



Comisiynydd  
Cenedlaethau'r  
Dyfodol  
Cymru

**Future  
Generations**  
Commissioner  
for Wales

# **The Future Generations Report 2020: Executive Summaries**



**Let's create the future together**

# Chapter 3 - Progress against the well-being goals

This chapter looks at progress against the seven national well-being goals for Wales. The goals represent a common vision for the future of Wales – what public services need to be collectively aspiring to.

My analysis of progress is based mainly on two key pieces of work: the journeys published as part of the Art of the Possible programme and my first round of statutory monitoring and assessing.

The [Art of the Possible programme](#) sought to explain and explore the practical implications for public services, on their journey to maximising their contribution to the well-being goals. The areas in the journeys where I suggest public bodies should focus change also form the basis of the challenges and opportunities as set out in each of the chapters on the seven well-being goals.

My [statutory monitoring and assessing in 2018-19](#) allowed me to examine (among other things) the objectives and steps published by the public bodies to understand how they reflected (or not) the definition of each of the seven well-being goals; and whether they considered their contribution to one or more of the goals.

Each section follows a consistent format for each goal, starting with an expanded vision of what success would look like, and examples from across the world where change is already happening. There is duplication across this chapter, in the vision and with many of the ideas and opportunities proposed. This is deliberate - the goals are interconnected, and I have purposefully sought to draw out the links between issues or to cross reference information contained in other chapters.

<p><b>Prosperous</b></p> <p>An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p><b>Resilient</b></p> <p>A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p><b>Healthier</b></p> <p>A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p>	
 <p><b>LLES GENEDLAETHAU'R DYFODOL</b> <b>WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS</b></p>			<p><b>More Equal</b></p> <p>A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p>
<p><b>Globally Responsible</b></p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</b></p> <p>A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p>	<p><b>Cohesive Communities</b></p> <p>Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.</p>	



# Overall Picture

Overall, progress towards the well-being goals by public bodies is mixed; there is positive action being taken on all of the goals, but only in places and in pockets of good practice with examples highlighted throughout the chapter.

**Some goals are less understood, and clarity is lacking on how public bodies are meeting them.**

This is particularly true of ‘A Prosperous Wales’, ‘A Resilient Wales’ and ‘A Globally Responsible Wales’. There is a tendency to rely on the title of the goals, neglecting the full extent of their legal definitions. For example, a public body’s corporate plan/annual report may state ‘This objective is about raising educational attainment and therefore, meets a prosperous Wales’, without exploring the connections between the full definition of that goal (for example skills fit for the future, a low carbon society, fair and decent work), other goals and how they could integrate areas of work and maximise their contribution to well-being. Use of language associated with the goals also continues to be a problem. For example, Welsh Government’s latest Annual Report (2019-20) is titled ‘a more prosperous, equal and greener Wales’, which can be confusing and undermine the framework as set out in the Act. (Please see Chapter 2 for more information).

However, when I compare earlier corporate plans with more recent annual reports of public bodies, the general understanding of the goals and their meaning is improving. Health boards, for example, are setting objectives and steps (and taking action) relating to ‘A Resilient Wales’, and more public bodies are exploring what they can do to contribute to more of the goals.

# Progress towards the Simple Changes

Progress towards the goals is exemplified by the uptake of my 82 Simple Changes, the first stage of the journeys. I shared these with public bodies in November 2018 and asked for feedback. On average, 71% of the Simple Changes are already ‘adopted’ or ‘in development’ across the 33 public bodies that replied. Approximately 12% are being considered for implementation in the future.



I expect public bodies and Public Services Boards to demonstrate how the Act is shaping what they do and move from adopting simple changes towards policies and plans that are more ambitious and transformational.





See each of the following sections on the well-being goals for more detail and examples but overall, with regards to each of the goals, I have found that:

### A Prosperous Wales



Public bodies are not demonstrating a clear understanding of the full definition of this goal. While the term ‘prosperous’ is referenced frequently in public body and Public Services Boards’ well-being objectives, its use broadly relates to education, employment, poverty or Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This means they miss some topics highlighted in ‘A Journey to a Prosperous Wales’, which are derived from the full definition of the well-being goal. This includes: decent work, a low carbon society, fair and local procurement, local economies, skills for the future and using resources efficiently (circular economy).

### A Resilient Wales



Similarly, the well-being objectives relating to the ‘environment’ set by many public bodies do not always reflect the true definition of the goal, which is focussed on maintaining and enhancing ‘a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems’. Commonly, they focus on areas such as recycling, flooding, cleanliness, fly-tipping and reducing emissions. While these are important areas, it demonstrates a lack of

progress in helping achieve nature recovery and healthy, resilient ecosystems.

More positively, it is encouraging to see the focus and attention on the natural environment from Public Services Boards in their areas. Also, some health boards and national bodies are increasingly making the connections between a healthy, natural environment and better health and wellbeing.



### A Healthier Wales

There is compelling evidence that we are not investing in the best balance of services to keep people well and to enable them to live healthy and fulfilled lives.

Many well-being objectives and steps acknowledge the need to shift towards prevention and wellness, but need to go further in how they fund these interventions and transform the way they deliver services. As a result, the prevention agenda is not progressing at the scale and pace needed and is not focused on the wider determinants of health.



### A More Equal Wales

Patterns of poverty have not changed significantly over generations and poverty remains a key challenge for current and future generations. Groups with protected characteristics are still disadvantaged in many areas of life including work, participation, education and health.

Key challenges include achieving more diversity in our decision-makers and our broader workforce, and ensuring that organisations in Wales are taking preventative, integrated approaches to end poverty and reduce inequalities.



## A Wales of Cohesive Communities



Public bodies and Public Services Boards have set more well-being objectives on the theme of ‘community’ than any other topic. It is reassuring to see this focus from public bodies on the communities they serve.

While many good initiatives are focusing on community well-being, we now need to build on this and deliver a coherent approach to planning, resourcing and delivery of services and infrastructure within communities.

The COVID-19 crisis has shown what can be achieved when public bodies work closely with community-help initiatives in their areas, particularly concerning vulnerable and isolated people, and this should continue beyond the pandemic to help connect Wales’ communities.

## A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language



While Wales is ahead of other countries in acknowledging the value and role that culture has to play, we still have a long way to go before our reality matches our ambitions. And while the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050 is an ambitious policy, there are concerns that it is falling short in terms of implementation and more needs doing to join the dots with other well-being goals. Not enough public bodies have set objectives and steps in relation to this goal, and those who do are failing to integrate culture and language with their other objectives.

## A Globally Responsible Wales



Wales is unique in the world in demonstrating a comprehensive commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and our contribution to these has been recognised.

Objectives and steps relating to being globally responsible are varied, and public bodies are not demonstrating clear and credible accounts of their positive contributions to the world. We should all be thinking and acting in a way that is globally responsible. The starting point is having a clear understanding of the definition of the well-being goal, so that any action 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.

