



Future Generations Newsletter: Our Future Focus



Foreword



Our Future Focus

We are in a new phase for the Well-being of Future Generations Act and for our office.

Since beginning my term as Future Generations Commissioner for Wales in March, my team and I have been working to review our approach and to shape an ambitious new work programme for the years ahead.

As part of this work to set our work programme, I want to listen and to understand priorities from a variety of perspectives including public bodies, Members of the Senedd and the communities they represent, voluntary groups and businesses across Wales.

Throughout April and May my team have been gathering and collating information, analysing future trends research and speaking with organisations who can help us further involve people.

We are not starting with a blank sheet of paper for this work, but we want to test the issues we should focus on, where we can add value and should be allocating our resources.





We are involving people in a number of ways to gather their views, and, to further support [Our Future Focus](#), I have launched an online survey to gather feedback and ideas which will help to inform us on where we need to focus and prioritise our work between 2023-30.

You can access the survey [here](#) - it will be live until the 3rd of July 2023.



For my term as Commissioner, we are exploring **how** we can achieve the most impact, as well as **what** we should focus on, so we want to know where you think our biggest opportunities and potential impacts lie.

It's also available for anyone to use with the survey tailored to who you are and what 'hat you're wearing'. So whether you're a public body representative, a business interested in the Act, or an individual who's campaigning for a better future for those not yet born, **we want to hear from you!**

Building on all of this knowledge and involvement, our new plan will be in place by **October 2023**. It will look long term, beyond the next seven years and will contain a clear set of performance indicators and success measures.

It will also be transparent about why we have made our choices and what role we will seek to play in meeting the outcomes we want to achieve, including how we will work with others.

For more information on how you can feed in your ideas about our work and the future of the Office, visit our [website](#).



Transport fit for the Future

“We can’t go on as we are, and we need to make bold decisions to protect our current and future generations.”

That’s what I said in April after Cardiff Council announced their [plans to explore a Road User Payment \(RUP\)](#) for drivers and improved public transport services in the city centre.

Our over congested roads are harming our health and our loved ones’ health and is at the centre of several issues.

Road transport is responsible for 40% of carbon emissions in Cardiff – one of the highest in the uk!

Not only are these busy roads full of pollution-emitting cars damaging our environment and contributing to climate change, but they’re also worsening inequality with our most deprived areas and people – who are less likely to drive and own cars – suffering the worst air pollution and subsequent health issues.

Cardiff has a higher prevalence of asthma than the European average.

And we know that just [building more roads isn't the answer](#). If we keep making roads for cars, we're only encouraging people to use their cars more – inducing demand and filling up our roads with even more congestion.

Climate change is here and now. We urgently need bold solutions to help people shift from an over-reliance on cars – so that all of us can live better lives and so that we have a livable Wales for our children and those yet to be born.

[Cardiff Council's latest plans for a cleaner, greener, healthier future](#) are a big step forward and we welcome this bold measure – as long as it's done correctly.

Implementing a charge for drivers could be a successful long-term solution to the number of issues around pollution and traffic in Cardiff, but only if we provide people with an integrated, reliable and accessible public transport system and active travel routes **first**.

Without valid alternatives (safe cycle routes, reliable bus services, accessible trains) implementing a charge on drivers won't work long-term and could potentially worsen inequality.

To ensure this is not just a sticking plaster solution, Cardiff Council must take an integrated approach, and we are glad to see their work to involve Cardiff residents' begins soon.



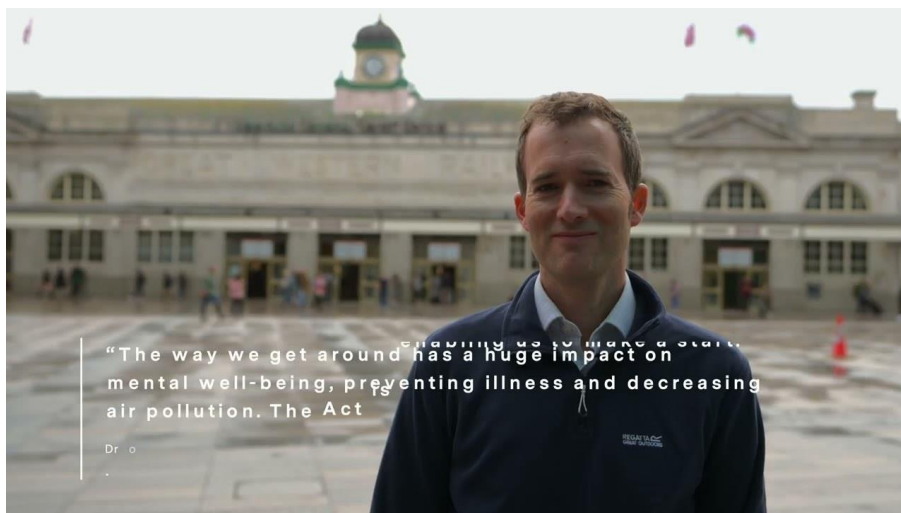
I expect to see meaningful involvement with communities and other public services, and a plan that reduces inequity so that everyone has access to better public transport and active travel options upfront.

And while there is still a lot of work to be done across Wales there are many changemakers who are working to improve our current and future well-being:

- Newport Council have added road space allocation along the A48 to prioritise active travel and public transport.

- Pembrokeshire Council is planning a [£8 million modern public transport interchange](#) for Haverfordwest which integrates all transport modes, improves pedestrian and cycle facilities and makes it easier for people to access the town.
- Cardiff and Vale University Health Board are encouraging active travel and supporting well-being by providing free OVO bikes for staff.
- Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service have signed up to a Healthy Travel Charter and have introduced hydrogen powered vehicles and electric bikes to encourage their staff to walk, cycle and take public transport.
- Gwynedd Council has bought [an electric powered truck](#) for its recycling fleet to minimise their unavoidable car use.

For more information on how public bodies and organisations across Wales are transforming our transport for a better future, visit our [website](#).



Movement for Change: Tir Natur - Bringing Nature Back, Together

This month my team has spoken to Tir Natur, a charity working to rewild Wales and how they're supporting communities to bring nature back, together.



[Tir Natur](#) is a rewilding charity, working to address the nature and climate emergencies in Cymru – a country that is ranked 224th out of 240 countries for ‘*biodiversity intactness*’ (RSPB report).

Their solution to both of these crises is one and the same – a complete restoration of ecosystems so that nature can be self-governing and natural carbon cycles are rebuilt; this is **rewilding**.

They see rewilding as offering genuine hope of nature recovery in Wales which complements other types of land management.

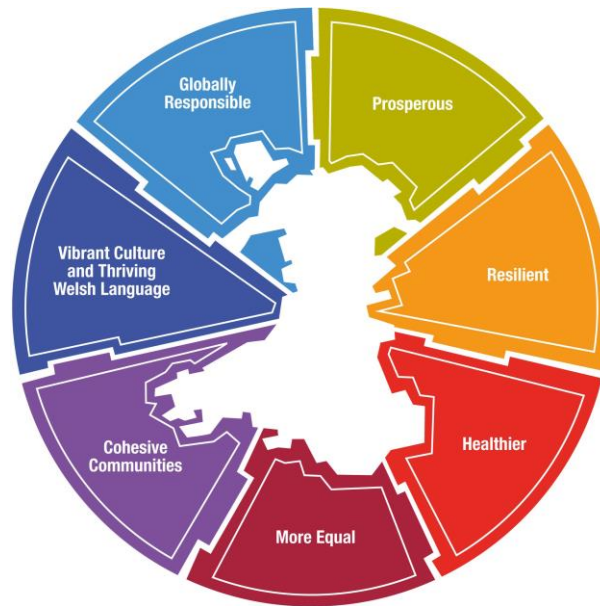
“In these desperately worrying times for nature, rewilding offers hope. Hope of recovery, hope of life.”

Tir Natur also stresses the important role that farming plays in rewilding and the key role of large, native grazers in ecosystem restoration.

They call the five animals (native, horned cattle; native ponies; native pigs; red and roe deer) at the core of their rewilding projects ‘*the ecosystem regulators*’ which support nature to “*come to life*”.

While these animals are crucial to the process, Tir Natur also recognises it is a delicate balance and that controlling their numbers is important for nature to truly thrive.

An important part of rewilding and their work is ‘*laying the foundations for natural processes to take over*’. This includes their work removing fencing, drainage blockages, preparing the ground, removing nutrients from soil where needed, removing invasive species and sowing seeds where necessary.



Rewilding and the Well-being goals – how Tir Natur is aligning its work to the Well-being of Future Generations Act

A Prosperous Wales

A restoration of ecosystems would create new opportunities for carbon positive, high nature jobs.

A Resilient Wales

By restoring the nuanced functions of an ecosystem, we can scale-up nature recovery and make our landscapes more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

A Healthier Wales

The benefits of nature to well-being are well studied – but we need to redefine nature itself. The full potential for human restoration within ecosystem restoration is yet to be fully explored. Tir Natur want to take people on that journey.

A More Equal Wales

Nature does not discriminate, and should be accessible to all. It is an immense source of well-being for everyone, and encourages us to look beyond material wealth for our satisfaction.

A Wales of Cohesive Communities

Rewilding has people and communities at its heart – we must not simply restore ecosystems, but rediscover our place within them.

A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language

Nature is culture; especially in Wales, where our Celtic forebears worshipped every plant and animal. We must reconnect our language to the vibrant and nature-filled landscapes in which it was formed.

Furthermore, rewilding relies on rare native breeds that are an important part of our culture. Vaynol cattle and Carneddau ponies would be ideally suited to rewilding in Wales.

We must also consider that natural and cultural history are one and the same in our country - whether it's the forests and creatures of the Mabinogion, or place names such as Eryri, believed to derive from Eyr, the Welsh word for Eagle.

A Globally Responsible Wales

Wales is ranked near the bottom of the pile for nature. It is time for us to stop pointing the finger at habitat loss around the world and look at our own impact. Even if it poses difficult questions, we must be more self-aware and more ambitious.



“Experiencing nature has become an activity, something to visit, as one would a library or a museum.

It has been marginalised, controlled - but it is time for it to be set free.

It is time for a new narrative, a reimagining of what is possible to achieve in our landscapes.”

What Tir Natur do

- Inspire - raise money, buy land and rewild it

They showcase their rewilding project as a working farm, demonstrating the important role of large grazers and farming in ecosystem restoration. They also use their projects to promote the principles of rewilding, and inspire other landowners to do the same.

- Connect – connect people and projects around Wales

Through their ‘Wilder Wales Network’, they connect people and projects, large and small from across Wales, where nature is in the driving seat. They are aiming to create an ever-expanding community based around the principles of rewilding.

- Inform - promote the principles of rewilding

Tir Natur works to promote the principles of rewilding and address some misconceptions. They inform on the many benefits it brings, not only to wildlife and the physical environment, but to the well-being of communities and wider society.

For more information on Tir Natur and their work, visit their [website](#) or their social media: [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



Meet the Team Q&A – Cara and Ola

Each month I'll be publishing a Q&A with a member of my team who will share their insights into their time with the Office.

This month it's Cara and Ola, our Team Support Administrators behind the Contact Us inbox and countless other pieces of work.



1 - Cara, Team Support and Welsh Language Administrator



2 - Ola, Team Support Administrator

When did you start with the office?

Cara: I started with the office in October 2021 shortly after completing my Master's degree in Welsh Government and Politics at Cardiff University.

Ola: In November 2021. Everyone was very welcoming and friendly, which made my experience more enjoyable.

What are your current priorities?

Cara: My current priorities are making sure everything internally is running efficiently, from sending out letters to translation. I also prioritise to build a bilingual service to communicate the Act to our audience. The Welsh language is very important to me, and it's a great privilege to be able to build on ideas, to have a creative, open mind to how we can maximise the use of Welsh both internally and externally.

Ola: I work as a Team Support Administrator where I mainly manage our central inbox, Contactus. This includes outgoing and incoming correspondence and requests, creating invoices for purchase orders and helping to send out letters to public bodies, ministers and members of the Senedd. I also work on the commissioner's speaking events and meetings and support the team with our busy work programme.



3 - Cara, Team Support and Welsh Language Administrator

What changes have you noticed over the years?

Cara: The biggest change is the transition to a new commissioner. It's an exciting time to reflect and to plan our next seven years.

Ola: The recognition of the Act in different countries and how it has impacted Wales.

What has been your proudest moment?

Cara: As team support, I've been involved with many projects since I started. I'm really proud of the event that we held at the Wales Millennium Centre to mark the end of Sophie's seven-year term. It was wonderful to meet new and familiar faces in a very positive, open environment.

Ola: Being part of the FGC team and gaining knowledge on the five ways of working.

What has been your biggest piece of learning in your time with the office?

Cara: The impact of sharing good examples.

Ola: Learning more about the Well-being of Future Generations Act itself and its framework to make Wales great by helping to deliver social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being for the current and next future generations.

What is your foremost hope as the work of the office continues into the future?

Cara: That we continue to inspire others and more importantly, listen and learn from others.

What advice would you give to new team members?

Cara: Share your ideas – no matter how big or small!

Ola: Stay focused, take five minutes break away from the screen and don't be afraid to ask for help.

One word that sums up your time at the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales:

Cara: Ever-changing!

Ola: AMAZING!



4 - Ola, Team Support Administrator

Contact us

Want to catch up on previous issues of the newsletter? You can find them on our website [here](#).

For more information get in contact here:

futuregenerations.wales / futuregenerations2020.wales

contactus@futuregenerations.wales

@futuregencymru



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**Cenedlaethau'r
Dyfodol**
Cymru

**Future
Generations**
Commissioner
for Wales