



Your responsibility for a Resilient Wales

What you can do

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act sets out 7 goals to improve Wales’s social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being. One of these goals is for a Resilient Wales which focuses on the natural environment and the challenges we are facing and this factsheet will explain why it is relevant to your organisation. There are simple, cost-effective steps that you can take to do your bit for a Resilient Wales which will also save money, improve staff and volunteer morale and contribute to healthier and vibrant communities.

Why do we need a resilient Wales?

Studies show that nature plays a major role in safeguarding our health and our social and economic well-being. Did you know that...?



The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is a ground-breaking piece of legislation that requires public bodies in Wales to work together towards 7 inter-related goals to improve Wales’s social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being. There is a requirement on all public bodies to set objectives to help reach these goals and to take all reasonable steps to meet these objectives.

There is more information about the Act at wcva.org.uk/WFGA



Spending time in nature provides protection against a range of diseases, including, diabetes, obesity and cancer and can alleviate the symptoms of depression and ADHD.



Customers are prepared to pay more for parking and goods in landscaped shopping areas.



The psychological benefits of plants (including office plants) make people feel less stressed, 15% more productive and 40% more satisfied with their work.



Time spent in nature boosts levels of social contact and enhances social ties especially within disadvantaged communities.



Students with greater “exposure to greenness show better academic performance”.



Areas with a high quality natural environment act like a catalyst for economic development.



Workers who can see a green environment from their desks experience 23% less time off sick.



Wales has a multi-million pound tourist industry that relies on thriving wildlife and a high quality environment.



The survival of older people increases where there is more accessible greenspace near their homes.



How to make a difference

Delivering a Resilient Wales



Incorporating nature into your organisation's premises and decision-making can be simpler than you think. Large or small, inside or outside, most organisations have areas where small changes can be made to make them nature-friendly. There are also many organisations with free or low-cost resources that will be happy to support you to do this.

You can encourage your colleagues and volunteers to experience and benefit from nature in many ways:



Manage your land and buildings for biodiversity; contact Environet for advice on how to do this.



Include opportunities to get outside and engage with nature during your away days - playing in nature strengthens resources to cope with stress and contributes towards creativity, social cooperation and concentration.



Think about how you can bring nature into your workplace, from a hanging basket to landscaping – and make this part of your organisation's corporate facilities management.



Make an effort to leave your desk at lunch time and seek out local green space to remember why nature is important and to recharge and relax – 94% of people report better physical and mental health after green exercise.



Consider creative and practical activities such as making bird feeders or learning about different trees or animals as half-hour slots to break up team meetings.



Take advantage of Wales's fantastic wildlife; it will inspire you, your colleagues and volunteers.



Make venues with access to green space your default choice for external meetings or events – this can boost creativity.



If your organisation has a policy for employee volunteering, make sure it promotes opportunities that let people get close to nature and enhance it.



Make your whole organisation nature-friendly by considering the impact on nature of your everyday management decisions – from procurement to cleaning products. Including nature in your Environment Policy will help this to happen.



Easy steps to delivering a Resilient Wales



Making space for nature in your workplace can be simple, cost-effective and extremely rewarding.

Even flowerpots or hanging baskets can help wildlife with the right planting and care and a single tree can help future-proof your premises against climate change by providing shade, improving drainage and reducing pollutants.

Feeders will attract birds and raised beds or pots in a car park can provide food for bees and butterflies. And don't forget inside as studies show that potted plants can improve air quality, reduce stress and improve concentration and creativity – as well as absorbing greenhouse gases.

Tips for success

Look for every opportunity to manage land for wildlife



Share your enthusiasm by finding like-minded people – your plans are more likely to succeed if you are part of a team to share ideas and tasks.



Be clear on roles i.e. who is watering the plants.



Get buy-in – your board or management team can offer great support and leadership.



Just do it! Even small changes can make a difference.

And in return

Taking action for nature will help towards the following benefits.



It will help demonstrate to funders and stakeholders that you have a holistic approach to sustainability and are working towards the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.



It will deliver cost savings in terms of increased staff and volunteer morale and fewer sick days.



You will be demonstrating global responsibility by helping tackle issues such as pollinator loss and biodiversity decline.



You will be part of a healthier and happier team and a more welcoming, therapeutic environment.



Wildlife in Wales

Where to draw inspiration



Buddsoddi yn Natur
Cymru
Invest in Nature
Cymru



Wales has an abundance of wildlife including amazing ospreys, red kites, the world's largest Manx shearwater colony and the best place in Britain to see puffins and porpoises.

The magic isn't just restricted to spring and summer; there are amazing wildlife displays in autumn and winter with seal pups, the return of thousands of birds to our estuaries, and wonderful autumnal woodland colours with golds, bronzes and reds.

Wales has 216 Wildlife Trust nature reserves, over 4,000 sq km of National Park, and an 870-mile Wales Coast Path where wildlife can thrive.

Here are just a few highlights:



1 Red kite - Around 2,000 of these magnificent birds patrol the skies throughout Wales, performing amazing acrobatics overhead all year round.



2 Osprey - These beautiful birds travel from Africa to Wales to breed at the Wildlife Trust's Cors Dyfi Nature Reserve, near Machynlleth.



3 Rainforests - We've got some of the best examples of Atlantic oak woodland in Europe, which date back an astonishing 10,000 years and are home to rare plants, birds, bats and otters.



4 Puffins and Manx shearwater - There are an estimated 357,000 breeding pairs of Manx shearwater on the Wildlife Trust's Skomer and Skokholm islands.



5 Dolphins - New Quay on Cardigan Bay is one of Europe's best places to see these amazing marine mammals.



6 Wildflower meadows - Wales has some of the largest remaining areas of flower-rich grassland and thousands of orchids can be seen at the Wildlife Trust's Pentwyn Farm.



7 Grey seals - Autumn is the best time to see seal pups, notably on the Wildlife Trust's Skomer and Skokholm islands.



8 Terns - The lagoon at the Wildlife Trust's Cemlyn Nature Reserve is home to breeding common and Arctic terns, and is one of the UK's largest nesting populations of Sandwich terns.



9 Otters - Wales has the best otter-watching opportunities in Europe. The best time to see otters at Gilfach is from October to December when otters come to the waterfalls to chase the leaping salmon.



10 Wading Birds - internationally important populations of wading birds use our estuaries as wintering feeding stations and the best places to see them are the Severn, the Dee and the Dyfi estuaries.





You are part of an ecosystem

Linking with nature

Wales faces a number of challenges now and in the future, such as climate change and the loss of biodiversity. Over 60% of the species we know about are in decline and many species are in danger of becoming extinct in Wales so any action you take can make a real difference.

A healthy natural environment is essential to social and economic well-being and therefore one of the 7 goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is for A Resilient Wales, which focuses on the natural environment.

A Resilient Wales - A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example, climate change).

What the terms mean

Biodiverse or Biodiversity means 'biological diversity' which refers to all the variety of life on Earth (plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms) as well as to the communities that they form and the habitats in which they live.

Ecosystems are a dynamic network of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit.

Ecological Resilience is also called ecological robustness and is the ability of an ecosystem to maintain its normal patterns of nutrient cycling and biomass production after being subjected to damage caused by an ecological disturbance.



Remember that, wherever you are, you are part of an ecosystem, a piece in the natural landscape, so try to look after what's next door. If you back onto a woodland, plant trees. If you live next to gardens, plant nectar-rich flowers or provide a home for hedgehogs. Every plant and flower really makes a difference.

