



Cymru Can Newsletter: July 2024



Foreword



1 - Derek Walker, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

At the Royal Welsh Show at Llanelwydd this month, I reiterated my call on Welsh Government to create a national food strategy for Wales – one which takes a whole-system approach to the way our food is grown, produced, packaged, transported, bought, eaten and thrown away.

This would address the links between the demand for some foods and the impact this has on our waterways, nature and health, and prevent future food shortages. I am pleased to see momentum grow behind these calls, with Welsh Government publishing [Food Matters](#), which outlines for the first time how cross-government food policy supports Wales' seven national well-being goals.

I supported the launch of the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission (FFCC)'s national ['Food Conversation' findings](#) – a project that asked people from across Wales their opinions on improving the food system.

Embed://<iframe width="560" height="315"
src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/6CydqNXDAXo?si=fj33FvBF_G78vGmx" title="YouTube video player" frameborder="0" allow="accelerometer; autoplay; clipboard-write; encrypted-media; gyroscope; picture-in-picture; web-share" referrerpolicy="strict-origin-when-cross-origin" allowfullscreen></iframe>

This found that:

- More than 2 in 3 people involved (69%) want a guaranteed agricultural transition budget from Welsh Government to provide financial support to farmers to adopt sustainable farming methods
- Almost three-quarters of citizens (73%) support banning Ultra-Processed Foods (UPFs) in schools and hospitals and 64% support restrictions on junk food advertising
- 60% of those involved supported the introduction of a windfall tax for big food companies, with revenue raised being directed to initiatives that will increase the accessibility and affordability of healthier food

- More than 3 in 4 people (77%) wanted changes to the national curriculum and school provisions to ensure children leave school with a strong understanding of the food system and the skills to grow and cook healthy food





It's also good to see public bodies like Cardiff Council passing a motion to redouble its efforts on food poverty, and six councils (including Carmarthenshire, Monmouthshire and Cardiff) now supporting the excellent [Welsh Veg in Schools programme](#).

Working with partners that include [Castell Howell](#), [Farming Connect Horticulture](#) as well as a host of enthusiastic growers, the [Welsh Veg in Schools](#) project helps to get more locally produced vegetables into school lunches – like carrots, courgettes and broccoli - giving farmers a new or alternative key income stream as well as offering opportunities for children to connect with nature and farming through visiting local growers.

We're hoping to see projects like this scale up and expand because we need to go further...

Wales needs to set a long-term direction for food with a strategy which supports farmers and ensures that everyone can access the healthy, affordable and sustainably-grown food they need.

For more information on the UK Food Conversation project click [here](#).

Connect about food education over free brunch

In partnership with the Abergavenny Food Festival and food educator, Kim Smith, we will be holding a friendly, informal brunch to bring food enthusiasts together to build connections and hear 'Fast food talks' on overcoming barriers around food education.

The session will cover what healthy foods look like, being more connected to where our food choices come from, and how our food choices impact our planet.

Join us at Abergavenny Community Centre on September 22 from 11am to learn, share experiences and inspire, over a free vegetarian brunch.

For more information on the event and to [book your place](#), visit the [Abergavenny Food Festival website](#).



2 - [Book your place now](#)

Improving water quality

Related to the issue of how we produce food, is the declining water quality of our rivers and coast.

Last month, we announced that we were working alongside the Deputy Interim Environmental Assessor for Wales [Anna Heslop](#), on a [Call for Evidence](#) on whether Wales' existing legal framework relating to water quality is functioning correctly.

During the Royal Welsh Show, we spoke at a panel event chaired by Anna, alongside Arpana Chunilal (kayaker, campaigner and [Future Generations Academy](#) alumni) and Gail Wright-Davies (CEO of [Afonydd Cymru](#)). There was frustration in the room from many sides but lots of ideas too, and a willingness to continue working together.

The river pollution summits (initially established by Mark Drakeford as First Minister), bring together relevant stakeholders to address some of the key issues relating to river pollution, like excessive phosphorous levels. This month we commissioned research on whether the summits are catalysing action at the scale and pace needed.

Thank-you to the members of the summits that gave interviews, and others that we have also had conversations with.

It's a complicated picture but we must do more to join the dots between food production, climate change, nature recovery, rural communities, housing, health and well-being. The Well-being of Future Generations Act provides the framework within which these connections and consequences can be understood.

We presented our initial findings at the [fifth River Pollution Summit](#) on 25 July, and were pleased that the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs Huw Irranca-Davies, MS, made a commitment then and there to review the current approach. Our final written advice will be submitted next month, and will be available on our website.



Submit your views ...

The [Call for Evidence](#) will produce a report on water pollution, addressed to Welsh Ministers covering the following:

- Whether the existing legal framework is functioning correctly
- Areas where the existing legal protection may not be delivering the intended benefits
- Potential gaps in existing legislation
- Areas where the practical application of the legislation may be impeded
- Recommendations for how the law could be improved.

I urge everyone who is worried about water quality to share their experiences, observations, concerns and ideas for change as part of this Call for Evidence and help inform recommendations around the urgent need for river and sea recovery.

You can submit evidence until Monday August 5, 2024, via [their questionnaire](#) or email IEPAW@gov.wales with the heading “Water quality evidence”.

For more information visit our [website](#).

In Europe....

Our Deputy Commissioner and Director for Health, Marie Brousseau-Navarro, joined the European Sustainable Development Network Conference to hear from international changemakers on how they're achieving the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN) brings together experts and organisations from across Europe who are working to ensure we meet the needs of present *and* future generations.

As part of the conference in June, ESDN highlighted inspiring examples from across the world including:

- **The Netherlands** who have established 'SDG Netherlands', a network to link national efforts on the sustainable development goals with local community groups and youth champions. They lead an annual 'action week' to promote implementation of the SDGs and involve people in solutions.
- In **Latvia**, culture has an important role in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Museums are a big part of life and are considered a keystone of the country's public services, with the government working to ensure local libraries and museums stay open and accessible for all.



- **Malta** has its own Sustainable Development Act and Sustainable Development Coordinators in each Ministry of Government. Malta also maps their budget process against the sustainable development goals and all funding requests and action plans must show how they contribute.

- **Romania** has created an official diploma on sustainable development to upskill their public sector.

These examples from across Europe are helping to inform the delivery of Cymru Can and we'll be arranging linkups with public bodies and European counterparts later this year.

For more information on the European Sustainable Development Network and their work across Europe, visit their website [here](#).

Free training on the Act

Understanding the Act

Are you trying to apply the Well-being of Future Generations Act and create practical change, but it feels harder than it should?

We're holding a Refresher on the Act session to help you further understand and implement the ways of working and goals.

Our next sessions are:

- 12.30pm - 3pm on **Tuesday, September 24 2024** (registration closes 10 September)
- 10am – 12.30pm on **Wednesday, November 6 2024** (registration closes 23 October)

Please register your attendance via [our survey](#) and if you have any queries, please e-mail contactus@futuregenerations.wales, directing your e-mail to Heledd Morgan.



Putting the Act into practice

Welsh Government and Academi Wales are also jointly running hour-long top-up sessions on the Act which shares some of the latest behavioural science you can apply, in practical and effective ways, to deepen your understanding and application of the Act.

Please e-mail sustainable.futures@gov.wales to register.

- Tuesday 10 September 10:30 – 12 (Bilingual)
- Monday 30 September 2:30 – 4pm (Bilingual)
- Thursday 10 Hydref 10-11:30 (Cymraeg)
- Thursday 31 October 3-4:30 (Bilingual)
- Tuesday 19 November 1-2:30 (Bilingual)
- Monday 2 December 10:30-12 (Cymraeg)

Team day at Porthkerry Country Park, Barry

Making the Well-being of Future Generation's Act work harder is our top mission in Cymru Can. As part of that, we're working more closely with public bodies, including getting out to meet the people who are leading the implementation of the Act locally.

So far this year, we've based our monthly staff meetings with Amgueddfa Cymru and Sport Wales. At our team meeting this month, we joined the Vale of Glamorgan County Council at [Porthkerry Country Park](#).

We:

- Heard about their plan for 'strong communities with a bright future' as part of their Corporate Plan refresh, and their emphasis on partnership working.
- Were brought up to date on the [Wales Net Zero 2035 Challenge Group](#) led by Jane Davidson, former Environment Minister. The work is due to be published in September and will map out a 10-year pathway of action to accelerate action on achieving net zero emissions and climate change.





- Volunteered with Restore the Thaw, stars of our Cymru Can [video](#). [Restore the Thaw](#) are an environmental conservation project increasing biodiversity and improving green spaces in the River Thaw area. We built snake nests from recently cut grass and pebbles from the beach, and planted a variety of plants across what was [previously a golf course](#) but is being rewilded due to flooding.

A big thank-you to Lloyd Fisher, Corporate Policy and Insight Manager, Mel Stewart and Ceri Williams for their warm welcome. To get involved with Restore the Thaw contact thaw@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk.

Coming up on 9th August...

Did you know Wales has more castles per head than any other country? But they're at serious risk due to climate change.

Don't miss us publishing our joint report, *Culture and Climate Risk*, with Cardiff Metropolitan University's Dr Lana St Leger at the National Eisteddfod in Pontypridd, around the risks of not protecting our heritage and culture from rising sea levels and extreme weather.



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:

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