



**Cyfoeth  
Naturiol  
Cymru  
Natural  
Resources  
Wales**

# Corporate Plan

// 2014 - 2017



Noddir gan  
**Lywodraeth Cymru**  
Sponsored by  
**Welsh Government**

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// We are on a long  
journey - and this  
is just the start...

## Foreword

Wales' environment is one of our most valuable assets. Cherished by the people of Wales and beyond for its wildlife, landscapes and seascapes, it is vital for the range of services it provides - food and water, energy, even the air that we breathe. Our environment is where we live, work and play; it is part of our culture and key to our economic prosperity and sense of community. We all have a responsibility to care for Wales's environment, and its natural resources, both now and for future generations.

But these are challenging times - the effects of climate change, declining biodiversity and the status of our rivers sit alongside issues like improving people's health and wellbeing, tackling poverty, and green growth - creating more sustainable jobs for Wales. Our recent weather and the outbreak of larch disease has brought some of these challenges into stark reality. We need to be able to use our natural resources wisely and efficiently to improve the quality of life for the people of Wales, while at the same time enhancing the resilience and diversity of our environment.

We in Natural Resources Wales believe that there is a great opportunity to respond to these challenges - not alone, but by working with partners like the Welsh Government, businesses, the voluntary sector, and local communities. With sustainability as a central principle, together we can help make Wales a more prosperous, joined up and resilient nation.

To develop this Corporate Plan, we have gathered a wide range of information and evidence from our staff, our stakeholders, our customers, and the people of Wales. Last year we ran a series of events and a public consultation on our ideas, priorities and how we can work better together in future. We were pleased with the level of response and the broad support for our proposals. We have used this information to develop our Corporate Plan. This important feedback will also be used in our future work.

We are a new organisation - we're just a year old and this is our first Corporate Plan. We are on a long journey - and this is just the start. We have a focus on delivery. In the first year we will concentrate on integrated and collaborative working, and designing and embedding the ecosystem approach. We will be reaping the benefits set out in the Business Case for creating Natural Resources Wales over the next ten years or so. We will deliver our purpose - ensuring that the environment and the natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, sustainably enhanced and sustainably used, now and in the future.

We hope that you find our Corporate Plan interesting and informative. And we hope to work with you in the future for the benefit of our environment and the people of Wales.



**Professor Peter Matthews**  
Chairman



**Dr Emyr Roberts**  
Chief Executive

# Our Purpose...

// is to ensure that the environment and natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, sustainably enhanced and sustainably used, now and in the future.



## Our Purpose...

// is to ensure that the environment and natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, sustainably enhanced and sustainably used, now and in the future.

### We want Wales...

to be a place where our air, land and water are managed sustainably.

We use

- **Good Knowledge:** gaining wisdom and understanding of our natural resources and how we affect them – using evidence and applying learning from experience, so that we make good decisions.

so that what we do is

- **Good for the Environment:** ecosystems are resilient and secured for the future, wildlife and landscapes are enhanced, and the use of our natural resources is carefully managed
- **Good for People:** people are safe, and enjoy and benefit from our natural resources and understand their relevance in our day to day lives
- **Good for Business:** a 'location of choice' for business and enterprise, and a place where best practice environmental management is adopted and encouraged

and that we are a

- **Good Organisation:** well led and well managed, with suitably skilled and experienced staff and effective underpinning systems and processes; transparent in our decision-making and continuously improving our service to customers and partners, benchmarking ourselves against the very best.

These five 'Goods' give rise to the five 'Good' Programmes that we use to organise our work. The 'Good' Programmes are closely integrated; work we do in one programme provides multiple benefits and helps to achieve our work in the others. They are interdependent and cross cutting. We will be providing this maximum benefit across the board, not just for one particular 'Good' programme. Key to this approach is the use of integrated natural resource planning which we are currently developing with Welsh Government.



// Our Corporate Plan 2014-17 sets out what we plan to achieve over the next three years...

## Who we are and what we do

Natural Resources Wales is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body and came into being in April 2013, largely taking over the functions of the Countryside Council for Wales, Forestry Commission Wales, and the Environment Agency in Wales, as well as certain Welsh Government functions.

### **We have a wide range of roles and responsibilities:**

**Adviser:** principal adviser to Welsh Government, and adviser to industry and the wider public and voluntary sector, and communicator about issues relating to the environment and its natural resources

**Regulator:** protecting people and the environment including marine, forest and waste industries, and prosecuting those who breach the regulations that we are responsible for

**Designator:** for Sites of Special Scientific Interest – areas of particular value for their wildlife or geology, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), and National Parks, as well as declaring National Nature Reserves

**Responder:** to some 9,000 reported environmental incidents a year as a Category 1 emergency responder

**Statutory consultee:** to some 9,000 planning applications a year

**Manager/Operator:** managing seven per cent of Wales' land area including woodlands, National Nature Reserves, water and flood defences, and operating our visitor centres, recreation facilities, hatcheries and a laboratory

**Partner, Educator and Enabler:** key collaborator with the public, private and voluntary sectors, providing grant aid, and helping a wide range of people use the environment as a learning resource; acting as a catalyst for others' work

**Evidence gatherer:** monitoring our environment, commissioning and undertaking research, developing our knowledge, and being a public records body

**Employer:** of almost 1,900 staff, as well as supporting other employment through contract work.

## About this Plan

Our Corporate Plan 2014-17 sets out what we plan to achieve over the next three years, together with a set of indicators showing wider environmental trends in Wales.

We also have a one year Business Plan with targets and measures to accompany the Corporate Plan and provide more detail.

The **indicators** in the Corporate Plan aim to monitor trends across Wales as a whole. They look at **outcomes** and give us the **big picture** – what is

// Our unique differences as an organisation can be used to make the changes demanded of us.

happening in Wales and further afield. We are not solely responsible for these. Our work makes a contribution, but they are the result of the work of a wide range of organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors, and changes in the behaviour of individuals.

The **measures** in the Business Plan look directly at what we in Natural Resources Wales are doing – **our outputs**. They measure our own performance, are in our control, and we usually show this in the form of a ‘dashboard’.

The Corporate Plan and its indicators, together with the Business Plan and its measures, will form our **Performance Framework**. We can then monitor both what we do ourselves and the wider picture in Wales, to ensure that our work is really making the difference that we want.

The Business Case for setting up Natural Resources Wales identified a number of savings and benefits that we need to make as our organisation develops, and these are highlighted in both our Corporate and Business Plans.

Although covering three years, we intend to publish a rolling Corporate Plan, with updates as required. After this first three year period, we will publish five year rolling Corporate Plans, which will align with National Assembly elections and changes in administration. We will publish our Business Plan every year.

## Our Risks, Pressures and Opportunities

We have an innovative purpose and significant short-term challenges in developing our standalone capability in Wales. The case for our formation identified a range of benefits and financial efficiencies that we will need to show clearly that we have delivered.

In addition to unique challenges, we also share the wider pressures affecting the public sector across Wales and the UK. Managing in an era of austerity is an added responsibility, as will be the wider economic prosperity of those we serve and work with. Despite this backdrop, we have some fantastic opportunities to exploit. Our unique differences as an organisation can be used to make the changes demanded of us. We will adopt an ecosystems approach to inform all our decisions at all levels – whether we are setting priorities or delivering specific operational activities.

We also have fabulous assets in Wales’ natural resources and environment, many of which are under our direct management. These assets can help us deliver our priorities through our own management and by supporting the delivery of others.

We are confident that we can deliver what is expected of us. The priorities set out in this Corporate Plan are a key step to making this happen.

// We are committed to being close to our communities in Wales.

## Our People

We have almost 1,900 full-time equivalent staff (FTE) located throughout Wales – scientists, engineers, foresters, environmental managers, recreation and education experts, people working with local communities, as well as many others who enable our organisation to work effectively and efficiently.

We are a new organisation. We know what sort of organisation we would like to be, but it will take time for us to get there. Talking with our staff, we have developed the following set of values:

- **Passionate and ambitious** about our work and the positive impact we will have
- **Disciplined and focussed** in our prioritisation and delivery
- **Trusted and professional** in our relationships with stakeholders, staff, and their representatives
- Taking a **common sense** approach to our work and being **responsible** and **accountable** for our actions.

Our People Strategy describes how we intend to improve our capability and performance, work more flexibly and develop our organisation in line with our business. We also have a workforce plan that shows how our workforce will change over time. True partnership with the trade unions is essential – with shared objectives and trusted and open relationships.

### Over the next three years we expect to see:

- A net reduction in our workforce to 1,850 FTEs in line with our efficiency savings targets
- An increase in retraining and re-skilling as we offer our staff opportunities to change the work they do
- An ageing workforce that has a wealth of experience which means that we need to plan carefully for the future and consider entry level schemes for key roles.

To change and grow with our changing business priorities, everyone will need to be flexible, responsive and clear about our performance expectations. A new, simple approach to performance management will seek continuous improvement, exemplifying our values of being focussed and ambitious. We will invest in the learning and development of our people.

Many of our staff across Wales are fluent in both Welsh and English. Our Welsh Language Scheme is helping us to strengthen our bilingual capability further.

We are committed to being close to our communities in Wales and want to reflect the communities we serve. Valuing and supporting diversity and action to ensure equality for people with protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) is vital and will form the cornerstone of our Equalities Plan. We want to become a good practice employer in relation to equality and we are committed to promoting and advancing equality for all citizens and visitors in Wales.

We wish to be an employer of choice, with pay and conditions that reflect our business needs and are affordable, and agreed with trade union representatives in true partnership.



// The current Corporate Plan has been developed against a backdrop of a challenging financial environment.

## Our Finances

The current Corporate Plan has been developed against a backdrop of a challenging financial environment. Public sector austerity has been a reality for the last couple of years and is predicted to continue for the foreseeable future.

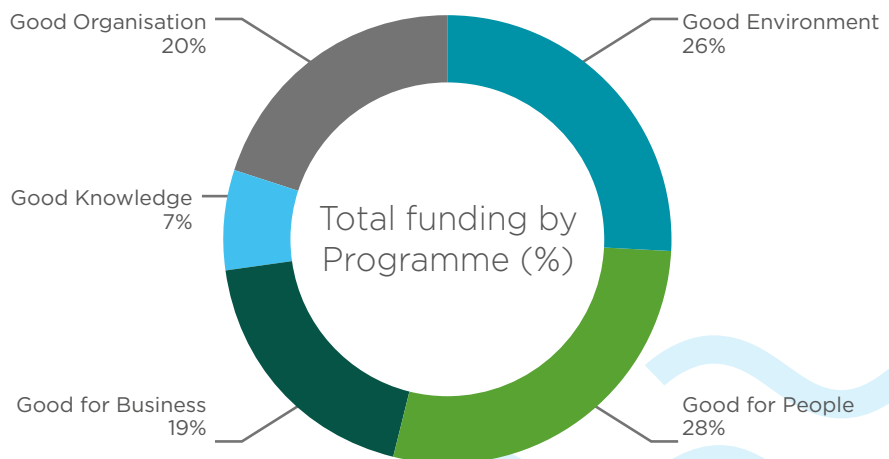
The financial focus of the initial Corporate Plan is on funding the establishment, then changing Natural Resources Wales into a standalone organisation. After this initial investment, the benefits will be delivered over future years so that the focus of the next Corporate Plan will be on how these savings can be reinvested to provide additional environmental benefits.

To achieve our outcomes in these challenging financial times we will need to:

- **Deliver** significant cash savings and efficiencies to achieve the benefits targets set by the Welsh Government over our first 10 years
- **Maximise** income opportunities by developing innovative approaches to enterprise
- **Develop** joint working to make best use of resources and expertise, and maximise benefits delivered with our partners
- **Prioritise** our activities and consider different ways that we can fund them.

Over the period of the Corporate Plan we will reduce our corporate services costs to achieve 'best in class' benchmark standards. We will also undertake a significant programme of work to establish our standalone capability. The savings we make will then be reinvested into improving environmental outcomes.

Our resources have been shared across our five 'Good' Programmes in 2014/15 as follows:



The table below summarises the income and expenditure budgets for 2014/15.

2014/2015 Summary	£m
<b>Income</b>	
Grant in Aid	115
Charge Schemes	38
Commercial	19
Other	8
Total Income	<b>180</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Staff Costs	70
Operating Costs	70
Ex-Parent Body Service Level Agreements	12
Capital Projects	28
Total Expenditure	<b>180</b>



// Our work can benefit the environment, people, and business, often in the same place at the same time.

## How we work and who we work with

We work with a wide range of people and organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors; umbrella organisations and networks; communities; as well as academic and professional bodies. We make an important contribution to virtually all aspects of life in Wales. We also work with others in a UK, EU and international context to ensure that our 'cross border' working is appropriate and joined up. We are keen to work with new and existing partners in innovative ways so that we can achieve even more together.

We are ambitious but realistic. The financial situation is causing us to reassess our priorities. We've had great feedback during the consultation process and this Corporate Plan gives us the opportunity to ensure that we focus our efforts on delivering our outcomes through our programmes.

So that we can provide clear direction to our business, and where possible reinvest in new activities and new ways of working, we've identified areas where we will seek to streamline our activities. These are shown in the introduction to each 'Good' programme.

## How we work with Welsh Government

We are a Welsh Government Sponsored Body. We have functions which are independent of Government, coming to our own views. We also work closely with Welsh Government and we have an agreed set of shared outcomes for Wales:

- Enhancing our environment
- Protecting people
- Supporting enterprise and jobs
- Improving the nation's health
- Viable and vibrant places
- Delivering social justice
- Supporting skills and knowledge.

These shared outcomes are cross cutting, as are our 'Good' programmes and everything that we do. Our work can benefit the environment, people, and business, often in the same place at the same time. The shared outcomes also lie at the heart of the priorities for action set out in 'Shaping a more Prosperous and Resilient Future', the 2013 autumn statement made by Alun Davies AM, Minister for Natural Resources and Food. These priorities are delivering **green growth, managing our natural resources more efficiently and effectively, tackling poverty and enhancing the resilience and diversity** of our natural resources.

Contributing to the delivery of these shared outcomes and priorities locks us into the wider life of Wales, provides us with an enduring focus, and connects us with a range of partners. Our work not only contributes to plans and strategies dealing with the environment, climate change and the transition to a low carbon economy, but also those strategies

// Ensuring that our work is clearly aligned with changing legislation is important.

dealing with health and wellbeing, poverty, education, equality and diversity, and building resilient communities.

Ensuring that our work is clearly aligned with changing legislation is also very important, as the Environment, Future Generations, Planning, and Heritage Bills are all developed.

We receive a Remit Letter at the start of each financial year setting out what the Welsh Government wants us to achieve during that year. The current Remit Letter can be found in the publications section of the Welsh Government website.

## The Business Case for Natural Resources Wales

The business case that supported the decision to establish Natural Resources Wales identified the benefits that we need to achieve over our first decade. These are an integral part of our corporate and business planning and they are spread across our programmes. We are expected to deliver three types of benefits:

- **Better delivery for Wales:** so that we align our work more clearly with Wales' priorities, with sustainable development at the heart of all that we do
- **Better outcomes for Wales:** so that we provide joined up advice and clearer guidance in our roles as adviser and statutory consultee as a single organisation
- **Better value for money:** we expect to generate benefits of £158 million over our first 10 years through the greater efficiencies gained by bringing three organisations into one.

We will monitor these closely against the business case and have already begun to deliver these benefits.



// Adopting the ecosystem approach in Wales will mean considering and regulating the environment as a whole, rather than dealing with individual aspects separately...

## Integrated Natural Resource Planning and the Ecosystem Approach

In both our Corporate Plan and our Business Plan we have referred to *Integrated Natural Resource Planning* and the *Ecosystem Approach*. The two concepts are interdependent – the ecosystem approach is the way that we think about managing the environment and its natural resources, while integrated natural resource planning and management are the ways we do this in practice.

The ecosystem approach has been defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity as ‘a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way’. This means having a more joined up approach to how we all manage the environment and its natural resources.

Adopting the ecosystem approach in Wales will mean considering and regulating the environment as a whole, rather than dealing with individual aspects separately; it will involve weighing up and setting priorities for the many competing demands on our natural resources.

## Our five ‘Good’ programmes

Our five work programmes capture the crosscutting nature of our work, where many of our activities help to deliver multiple outcomes across a number of the programmes. It is important that the work we do has a clear ‘line of sight’ or ‘golden thread’ from our shared outcomes with Welsh Government through our Corporate and Business Plans, right through to the work of an individual staff member.

These ‘Good’ Programmes are the link between delivering outcomes for Wales, and organising ourselves as a new body.

More detail can be found in our Business Plan 2014-15, available on our website.



# Good Knowledge...

// What 'Good' looks like:  
gaining wisdom and  
understanding of our  
natural resources and  
how we affect them  
- using evidence and  
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## Good Knowledge

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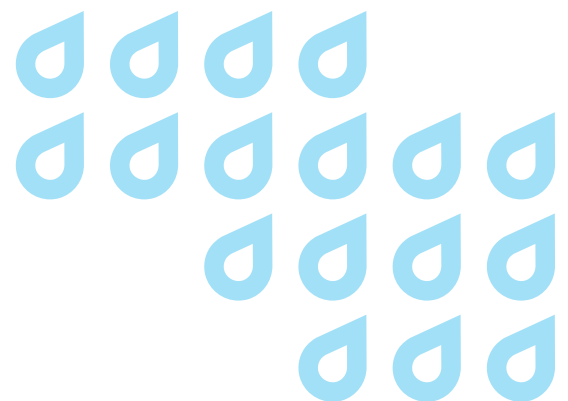
### Challenges and Opportunities

Knowledge is fundamental to the successful delivery of all our work. It is important that all decisions taken that affect the Welsh environment are based on sound evidence. We have an important role to play in this: contributing to the evidence base, sharing our information with others, and providing a more joined up approach to evidence gathering. Our knowledge is the basis of our credibility and accountability for our decisions and actions.

We need to become more innovative, efficient and effective in the ways that we generate and use data if we are to work at our best within our budget. Working extensively in partnership will ensure that we use the 'collect once, use many times' principle. This means we will be an evidence-based organisation, making transparent and timely decisions for Wales, based on our knowledge, evidence and experience, underpinned by the ecosystems approach.

### How we will work differently:

- In partnership with others, and particularly Welsh Government, we will develop the ecosystem approach and integrated natural resource management so that our natural resources can continue to support us into the future. We will trial and showcase this work so that others can use what we've learned and apply it to their own work
- In partnership with others, we will build our evidence base, make it available and keep it under review, by working with Welsh Government, academia and the voluntary sector as well as using 'citizen science'
- By understanding our role in providing evidence, we will generate information where appropriate, and help others if they are better placed to undertake research or gather relevant evidence.



// It is important that all decisions taken that affect the Welsh environment are based on sound evidence.

**What we will do less of:**

- We will rationalise our monitoring programme where appropriate so that we can concentrate on the essentials, and look at innovative ways to bolster our information. We'll use others' information where it is suitable and meets our needs
- Using available science and research in line with our priorities, we will only use our resources where we are the right organisation to fill any gaps
- Our modelling will be fit for purpose and we will encourage the academic and private sectors to invest in strategically assessing, reviewing and developing new modelling capability, working with Welsh Government.

**Our indicators**

**Indicator Ka: Development of the ecosystem approach and integrated natural resource management**

- Number of Natural Resources Wales work areas that reflect the needs of Wales based on integrated natural resource management
- The area covered by natural resource planning will be a longer term indicator as the approach is developed and the proposed Environment Bill is enacted.

**Indicator Kb: Our data is used by others for decision making**

- Number of raw datasets that are published for reuse by us or on our behalf
- Number of Access to Information requests.

**Indicator Kc: Building our expertise**

- We build our evidence base, securing and using the intellectual capital of our organisation and increase the level of qualification, professional membership and continuing professional development of our staff.





## Our commitments

**K1: We will develop Wales' approach to integrated natural resource management, using the ecosystem approach as a basis for decision making by, for example:**

- Working with Welsh Government and other partners to develop the overall approach
- Developing a 'toolkit' to embed the ecosystem approach and integrated natural resource management and planning in our work, and running three trials in areas around the Dyfi, Rhondda and Tawe rivers
- Advising on sustainable land and water use and integrated natural resource management to embed good practice
- Working with Welsh Government to help ensure that integrated natural resource management provisions in the proposed Environment Bill are supported in other legislation, such as the Future Generations, Heritage, and Planning Bills, as they are being developed.

**K2: We will ensure we have a good understanding of our environment, economy and people in Wales, and of Wales' place in the world, and will continue to review our evidence to ensure that it is fit for the challenges facing the natural resources of Wales by, for example:**

- Working with Welsh Government and others to identify sources of evidence, understanding where there are gaps and, where we can collaborate to fill these gaps, sharing information and expertise and supporting others to fill them
- Reviewing our monitoring strategy and applying recommendations to our operational work
- Working with Welsh Government to develop natural resources policy, including the delivery of a State of the Environment and, in the longer term, a State of Natural Resources, report with an interim report by November 2014.

**K3: We will develop and manage a sound evidence base to support our strategic and operational decision making and inform decision making by others by, for example:**

- Developing our modelling and forecasting capability, and working with others to increase our use of futures techniques such as horizon scanning and scenario planning
- Developing our social and economic capability and evidence base, to provide information for our natural resources management and ecosystem approaches, and to help understand and overcome barriers to using the environment faced by the different sectors of society and local communities
- Developing our ability to better explain and communicate complex issues to a wide range of stakeholders by using a wide range of communication tools and formats, including guidance.

**Resources for 2014/15:**

**Expenditure: £13m Staff: 185 FTEs**

# Good Environment...

// **What 'Good' looks like:** ecosystems are resilient and secured for the future, wildlife and landscapes are enhanced, and the use of our natural resources is carefully managed.



## Good Environment



What 'Good' looks like: ecosystems are resilient and secured for the future, wildlife and landscapes are enhanced, and the use of our natural resources is carefully managed.

### Challenges and Opportunities

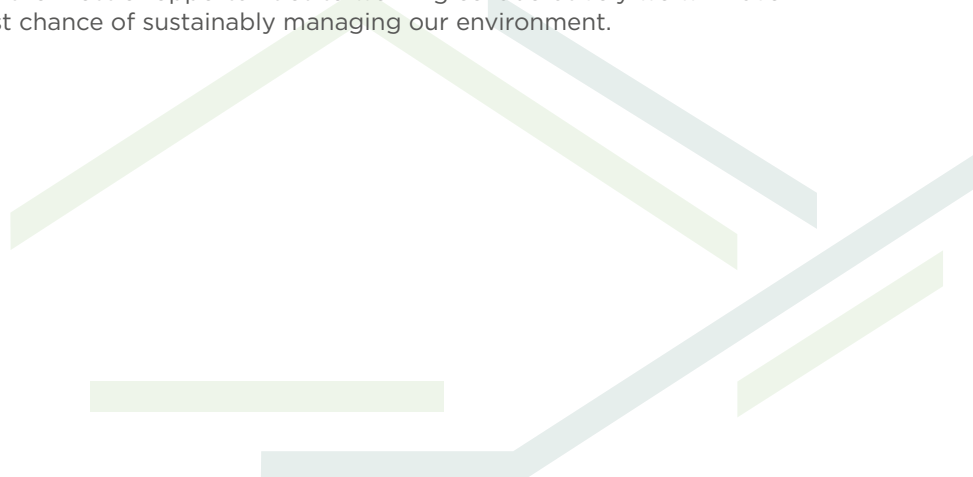
Our environment in Wales faces many challenges: the effects of climate change, pests and diseases, loss of biodiversity, pollution, and competing uses for land and water. We must manage our natural resources to meet these challenges and increase ecosystem resilience, ensuring we meet our national and international responsibilities.

Climate change is real and Wales must play its part; we must reduce our contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and protect and enhance our carbon sinks. Wales must adapt to the consequences of climate change that will affect people directly and have a major impact on Wales' environment and natural resources. Outbreaks of pests and diseases, such as *Phytophthora ramorum* in larch trees, are increasing, perhaps aggravated by climate change. We want to understand the impacts of climate change and be an exemplar in how we manage land and water to both adapt to and mitigate its effects. We will keep our own carbon footprint as low as possible in our day to day business.

Many of our habitats and wildlife species are in trouble, as highlighted in the State of Nature report (2013); we need to help slow and, where possible, reverse habitat and biodiversity loss, helping to meet UK, EU and international biodiversity targets. We also need to care for our protected landscapes, including AONBs, National Parks, and historic landscapes.

During 2013, there were around 100 significant pollution incidents in Wales and 36 per cent of our surface waters were classed as having 'good or better' ecological status. For the same period, 92 per cent of bathing waters were classified as 'good' or 'excellent'.

The challenges are huge. Achieving progress will not be easy and we do not have the resources to tackle all of these issues by ourselves. By making the most of opportunities to working collaboratively we will have the best chance of sustainably managing our environment.



By making the most of opportunities to work collaboratively we will have the best chance of sustainably managing our environment.

**How we will work differently:**

- Prioritising our efforts where they can make the biggest difference
- Applying the ecosystem approach and integrated natural resource planning and management as it develops
- Using the land and water we manage to demonstrate this approach
- Accept that the spread of non-native species or disease outbreaks can be unpredictable and may require additional resources if we are to halt their spread.

**What we will do less of:**

- We will review our land management and operational activities and use the ecosystem approach to deliver more with less and in partnership with others
- We will review our work on air quality and the strategic advice we provide to local authorities; and use our regulatory role to ensure the best performance from those that we regulate
- We will focus our most robust enforcement, inspection and permitting activity on those who operate below a level of compliance. We will use earned recognition and lighter touch approaches with those whose performance is at, or goes beyond, compliance
- We will review our approach to salmon stocking in Welsh rivers and implement any changes that better deliver the ecosystem approach.

**Our indicators**

**Indicator Ea: Water environment**

- Compliance with good status under the Water Framework Directive.

**Indicator Eb: Sustainable forest management**

- Woodland known to be managed to UK Forestry Standard (UKFS).

**Indicator Ec: Biodiversity**

- Bird population indices and other UK biodiversity indicators for sites or habitats which can be disaggregated to a Wales level.

**Indicator Ed: Climate change**

- Greenhouse gas emissions in Wales.

**Indicator Ee: Marine, terrestrial and freshwater environment**

- Condition of features of marine, terrestrial and freshwater Natura 2000 sites.

## Our commitments

**E1: We will be an exemplar in the way that we manage sustainably the land and water that we are responsible for, and help others do the same by, for example:**

- Using the ecosystem approach and integrated natural resource management principles to develop plans for the land and water that we manage directly, understanding the context within which these plans sit
- Ensuring the sustainable management of land and water we manage including:
  - Welsh Government woodland estate
  - National Nature Reserves we own/manage directly
  - Historic assets
  - Flood defence works and assets
  - River Dee conservancy
- Delivering sustainable fisheries and their associated programmes, subject to funding.

**E2: We will help protect and improve the quality of our air, land, sea and water by, for example:**

- Considering streamlined innovative approaches and working with others where appropriate to implement EU Directives, UK and Wales legislation such as:
  - the Water Framework Directive
  - revised Bathing Waters Directive
  - Habitats Directive
  - Marine Strategy Framework Directive
  - Natura 2000
  - Industrial Emissions Directive
 and waste and water quality legislation and conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the European Landscape Convention
- Influencing the development and implementation of legislation, regulation and strategic policies and practice for sustainable land use, including Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Rural Development Plan (RDP), and other aspects of agriculture and forestry
- Working with Welsh Government to respond to risks and issues from pests, diseases and invasive non-native species
- Contributing to the development and implementation of the Welsh Government Marine Transition Programme and Marine and Fisheries Strategic Action Plan.

**E3: We will play our part and work with others to halt biodiversity loss in order to help ensure that, by 2020, ecosystems are more resilient by, for example:**

- Playing our part in the delivery of Aichi and EU Biodiversity targets as part of our commitment to the ecosystem approach
- Developing mechanisms to improve the delivery of strategic management and restoration of Wales' designated sites focussing on actions which yield the best outcomes, including projects such as Life N2K programme
- Improving the connectivity and restoration of priority habitats (such as deep peat) and their linkages as part of area-based natural resource management plans.

**E4: We will help to make Wales more resilient to climate change and other impacts, as well as supporting global efforts to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by, for example:**

- Understanding our contribution to mitigating the effects of climate change using the land and water we manage and our other assets, and aiming to be an exemplar in carbon management
- Ensuring climate change adaptation is embedded in all areas of our work
- Continuing our approach to flood risk management in the light of climate change and take account of future flood risk when making our decisions. Implementing innovative solutions, and working with the natural environment to reduce flood risk in urban and rural or agricultural areas.

**Resources for 2014/15:**

**Expenditure:** £46 million **Staff:** 571 FTEs



# Good for People...

// **What 'Good' looks like:** people are safe, and enjoy and benefit from our natural resources and understand their relevance in our day to day lives.



## Good for People

// What 'Good' looks like: people are safe, and enjoy and benefit from our natural resources and understand their relevance in our day to day lives.

### Challenges and Opportunities

There is a huge potential to use our environment and natural resources to improve people's health and local surroundings, support local communities and jobs, and to provide opportunities for recreation. We also need to help protect people from environmental incidents such as flooding and pollution. This has been brought into focus recently with serious coastal flooding: 208,000 properties in Wales are at risk of flooding.

*Healthy* life expectancy varies hugely across Wales (57.1 years in Blaenau Gwent to 68.2 years in Monmouthshire). Increased activity can improve both physical and mental health, while experiencing the natural environment can also be beneficial. Encouraging more people to get more active using the outdoors has the potential to have positive effects on people's health and wellbeing.

Tackling poverty is a key priority. Although poverty is often thought of in an urban context, rural poverty is also an important issue.

The Welsh environment is a great place to learn in and learn about. Schools, universities, colleges and the public all use our natural resources as a fantastic learning resource. We will help people to reconnect with, and understand the importance of, our natural resources and their relevance to day to day living. Raising awareness of environmental issues can help people make better informed decisions and help protect our environment for the future.

It is essential that the opportunities that we provide, or help others to provide, are as inclusive as possible, considering people of different ages, of different races or faiths, with disabilities, or with any of the other protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act, 2010. We want to cater for a wide range of people and provide opportunities for the communities we serve.





// We will help people to reconnect with, and understand the importance of, our natural resources.

**How we will work differently:**

- Ensuring that we integrate the recreation opportunities on land and water we offer with other providers, complementing rather than competing with them
- Building on our existing work in urban areas to ensure that areas of greenspace are valuable assets for our towns and cities
- Working more closely in partnership with communities, and listening to, and working with, local citizens, including people from protected characteristics groups, focussing our efforts on the most deprived communities.

**What we will do less of:**

- We will focus our access and recreation development activities on those sites which are the most popular with people or are in our poorest communities
- We will reduce more costly visitor infrastructure where demand might suggest a more user-led, lower key approach, supported by good information provision
- We will embed our role to educate in our core delivery activities and support educational professionals in outreach work, paying attention to our commitment to promoting and advancing equality for all people in Wales.

**Our indicators**

**Indicator Pa: Flood risk and management**

- Number of properties with a reduced probability of flooding.

**Indicator Pb: Recreation and health and well being**

- Percentage of people living in Wales using outdoors for recreation for the minimum advised levels of physical activity required for a healthy life.

**Indicator Pc: Proximity of greenspace**

- Percentage of population with access to natural greenspace, such as woodland, parks and open space.

**Indicator Pd: Volunteering and skills development in the environment**

- Number of volunteers directly hosted by Natural Resources Wales or facilitated through Woodlands and You (and successor approaches).

**Indicator Pe: Education, learning and sector skills**

- Number of educational settings supported by Natural Resources Wales to use the environment for education, learning and sector skills.

**Indicator Pf: Economic impacts**

- Benefits and economic impact of recreation in Wales using the Coast Path as an example
- Value of local small scale commercial opportunities enabled by Natural Resources Wales on the land and water it manages.

## Our commitments

**P1: We will deliver an effective and co-ordinated response to environmental incidents and risks, such as flood events, pollution and disease outbreak, and help decrease the risk of flooding to people and properties by, for example:**

- Building, maintaining and operating flood defences and implementing innovative ways of managing uplands and lowlands to hold and slow down water to help reduce flood risk to communities
- Raising people's awareness of their flood risk and what actions they need to take
- Reducing the number of serious pollution incidents using a prioritised, risk based approach
- Maintaining our liabilities to help ensure public safety in our forests, National Nature Reserves and the flood defences we manage.

**P2: We will provide and enable recreation and access opportunities which contribute to improving people's health and wellbeing by, for example:**

- Developing and delivering our recreation and access strategy, covering all aspects of our recreational functions and relevant business outcomes
- Using recreational opportunities on the land and water that we manage to improve people's mental and physical wellbeing. This is to be done by working in an equitable way, with a programme of activities agreed with our stakeholders, including health professionals and outdoor recreation networks
- Implementing initiatives on behalf of Welsh Government including the Wales Coast Path Development Programme.

**P3: We will help ensure people are able to live, work in, and visit a good quality environment, including those in urban areas and those in our most disadvantaged communities, and will channel economic benefit to help tackle poverty by for example:**

- Working with other organisations to develop a programme of projects, including the Welsh Government 'Cynefin' project, to improve local environmental quality and provide opportunities for disadvantaged communities. This includes urban regeneration projects
- Working with local communities to get more people involved in place-based decisions, and developing future plans together using a principle of community ownership and co-production, particularly close to land and water we manage
- Maximising the economic benefits of our work, focussing particularly on Communities First areas and other communities with evidence of deprivation.

**P4: We will provide and enable opportunities for people to learn in, and about, and enjoy the environment by, for example:**

- Providing learning and skills opportunities, advice and guidance, in and about the environment, including visits for all ages and abilities and in particular for young people
- Establishing links with Welsh Government to ensure curriculum-linked educational material and visits are appropriate and Welsh Government priorities are addressed
- Developing our approach to volunteering by working in partnership with others, and working with existing volunteer networks.

**Resources for 2014/2015:**

**Expenditure:** £50 million   **Staff:** 428 FTEs



# Good for Business...

// What 'Good' looks like:  
a 'location of choice' for  
business and enterprise  
and a place where best  
practice environmental  
management is adopted  
and encouraged.



## Good for Business



What 'Good' looks like: a 'location of choice' for business and enterprise and a place where best practice environmental management is adopted and encouraged.

### Challenges and Opportunities

Our stakeholders have told us that most of the businesses we work with share our environmental aims and would welcome a more collaborative and streamlined approach. This means working together right from the start, sharing information and advice, linking into trade bodies or partnerships, and considering rural and agricultural businesses as well as industry. Working together, we will look for solutions and timely responses, while protecting and improving the environment. We will be consistent, fair and transparent in all our dealings and will take into consideration cross border issues. We need to use our natural resources more efficiently and effectively as we move towards a low carbon economy, including energy generation.

'Green growth' is a priority for action, and is key to Wales' future. As well as economic growth, it creates local opportunities for community renewal, and the ability to use our natural resources to deliver on Welsh Government's priorities of creating jobs and growth and tackling poverty. Consideration of procurement practices which can allow access to small scale, local and social enterprises are important here, as well as getting value for money. As well as jobs, the environment can provide opportunities for training and skills development which can lead to employment in other sectors.

Some 1,700 industrial, waste and water sites are regulated across Wales. 48 per cent of commercial and industrial waste is currently reused or recycled, but there are 36,000 instances of fly tipping each year. Waste can be a valuable resource - providing energy, or material for construction, for example.

We market over 878,000 cubic metres of timber each year, fulfilling 300 harvesting contracts, and providing employment in the forestry sector through our contractors and the businesses that add further value to the timber that we sell. We also generate income through car parking and other visitor facilities at our principal recreation sites. We run a permit charging scheme which works on a cost recovery basis. We host businesses and enterprises on the estate we manage, including renewable energy such as wind farm developments and hydroelectric power. As well as looking to further develop these opportunities, we are also looking at new ways to generate income, which we can then reinvest for the benefit of our natural resources and environment.



// Working together, we will look for solutions and timely responses, while protecting and improving the environment.

**How we will work differently:**

- We aim to increase our use of a risk based ecosystems approach that will involve new ways of working with our customers and within the organisation
- Providing well evidenced, clear, planning advice and decisions in good time will help achieve the highest environmental standards and the sustainable management of our natural resources. This will mean that we will focus more on influencing strategic national and local plans and less on tactical responses. We will also aim to create a framework that supports the development of renewable energy projects at appropriate scales and locations
- We will develop and implement a new regulatory strategy that will encourage improved environmental performance by regulated businesses and reduce the number of unpermitted sites posing significant risk to the environment, by providing information and advice, and considering cross border issues
- We will work with others to identify new business and job opportunities, especially in disadvantaged areas, and grow our income to reinvest in our highest priorities. The sustainable management of our directly managed natural resources will enable and support innovative business development and investment.

**What we will do less of:**

- We will provide strategic local and strategic national planning responses, relying on standing advice and whole area approaches for most individual planning applications
- We will streamline our permitting processes, relying on simpler permits for those whose performance is compliant with the standards required
- We will consolidate and enhance the management of protected sites so that they are as effective, resilient and diverse as they can be before seeking new ones. We will also streamline the process for their designation
- We will consult on proposals for charging for pre-application advice and ensure our regulatory charges comply with the 'polluter pays' principle and cover the cost of regulation in its widest sense.



## Our indicators

### Indicator Ba: Applications processing

- Determination of permit/licence/consent applications within statutory timescales.

### Indicator Bb: Managing sites

- Proportion of sites carrying out regulated activities with improving environmental performance.

### Indicator Bc: Bringing sites into management

- Number of unpermitted sites posing significant risk to the environment brought into a permitting regime, or closed down.

### Indicator Bd: Our role as statutory consultee

- Proportion of planning consultations responded to within agreed standard of service.

### Indicator Be: Generating income

- Income from Natural Resources Wales enterprise activities.

## Our commitments

**B1: We will, as a regulator, provide evidence based advice and clear decisions in good time to enable businesses in Wales to operate effectively and achieve the highest environmental standards by, for example:**

- Continuing to develop our Customer Care Centre as a single point of contact for our customers and continuously increasing our knowledge base
- Developing our regulatory systems, including opportunities for Better Regulation to streamline the service and lower costs for customers
- Streamlining our administrative procedures for designating Sites of Special Scientific Interest and declaring National Nature Reserves to make these more efficient.

**B2: We will work with business, industry and government to support the development of critical infrastructure and encourage development in the right places to ensure the sustainable management of our natural resources by, for example:**

- Developing a single permitting, licensing and consenting service, based on common standards and processes, to be co-designed with our stakeholders
- Implementing our transition plan for Town and Country Planning including our new approach to planning consultation advice
- Advising on Local Development Plans, regional strategies and the emerging Welsh Government development framework.

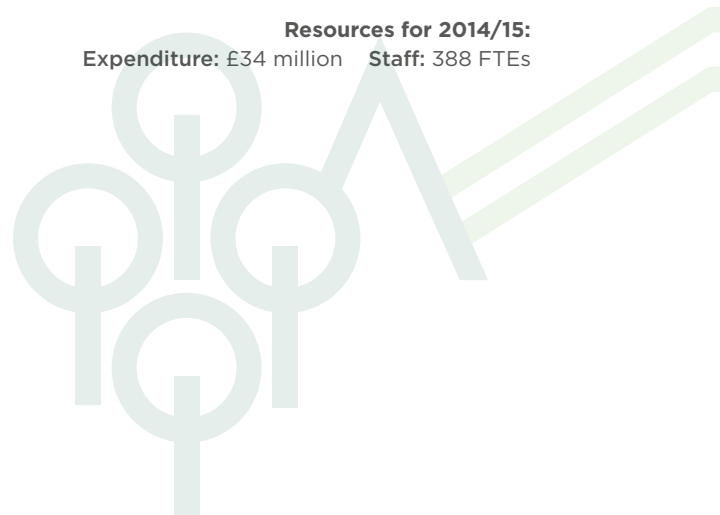
**B3: We will work closely with others to identify, develop and support new business opportunities and new opportunities for jobs and training to create a skilled workforce in Wales by, for example:**

- Facilitating new business opportunities, developing our enterprise capability, and working with Welsh Government and others to support schemes and future plans, including renewable energy generation, as well as recreation and tourism opportunities
- Commission a study of our impact on the socio-economic benefits arising from energy developments
- Supporting the wind energy programme and delivering our hydropower programme on land that we manage.

**B4: We will grow our income within our purpose, reinvesting that income to provide further public benefit by, for example:**

- Completing our feasibility studies for new ideas in our Enterprise Framework, looking at motor sports, value added timber, housing, telecommunications, visitor centres, filming, minerals, and recreation
- Marketing timber from the Welsh Government woodland estate in accordance with our marketing strategy: some 878,000 cubic metres over bark standing, of which 332,000 cubic metres will be larch
- Generating external income by providing an analytical service through our laboratory.

**Resources for 2014/15:**  
Expenditure: £34 million Staff: 388 FTEs





# Good Organisation...

// What 'Good' looks like: well led and well managed, with suitably skilled and experienced staff and effective underpinning systems and processes; transparent in our decision-making and continuously improving our service to customers and partners, benchmarking ourselves against the very best.



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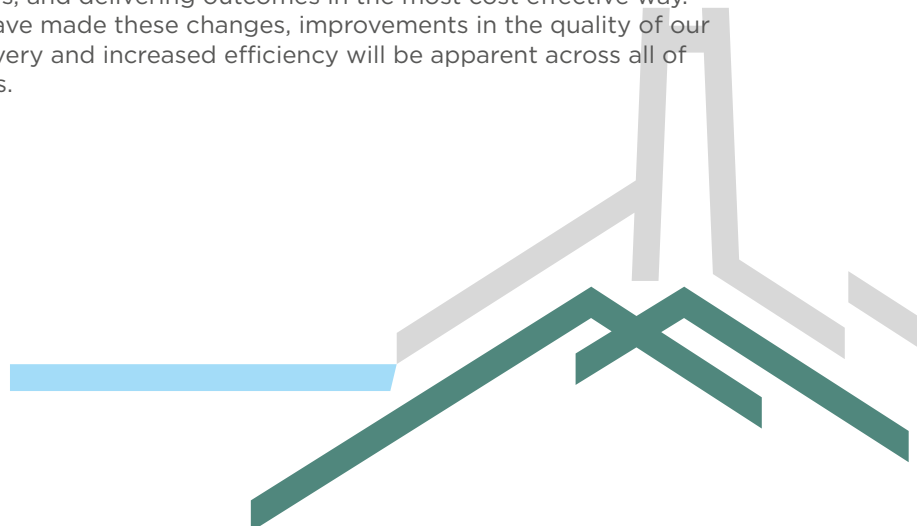
### Challenges and Opportunities

As a new organisation, we need to develop ourselves and our ways of working. We need to develop our strategic and technical standalone capability, making decisions in Wales for Wales by reducing our dependence on legacy systems. Many of our business challenges can only be tackled by adopting an ecosystems approach to support our decision making. We will need to develop our most critical asset, our staff, to help them understand what this means in practice and to support them in delivering this new way of working.

We need to keep improving our service to customers and work ever more closely with stakeholders. We want to be fair, consistent and transparent in our transactions with partners and work with them to get the best results for them and for the environment and its natural resources. We intend exploiting the potential of digital technology to drive down our costs and improve services externally for customers and internally for staff.

In order to maximise the resources we have available for our work, we need to become more efficient, entrepreneurial and innovative. We need to generate more income to reinvest in our services, where we can exploit opportunities that are in line with our purpose and priorities. We need to work with our staff and unions to create shared expectations of performance and commitment to our values and purpose.

We have a significant programme of change to establish our full standalone capability as well as to develop our culture, ways of working, systems and processes, and ensure that we make the savings and efficiencies that we need to over the next ten years. We want to be an organisation that is flexible in its approach, responsive to the needs of customers, and delivering outcomes in the most cost effective way. When we have made these changes, improvements in the quality of our service delivery and increased efficiency will be apparent across all of our business.



// We want to be an organisation that is flexible in its approach, responsive to the needs of customers, and delivering outcomes in the most cost effective way.

**How we will work differently:**

- We will have a sharp focus on delivering our business priorities for Wales; our decision making, allocation of resources, and performance management will be aligned to achieve this
- Joining up our services internally will help us improve our efficiency
- We will become more entrepreneurial in our approach to both the delivery of our core services and also in the development of new opportunities that are in line with our purpose
- We will look at different ways of delivering our business support services that are more efficient and joined up with other partners and organisations.

**What we will do less of:**

- We will reduce the multiple points of contact with our organisation or internal facing approaches that are inefficient and unfriendly
- We will rely less on process and more on empowering and trusting our staff to deliver our priorities
- There will be fewer paper based transactional systems; we will invest in digital approaches which are more efficient and effective
- There will be less non-statutory publishing that does not directly support the delivery of our priorities
- We will review our financial governance models and streamline them so that we are easier to do business with and our processes are simpler to run. Wherever possible, we will seek to meet, or better, Cabinet Office benchmark levels for our support functions.

**Our indicators**

**Indicator Oa:** Customer and stakeholder satisfaction index

**Indicator Ob:** Staff engagement index

**Indicator Oc:** Progress towards Welsh Government/Cabinet Office benchmark targets for support services including accommodation

**Indicator Od:** Achievement of revised Business Case tracking cash and non-cash releasing benefits

**Indicator Oe:** Reduced organisational carbon footprint

## Our commitments

**O1: We will continuously improve our services to customers and our relationships with stakeholders and partners through open and collaborative approaches by, for example:**

- Providing efficient and effective business support and customer care to both staff and customers
- Ensuring that our communications and work with stakeholders is effective and aligned to our Business Plan
- Delivering our Welsh Language Scheme.

**O2: We will work more efficiently and grow our income, within our purpose, so that we can use these savings to provide greater public benefit by, for example:**

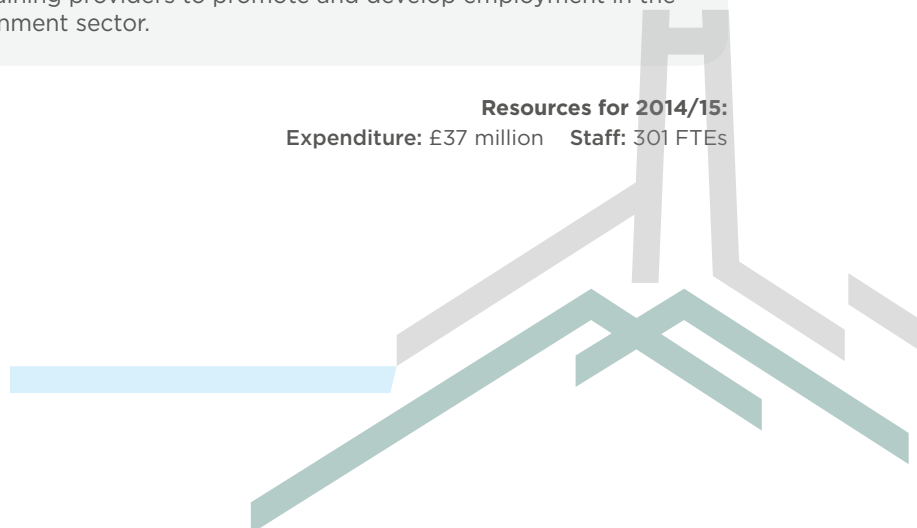
- Implementing a self-service and digital approach to our services to customers where this improves performance and reduces cost
- Delivering our strategies on our transport fleet, facilities management, security and accommodation, to ensure that we provide the most efficient and customer focussed service
- Gaining and maintaining ISO 14001 accreditation for our environmental management and being an exemplar in areas such as carbon use, waste and water.

**O3: We will develop a culture that supports our values, increases our skills base, enhances our flexibility and diversity, and improves our standards of health and safety by, for example:**

- Developing the organisation, and helping staff reflect our desired values, diversity and culture
- Enhancing the overall capability of the workforce, including strategic leadership through investment in learning and development
- Continuing to provide high quality skilled jobs in Wales through ongoing development of existing staff and continuation of apprenticeship schemes, and working in partnership with learning and training providers to promote and develop employment in the environment sector.

### Resources for 2014/15:

**Expenditure:** £37 million    **Staff:** 301 FTEs



## How well are we doing? Reporting our progress

As a delivery organisation, we need to be able to demonstrate how well we have performed, both individually and in conjunction with our partners, and whether people and communities are better off as a result.

Our conversations with our stakeholders and staff have given us clarity about what our customers want us to do, what success will look like, and have allowed us to develop a set of indicators to demonstrate our contribution to our shared outcomes with Welsh Government. Our Corporate Plan includes these high level indicators.

We will also publish a set of performance measures, derived from our Business Plan, to show our outputs – how much we have done, how well we have done it, and what the results are. We will publish this as our Corporate Dashboard.

Directorate Delivery Plans for each of our Directorates, and individual contribution statements for each member of staff, sit below the Business Plan and Corporate Plan so that there is a clear link from our own outcomes and those shared with Welsh Government right through to the job of an individual member of staff.

The Corporate Plan with its indicators and the Business Plan with its Corporate Dashboard together provide us with a Performance Framework to monitor our work and its impact on our environment.

We will be open about reporting our delivery against our Corporate Plan and Business Plan. We will publish results in our Annual Report and our Board will publicly scrutinise performance at least three times a year.

For any further comments or queries, or to obtain this document in an alternative format, please contact [corporate.planning@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk](mailto:corporate.planning@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk)





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