

**Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd,
yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith**

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M. H. Sr. Josep Rull
President of the Catalan Parliament

3 February 2025

Follow-up on Wales' Well-being of Future Generations Act

Thank you for the productive meeting on 4 December 2024 with you and the delegation from the Catalan Parliament. It was a pleasure to explore our shared interests and priorities as parliamentarians.

During our discussions, members of the delegation expressed an interest in Wales' Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Act aims to ensure that decisions taken today do not adversely impact the needs of future generations by enshrining in law commitments to improving Wales's social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being. The Act seeks to do this by placing a well-being duty on public bodies (including local authorities and the Welsh Government) to set and publish objectives to show how they will achieve the vision for Wales set out in the Act.

I have attached an annexe with details about the Act, which has been prepared by the Senedd's Research Service. This includes information about the Act's aims, the role of the Future Generations Commissioner, and the challenges faced during its implementation.

I hope there will be further opportunities for continued dialogue and cooperation regarding our mutual interests.

Yours sincerely,



Llyr Gruffydd MS,
Chair, Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg | We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



**Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament**

Well-being of Future Generations Act

January 2025

Overview of the Act

The [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) received Royal Assent in April 2015, with most of its provisions coming into force from 1 April 2016. The Act is concerned with improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It aims to put sustainable development at the centre of decision-making, and is designed to ensure actions meet the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Senedd Research published an [overview of the Act](#), which outlines its key aspects.

The Act introduced seven well-being goals for Wales:



The Act places a well-being duty on public bodies (including local authorities and the Welsh Government) to set and publish objectives to show how they will achieve the vision for Wales set out in the well-being goals. The bodies are required to maximise their contribution to delivering each of the well-being goals. Public bodies must take action to make sure they meet the objectives they set. The cost of delivering the Act's requirements need to be met by public bodies.

Since the briefing was published, **eight new bodies** have been added to the list of public bodies subject to the well-being duty. These include Transport for Wales and the Welsh Revenue Authority.

The Act puts in place a 'sustainable development principle' that sets out how public bodies should go about meeting their duties under the Act. Acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle means that the body must act in a manner that seeks to ensure that the

needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. There are five things that public bodies need to take into account to show they have applied the sustainable development principle. These are known as the ‘five ways of working’:

- Long-term: The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long term needs;
- Prevention: How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives;
- Integration: Considering how the public body’s well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on its other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies;
- Collaboration: Considering how acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) could help the body meet its well-being objectives; and
- Involvement: The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

Barriers to implementation

In 2020, the [Senedd’s Public Accounts Committee \(PAC\)](#) embarked upon a piece of work exploring the barriers to implementing the Act, and looking at whether it has delivered the transformative change it heralded when it was introduced over five years ago.

This work coincided with, and was shaped by, the publication of the Future Generations Commissioner’s [first Future Generations Report](#) and the Auditor General for Wales’ [examination of public bodies under the Act](#). Set against the context of the coronavirus pandemic, the Committee’s inquiry explored the levels of understanding and awareness about the Act; the resources available to public bodies for implementation; the support and leadership provided by the Welsh Government and the Future Generations Commissioner; and what needs to be done to ensure the Act is implemented successfully in the future.

The Committee’s report can be found [here](#).

Future Generations Commissioner

Derek Walker was appointed as the second [Future Generations Commissioner for Wales](#) in 2023. The Commissioner’s role is to promote the sustainable development principle, act as a guardian for the interests of future generations in Wales, and to support the public bodies listed in the Act to work towards achieving the wellbeing goals. The Commissioner holds office for a 7-year period.

The Commissioner has a number of roles and can undertake a number of actions:

- Advise, encourage and promote: The Commissioner can provide advice to public bodies and PSBs and promote and encourage them to work to meet their well-being objectives;
- Research: The Commissioner may carry out research, including into the well-being goals, the national indicators and milestones, and the application of the sustainable development principle;
- Carry out reviews: The Commissioner may conduct a review of how public bodies are taking account of the long-term impact of their decisions, and make recommendations based on the findings;
- Make recommendations: The Commissioner can make recommendations to a public body about the steps it has taken or proposes to take to set and then meet its well-being objectives. Public bodies must take all reasonable steps to follow the recommendations made by the Commissioner;
- Future Generations Report: The Commissioner must publish, a year before a Senedd election, a report containing her assessment of the improvements public bodies should make to achieve the well-being goals; and
- Advisory Panel: The Commissioner will be supported by an advisory panel. The Panel includes the other Welsh Commissioners, the Chief Medical Officer for Wales, a representative of Natural Resources Wales, 10 Research Briefing: The Well-being of Future Generations Act Wales TUC and Welsh business. The Commissioner may invite others to attend and Welsh Ministers can appoint new members.

The Commissioner is scrutinised annually by the Senedd's Equality and Social Justice Committee.

Useful links

Welsh Government website – [Future Generations Act](#)

[Future Trends Report](#)

[Wales and the Sustainable Development Goals](#) report

[Well-being of Wales 2024](#): measuring progress towards well-being goals

[Future Generations Commissioner for Wales](#) (website)

Future Generations Commissioner for Wales – [vision and focus](#)