

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb i ymgynghoriad y [Pwyllgor Cyllid](#) ar [Cyllideb Ddrafft Llywodraeth Cymru 2025-26](#).

This response was submitted to the [Finance Committee](#) consultation on the [Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26](#).

WGDB_25-26(6)38: Ymateb gan: Rewilding Britain | Response from: Rewilding Britain



Dear Peredur Owen Griffiths MS,

I am writing to you in relation to the consultation on the Draft Budget 2025-26, and specifically question 5:

5. Are Welsh Government plans to build a greener economy clear and sufficiently ambitious? Do you think there is enough investment being targeted at tackling the climate change and nature emergency? Are there any potential skill gaps that need to be addressed to achieve these plans?

Rewilding Britain has sufficient clarity on how Wales will transition to green energy and supports Welsh Government's commitment to show leadership in this area. We have concerns that there is a lack of a parallel conversation and/or narrative on a shift to a greener land economy. We appreciate that post CAP subsidies have been complex to design and have taken time. We support the progress made with the Sustainable Farming Scheme. However, we are concerned that there is now huge pressure on the allocation of the funding that is available for land subsidies. We have real worries that the allocation of more than 30-40% of funds to the universal layer of the Sustainable Farming Scheme will prohibit progress to our climate and biodiversity targets. And more so, in its current form it will not sufficiently encourage enough changes in practice to help create more jobs in land based work. The discussions at the ministerial roundtable, and within the carbon subgroup, have had many positive elements. But there is insufficient mention to our nature targets and our commitment to the Convention on Biodiversity Targets and the aim of securing 30% of land managed for nature by 2030. This land is mapped and we have long been able to identify that the hardest areas to farm economically and to any significant level of food production are also the areas that are classed as Least Favoured Areas, many of which support nature or have high potential to see nature put into recovery. We would like to see the budget breakdown reflect these targets and ensure sufficient allocation to funding streams such as another round of the Integrated Natural Resources Scheme and the Nature Network Fund. Ideally we'd like to see these funds increased by 30% as the SFS universal layer will provide too little support for LFA's and those wishing to make a transition to nature friendly farming and nature first farming. We'd also like to see the BPS phased out quickly so all funds can be allocated to the SFS and other supporting mechanisms for nature and climate.

We'd like to draw Welsh Government's attention to the successful Nature for Climate fund that was set up in England: <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/about-us/nature-for-climate-fund/> And suggest something similar might help those that were ready for the 10% tree cover and those that want to begin their journey to nature friendly and regenerative farming.

The sustainable farming scheme is just one vehicle to support land use change.

We have welcomed the developments within Welsh Government around private finance and investment for nature, and will be responding to the Sustainable Investment Principles consultation. We see a strong role for Welsh Government in

seeding market changes, providing strong guidance and frameworks for actions and potentially helping to facilitate delivery models (the main barrier) through work with the Community Bank of Wales and other similar organisations.

We would like to see more emphasis put on an agroecological economy with core areas for nature helping us secure nature rich and climate stable landscapes for future generations. We have evidence that rewilding, which in the Welsh context is the extensive management and restoration of land at landscape scale, increases employment by up to 400%. The opposite to the conventional agricultural model.

Achieving 30% of Wales managed for nature, through conservation, nature friendly farming, extensive management and perhaps 5% of core 'rewilded' areas for nature could result in 3,273,000 tCO₂ or 3.3 MtCO₂ to be sequestered per year from its landmass, which is a 7.6% [reduction in the current annual carbon emissions](#) (324 MtCO₂/yr). Since the [marine area of Wales](#) (32,000 km²) is 35% larger than its landmass, using [calculations from Natural Resources Wales](#), we estimate a further annual sequestration potential of 11,516 tCO₂/yr across Wales' marine area.

Embracing natural process and investing more funds in natural flood management techniques such as wetland creation, strategic planting of hedges, shelter belts and corpses, as well as the installation of swales and leaky dams could be win-win for the budget and communities thwarted by flooding. We'd like to see a greater proportion of funding go to catchment scale natural flood management, which has the greatest potential to alleviate flooding in the face of climate change.

We'd like greater clarity on what portion of the budget will be used to support a transition to a green land economy, with more market gardening, more extensively managed land which has the highest level of funding supplied to it. And we'd like more information on what funding and resource will be allocated to deliver Welsh Government's support for the licencing of wild beaver release - Wales has a chance to lead devolved nations with positive progress and Rewilding Britain is very keen to help with this. We're deeply concerned that NRW has suffered further cuts and note the scrutiny by the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee against its targets and its consistent lack of performance in key areas. We hope that the budget can find ways to address this, either through targeted increases in resource or support services and contracting of key delivery to the third sector or community benefit businesses.

With all nature based solutions there is a need to increase the level of public communication and information about their value and the role they can play in revitalising rural communities and land based work. There is a need to improve the curriculum in this regard and in particular change the way the view of what productive land is for the 21st Century. We need food, but the current landuse model does not give us food security as we do not grow enough fruit and veg in Wales.

At Rewilding Britain, we look after the largest membership-based network of land and marine nature recovery projects in Britain, covering 181,128ha of land and 506km² of our seas. This includes 3,843ha in Wales and involves 23 projects over 40ha in size. We are proud to work with and support a wide range of community groups, conservationists, farmers and landowners across Wales. We also have 2055 supporters in Wales. Our ambition is the rewilding of 30% of our land and seas by 2030. 20% as semiwild/regenerative with 5% extensively managed and 5% functioning as core areas for nature led management. I am the first full-time Advocacy post for Wales, having been in the role for 1 month.

Rewilding Britain bridges the gap between academia and practitioners and we hold lots of evidence and numerous case studies on the benefits of extensive and nature led management, which we think are a highly cost effective way of achieving our targets and commitments to nature, climate and prosperous rural communities in Wales.

The best way to experience the benefits of rewilding is to see it up close and in action. We would like to invite you to join us on a visit to a network members site - we have a few options in mid, or west Wales, depending on your availability. We can show you a progressive and impactful nature recovery project, delivering many of your government's priorities for farming, nature and climate mitigation, at scale. If this is of interest perhaps one of your team could get in touch to talk through further and discuss your availability? I look forward to hearing from you and hopefully to working together in the future. Please reach out at any time if you or your team think we can be of assistance on any policy or practical nature recovery related issues. I'm contactable via [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

Regards,

James Hitchcock (he/him)

Advocacy Coordinator Wales

[REDACTED]

www.rewildingbritain.org.uk

CIO registered in England and Wales (1159373) and Scotland (SC045685)

Follow us on: [LinkedIn](#) [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#) [Newsletter](#)

Join the campaign to declare Scotland a Rewilding Nation: [sign the charter](#)



www.rewildingbritain.org.uk

CIO registered in England and Wales (1159373) and Scotland (SC045685)
Follow us on: [LinkedIn](#) [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#) [Newsletter](#)
Join the campaign to declare Scotland a Rewilding Nation: [sign the charter](#)

