more globally responsible through ethically sourced supply chains, Fair Trade policies and seeking to procure locally (thereby reducing carbon footprint). For example: Public Health Wales promote Fairtrade Fortnight, and in 2019, worked with procurement to communicate the Fair Trade products available for purchase corporately, alongside a Fair Trade 'Be the Change' Well-being Goals Challenge for staff (inside and outside of the workplace). Despite examples like these, it is apparent that value for money (lowest price) is still seen as the key driver of procurement rather than wider value and outcomes. This is supported by research from Audit Wales and is why I've highlighted the importance of procurement as a key area of my work.

We are using our natural resources faster than can be replenished, but Wales is demonstrating its ambition to become a zero waste, net zero carbon country.

Currently, if everyone in the World consumed the same as the Welsh average, we would need 2.5 Earths to provide the necessary resources and absorb the waste. Wales' ecological footprint, at 10.05 million global hectares, is roughly five times the size of Wales. More positively, Wales has been a leader with its recycling rates and currently has the fourth highest household recycling rate in the World at 63% of municipal waste reused, recycled or composted. Many public bodies are also taking steps to reduce their carbon footprint, helping achieve Wales' ambition of a carbon neutral public sector by 2030.

For example, Public Health Wales has 16 actions about contributing to a low carbon, environmentally resilient Wales and Bridgend County Borough Council undertook a successful Low Carbon Schools project at seven schools, identifying nil-cost measures pupils and staff could take, reducing carbon emissions, resulting in estimated annual savings of £41,914.

9 schools across Wales now have Fairtrade uniforms supplied by [Koolskools](#), including [Welshpool Church in Wales Primary School](#), [Ysgol Esgob Morgan in St Asaph](#), [St Bernadette's in Cardiff](#) and [Neyland Community School in Pembrokeshire](#). Specifying that school uniforms are made from Fairtrade cotton in ethical factories is one way that schools can make a difference. Fairtrade standards forbid child labour, pay a fair price for cotton and also provide a Fairtrade premium to be invested in communities in developing countries.

Welsh Government's [Wales and Africa Grant Programme](#) has supported thousands of people in Wales to undertake actions that are globally responsible, and capacity and knowledge is being developed through partners such as the Welsh Council for Voluntary Action and Cymru Africa.

For example, [Welsh Government's Plant! tree planting scheme](#) plants two trees for every child born or adopted in Wales – one in Wales and one in Uganda. These trees contribute to Wales' Mbale programme, which plants trees in the heavily deforested region of Mount Elgon in Uganda. The Mbale programme has planted 10 million trees since 2014 with a goal of planting 25 million by 2025.



Below are the areas I recommend that all public bodies, including Welsh Government, should focus on:

- Wales should demonstrate global citizenship and leadership
- Ensure Wales is welcoming, safe and fair to all
- Making the right financial decisions now, to enable future generations to thrive
- Ensure our supply chains are fair, ethical and sustainable
- Ensure we use natural resources efficiently, recognising the limits of the global environment, and contribute to global wellbeing

For my full evidence, assessment, key findings and advice please see the section on A Globally Responsible Wales in Chapter 3: Progress against the well-being goals of the Future Generations Report.

