



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
Stryd y Jêl
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

LLŶN A.O.N.B. JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Date and Time

4.30PM, WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER, 2015

Please note the meeting start time

Location

MEETING ROOM, FRONDEG, PWLLHELI

Contact Point

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Distributed: **10/11/15**

MEMBERSHIP:

Gwynedd Councillors:

**Angela Ann Russell
W. Gareth Roberts
Gruffydd Williams
Owain Williams
R.H. Wyn Williams**

Others:

Aberdaron, Buan, Botwnnog, Clynnog, Llanbedrog, Llanaelhaearn, Llanengan, Nefyn, Pistyll and Tudweiliog Community Council nominees.

Nominees of the following agencies/institutions:

**National Trust,
Natural Resources Wales,
Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum,
Cyfeillion Llŷn,
National Farmers Union,
Farmers Union of Wales,
Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partnership,
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales,
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust.**

Others Invited	For Item
Councillor Dafydd Meurig (Planning and Regulatory Cabinet Member)	Item 8 – AONB Management Plan

Please note that the meeting starts at 4.30 pm

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES

1 - 5

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of this committee, held on 24 June, 2015, be signed as a true record (copy enclosed).

5. VISITORS CONTRIBUTING

To receive a presentation from Alun Fôn Williams, Senior Tourism Development Officer.

6. LATEST PROJECTS FROM THE LLŶN AONB UNIT

6 - 8

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Projects Officer.

7. PLANNING RELATED MATTERS

9 - 10

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

8. AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

11 - 55

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

9. GWYNEDD CHALLENGE

56 - 57

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

10. REVIEW OF WELSH DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES

58 - 86

To consider the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager.

LLŶN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 24/06/15

Present:

Councillor Gruffydd Williams (Chairman)
T. Victor Jones (Llanbedrog Community Council) – Vice-chairman

Committee Members: Councillors W. Gareth Roberts, Angela Russell and R. H. Wyn Williams (Gwynedd Council), Emily Bateman (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust), John Gosling (Abersoch and Llŷn Tourism Partnership), Arfon Hughes (Nefyn Town Council), Laura Hughes (National Trust), William I. Hughes (Farmers' Union of Wales), Sian Parri (Tudweiliog Community Council) and Alun Price (Natural Resources Wales).

Officers: Bleddyn P. Jones (Llŷn AONB Service Manager), Wyn Williams (Countryside and Access Manager) and Bethan Adams (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

1. WELCOME

Alun Price, Natural Resources Wales, was welcomed to his first meeting.

2. CHAIRMAN

It was reported that the constitution of the Joint Advisory Committee had been amended under delegated powers of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory so that any member of the Joint-committee could act as Chairman.

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Gruffydd Williams as Chairman for the year 2015/16.

2. VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED to elect T. Victor Jones as Vice-chairman of the Committee for 2015/16.

3. APOLOGIES: Noel Davey (Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales), Morgan Jones-Parry (Arfon and Dwyfor Access Forum), Hedd Rhys (NFU Cymru), Gillian Walker (Botwnnog Community Council), John Eric Williams (Cyfeillion Llŷn), Wenda Williams (Aberdaron Community Council) and John Lloyd Jones (Welsh Designated Landscapes Review Panel).

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

5. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 25 March, 2015, as a true record, subject to amending the name of Arfon Jones (Nefyn Town Council) to Arfon *Hughes* under the list of apologies.

6. URGENT ITEM

The Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that the Llŷn AONB Unit was being considered as part of possible cuts by the Council. The support of members was requested for the Unit as part of the public consultation on cuts.

7. REVIEW OF WELSH DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES –STAGE 2

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager, noting the latest situation in terms of the Welsh Government's review of Designated Landscapes.

It was reported that the response to Stage 2 of the review had been sent to the review Panel by Gwynedd Council as an organisation.

Attention was drawn to a letter received from Professor Terry Marsden, Chairman of the Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales, introducing Stage 2 of the review and was giving organisations an opportunity to submit evidence in writing regarding designated landscape governance arrangements. The specific questions posed were highlighted to assist the Review in identifying and gathering the necessary evidence to come to a conclusion on Stage 2.

Members were given an opportunity to offer observations. During the discussion the following main points were noted:

- In the current financial climate, it would be more cost-effective to have one body to decide on planning applications, namely Gwynedd Council;
- There was a lack of awareness of the AONB and there was a need to ensure stronger planning arrangements to safeguard the AONB when deciding on planning applications;
- There was need for a better balance between beauty and the economy as so many young people were leaving the area;
- Tourists visited the area because of its beauty and there was a need to balance the value of economic development with conservation. This meant that developments which were not in-keeping with the natural beauty had to be refused, especially because of the duty to secure/protect the beauty of the area under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- Raising awareness of the AONB to a similar level as the National Parks would encourage more people to come to the AONB;
- A member expressed her concern that if the National Parks and AONBs were governed under the same system, the AONB would be swallowed by the Park;
- There was a lack of resources and a low profile within the Council and Gwynedd as a whole;
- The AONB should receive resources/support that was similar to the level of National Parks and keep its local independence.

A member noted that the Crown Estate received a substantial amount of money from Wales on an annual basis and this was inequitable.

A member drew attention to a local quality assurance plan in the Lake District where an additional fee was charged on visitors and the money was used for marketing and maintaining the area and the member was in contact with the Council with a view to establishing a similar system in Gwynedd. He noted that establishing a pilot scheme would take some time but it would be of considerable value to the area.

In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that he had been in contact with the Tourism, Marketing and Customer Care Unit and they were looking into establishing a similar system. The Countryside and Access Manager added that it was a complicated matter and there was a need for resources to establish and administrate such a system and it would have to be independent from the Council.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to accept the report;**

(ii) that the Llŷn AONB Service Manager summarises the discussion and sends it to the Panel.

8. UPDATE ON PROJECTS

Submitted – a report on the work of the AONB Unit, noting that Catrin Glyn, Llŷn AONB Project Officer – temporary, had received a new post and she was wished well.

Llŷn Conservation Areas Projects

It was noted that the final report had been received and the next step of the work, if resources permitted, would be trying to achieve the recommendations of the report and improve the condition of the Conservation Areas in the AONB by collaboration and securing funding.

In response to an observation by a member, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that the owners of buildings in Conservation Areas were encouraged to safeguard and improve the appearance and character of the areas.

A member expressed concern regarding street furniture (by private businesses) that were not in-keeping.

A member expressed an opinion that the observations of Community Councils on planning applications did not receive a fair consideration.

A member noted that Conservation Officers of the Snowdonia National Park Authority had succeeded in attracting grants for maintaining conservation in Dolgellau and more consideration should be given to Conservation Areas when determining planning applications in Gwynedd.

World Wars Project

It was noted that Elfed Gruffydd had completed his research work into the First World War in terms of the impact and influence of the World Wars on the environment and on society in the area and that he was now examining the Second World War. Attention was drawn to a summary of the work and it was noted that a complete report would be brought before the Joint-committee.

A member expressed his gratitude to Elfed Gruffydd for the work and hoped the information would be published. In response, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager noted that he would convey the appreciation of the member to Elfed Gruffydd. It was added that it was proposed to publish the report on the internet.

Llŷn Coastal Festival and Walking Tours

It was reported that the Coastal Festival would be held during the summer and walking tours had been arranged by the Llŷn AONB Unit for September.

RESOLVED to accept the report.

9. ESTABLISHING A PLANNING MATTERS SUB-GROUP

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager, weighing up and measuring the situation in terms of establishing a Planning Matters Sub-group in accordance with the decision of the Joint-committee at its meeting on 22 October 2014.

It was noted that observations were submitted on relevant planning applications by the Llŷn AONB Service Manager, along with the Joint-committee's statement when applications on wind turbines arose.

A member noted that establishing a sub-group would enable members to prepare more comprehensive observations when it was considered that a planning application would have a detrimental effect on the AONB.

RESOLVED that the Llŷn AONB Service Manager submits a report at the next meeting regarding establishing a Planning Matters Sub-group.

10. PLANNING APPEAL - WIND TURBINE, CRUGERAN, SARN

Submitted – report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager regarding the Planning Appeal lodged following the refusal of planning permission to erect an additional wind turbine on land near Crugeran, Sarn Mellteyrn (Planning Application Reference C14/0974/32/LL), following a request by a member of the Joint-committee to consider the matter.

It was reported that observations had been made on the application by the Llŷn AONB Service Manager which included the Joint-committee's statement in relation to wind turbines.

Members were given an opportunity to produce detailed observations on the Appeal.

Following a request by a member, the Llŷn AONB Service Manager agreed to send a copy of the observations that will be sent to the Inspector on behalf of the Joint-committee to her by e-mail.

RESOLVED to authorise the Llŷn AONB Service Manager to submit observations based on the information below on the appeal to the Inspector on behalf of the Joint-committee:

- **The Joint-committee considers that approving the application would have a substantial detrimental effect on the Llŷn AONB. It is considered that the proposal is contrary to the Joint-committee's duty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.**
- **Applications for wind turbines in the locality had been refused and the appeal should be dismissed.**
- **The Joint-committee disagreed with the observations of Natural Resources Wales (NRW) which noted that it was not considered that there would be a substantial detrimental impact. The Inspector is asked to take into account the specialist local opinion of the Joint-committee which is contrary to the opinion of NRW's desk-top exercise. It was felt that there was inconsistency in NRW's observations on planning matters.**
- **The consultation document of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Draft Deposit Local Development Plan 2011-26 noted that wind turbines of more than 15 metres were not permitted in Llŷn to prevent substantial detrimental impact on the AONB and this has been supported by several bodies, including the Joint-committee.**
- **It is believed that the economic need does not outweigh the damage caused to the AONB.**

11. LOCAL MEMBERS ON THE JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Submitted – the report of the Llŷn AONB Service Manager regarding consideration of changing the constitution of the Joint Advisory Committee in relation to the number of Local Members (Councillors) on the Joint Advisory Committee following a request by a member for the Joint Advisory Committee to consider the matter.

It was noted that in the current system, local members were changed following each electoral period with five Local Members serving on the Joint Advisory Committee at the same time.

A member noted that the electoral boundaries would be changing following the Local Council elections in May 2017 and the current system should be retained until the boundaries were changed.

RESOLVED to keep to the present arrangement for the time being but arrangements to be made to amend the constitution to enable every Local Member to be a member of the Joint Advisory Committee by May 2017.

The meeting commenced at 4.30pm and concluded at 6.35pm

CHAIRMAN

Agenda Item 6

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	18 November 2015
TITLE	Latest Projects from the Llŷn AONB Unit
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Projects Officer
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report updates members of the Joint Advisory Committee on the AONB Unit's recent projects. The themes vary from raising awareness of the AONB, interpretation, events, improving the landscape and administering the Sustainable Development Fund.

2.0 THE LLŷN COAST FESTIVAL

- 2.1 The 2015 Coastal Festival was a huge success with large numbers of residents and visitors participating in a series of events jointly-organised by the AONB Unit, National Trust, Natur Gwynedd, Ecoamgueddfa, the Llŷn Maritime Museum and Plas Heli
- 2.2 The AONB Unit conducted three guided walks in the Cilan, Garn Fadryn and Clynnog Fawr areas. Many people joined – with very positive feedback.
- 2.3 It is the intention of the Partners to meet in the coming weeks in order to start preparing for the 2016 Festival. Normally, the AONB Unit is responsible for coordinating the production of a leaflet which summarizes all the events. We aim to publish by Easter.

3.0 LLYGAD LLŷN

- 3.1 The work of collecting items and creating articles will begin before the end of December for Llygad Llŷn 2016. The intention is to produce around 4,000 again this year and publish by Easter.
- 3.2 In addition to the usual items, it is proposed to include the area's traditional gates-upon the request of a member of the public. If there is any other desired item for us to consider including, please contact the AONB Unit.

4.0 PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

- 4.1 In the 2015 edition of Llygad Llŷn 2015, a photography competition was held, themed "Llŷn's Heritage" – with the closing date September 25th. The competition is held every two years as an effort to promote the area's special characteristics.

- 4.2 Many photos were entered and the intention is to decide on a shortlist and winner shortly, and to hold a prize-giving event during December,

5.0 DISCOVER SCENIC WALES CALENDR 2016

- 5.1 A special calendar has been published now for some time, jointly between the Welsh AONB's and National Parks. Each area contributes to the cost, with a different area co-ordinating each year. Llŷn is responsible this time.
- 5.2 The calendar aims to raise awareness of Wales' protected landscapes and contains impressive landscape photos from the 8 areas as well as photos themed: community; biodiversity; historical Environment and sustainable recreation.
- 5.3 The photos have now been transferred to the designers and we are awaiting a draft copy.
- 5.4 We aim to have the finalised calendar ready by mid-December and each member of the Joint Advisory Committee will receive a copy through the post.

6.0 UNDERGROUNDING

- 6.1 This is a summary of the project undertaken jointly between Scottish Power, Llŷn AONB, Ynys Môn AONB and Clwydian Hills and Dee Valley AONB – to identify possible sites for undergrounding electric cables to improve the landscape.
- 6.2 Considerable work has been undertaken in Llŷn during the last few months and in particular on Mynydd Cilan.
- 6.3 A meeting was held on October 7th between Scottish Power, Eryri Arboriculture and Consultancy and the 3 AONB's in order to update on recent work in all areas. An opportunity was had also to discuss sites in the pipeline. Here in Llŷn, we hope to see work beginning soon on sites in Nefyn (Cors Geirch) and Mynytho commons.

7.0 TRE'R CEIRI INTERPRETATION

- 7.1 This project is a continuation of work in 2013 when information panels were installed at sites near the area's hill forts - Garn Boduan, Garn Fadryn and Tre'r Ceiri.
- 7.2 Discussions have taken place recently with CADW and the aim is to begin shortly on further interpretation work, and specifically – Tre'r Ceiri. The aim is to raise awareness about one of Northern Europe's most important hill forts, improve visitor experience, expand the possible audience and raise awareness of other hill forts in Llŷn.

- 7.3 Elements of the project include disposing three information panels that have deteriorated significantly near the entrances and on the summit, as well as publishing an information leaflet.
- 7.4 It is an important project to the area, and complements CADW's Interpretation Strategy and the Llŷn AONB Management Plan.

8.0 THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

- 8.1 £60,000 was allocated to each Welsh AONB in the 2015/16 financial year.
- 8.2 For your information, nearly £64,000 has been allocated to worthy projects in the area and therefore, the AONB Unit are not taking any more applications at this present time. Even though there is overspend, we have received confirmation from Natural Resources Wales that additional funds are available.
- 8.3 There will be an opportunity at the meeting to see a summary and short presentation about some recent successful projects.

9.0 RECOMENDATION

- 9.1 The members are asked to accept the above information.

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	18 November 2015
TITLE	Planning related matters
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Service manager
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been included on the JAC's agenda to present information on planning matters relevant to Llŷn and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1.2 In accordance with the service agreement the AONB service provides comments on planning applications which are within the AONB or nearby in the case of applications which could have an effect on the designated area. Comments are made on around 100 applications annually.
- 1.3 This report includes information on some recent planning appeals and the possibility of setting up a Planning Sub-group.

2.0 PLANNING APPEALS

- 2.1 **Wind turbine 34m to blade tip. Crugeran, Sarn Mellteyrn.** Appeal dismissed; the main reason for decision was:
 - “the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area with particular regard to its effect on the Llŷn Peninsula Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB) and including its effect on visual amenity.”
- 2.2 **Wind turbine 48.6m to blade tip. Tir Dafydd, Sarn Mellteyrn.** Appeal dismissed, main reasons for the decision was:
 - “The impact of the proposal on the Landscape Conservation Area and Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest and views into and out of the Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
 - The visual impact of the proposal on nearby residents”.
- 2.3 **Demolish existing chalet and erect new dwelling. Site by Glyndwr, Abersoch.** Appeal dismissed, with main reason for decision being:

- “the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, having particular regard to its location within the Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).”

2.4 **Wind turbine 67m to blade tip. Moelfre Llanaelhaearn.** Awaiting decision.

2.5 **6 Maes Awel, Abersoch. Alterations to dwelling house.** Awaiting decision.

3.0 SOLAR PANELS

3.1 To date numerous planning applications for solar panels on rooftops have been approved within the AONB. Generally the visual effect has been small due to the fact that the actual buildings are already in place.

3.2 Lately however there has been an increase in interest and in the number of applications for solar panels on the ground and solar farms. An update on this issue will be provided at the meeting.

4.0 ESTABLISHMENT OF PLANNING SUB-GROUP

4.1 A report on this matter had been presented to the previous JAC meeting (please refer to attached minutes). The report drew attention to various relevant matters and the pros and cons of establishing a planning sub-group.

4.2 There was no clear conclusion on the matter and the decision made was to place the matter on the next meeting's agenda. From the AONB Unit's viewpoint there is no change in the circumstances and it is suggested that the existing procedure for dealing with planning is retained.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Accept the information

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	18 November 2015
TITLE	AONB Management Plan
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Service manager
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is presented to members of the Joint Advisory Committee to provide an update on the work of revising and updating the AONB Management Plan.
- 1.2 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 there is a statutory obligation on Gwynedd Council, as a relevant Authority, to prepare a Management Plan for the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to review the Plan every 5 years.

2.0 PROGRESS TO DATE

- 2.1 To date numerous steps have been taken to revise and update the existing Management Plan which was completed in 2010 , as follows:
- A review of the existing Plan (by Council staff)
 - Collating new data – including commissioning a State of the AONB Report– copies of this will be available to JAC members as it contains useful and interesting information.
 - Consulting with relevant organisation such as CADW, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, Hunaniaith, Agricultural Unions, Partneriaeth Tirlun Llŷn, The National Trust
 - A workshop with JAC members when various themes were discussed including the Ecosystem Approach, Llŷn AONB’s Special Qualities, changes within the area and Management Plan policies.
 - Updating and revising sections of the existing Plan.

3.0 PART 1 OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 3.1 Part 1 of the revised Plan (for 2015-20) consists of the following sections:
- **Introduction**
 - **Context**

- **The Ecosystem Approach**
- **Llyn's Special Qualities**
- **Vision for the Future**

3.2 These sections of the Plan have been attached as an Appendix to this report.

4.0 PART 2

4.1 The AONB Unit's staff have begun work on Part of the Plan. The intention is to change the make-up of Part 2 for the revised Plan and have sections relating to specific features (rather than include them all together as in the existing Plan). Also, much of the background information is to be placed in a supplementary document so as to make the Plan easier to follow and understand.

4.2 All sections or chapters will include a summary of the features, identify changes and tendencies and include policies for the future. Part 2 will also include the Action Plan which will identify specific actions that are to be implemented during the plan period.

4.3 The aim is to bring Part 2 of the revised Plan before the JAC in Spring 2016.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Accept the information

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Management Plan

1.1.1 This is the Management Plan for the Llŷn Peninsula Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Plan has been drawn up by Gwynedd Council and associated partners and is relevant to the section of the Llŷn Peninsula designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1957.

1.1.2 It is a statutory requirement of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act that a Management Plan must be prepared and revised for every Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The first Llŷn AONB Management Plan was published in 2005 was revised in 2009/10. This is a further revision of the original Plan and will be operational from 2014 to 2019.

1.2 What is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)?

1.2.1 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty have been designated due to the exceptional quality of the landscape and views. From this perspective, AONBs are as important as National Parks in terms of conservation – and they have been designated under the same act – namely the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Together AONB's and National Parks are nationally classified as protected landscapes.

1.2.2 The main reason for designating an area as an AONB is to protect and enhance the natural beauty, which includes protecting plants, wildlife and geographical features as well as the features that relate to the landscape. Also the influence of people on the landscape is important and therefore there is a need to protect archaeological historical and architectural remains. People and society is a key part of the character of the area, therefore it is required to care for the social and economic welfare of AONB's, addressing agriculture, forestry and other rural industries as well as the social needs of local communities.

1.2.3 Because they are attractive areas, AONB's are popular with tourists. The local economy gains from the tourism industry but there are also some negative effects such as litter on popular sites, traffic and pressure on local services. A balance must be sought in order manage impacts and protect the natural beauty which makes the area so attractive in the first place.

1.2.4 The Assembly Government's principal planning policy document - Planning Policy Wales (Edition 7) 2014 confirms that AONBs and National Parks are equal in status and must be safeguarded:

“The primary objective for designating AONBs is the conservation and enhancement of their natural beauty. [Planning] policies and development control decisions affecting AONBs should favour conservation of natural beauty, although it will also be appropriate to have regard to the economic and social well-being of the areas. Local authorities, other public bodies and

other relevant authorities have a statutory duty to have regard to AONB purposes” Para 5.3.5.

“National Parks and AONBs are of equal status in terms of landscape and scenic beauty and both must be afforded the highest status of protection from inappropriate developments. In development plan policies and development management decisions National Parks and AONBs must be treated as of equivalent status. In National Parks and AONBs, development plan policies and development management decisions should give great weight to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of these areas.” Para 5.3.6.

1.2.5 The Gower Peninsula was the first Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to be designated in Britain in 1956. Then in 1957, a section of the Llŷn Peninsula was designated an AONB (the third area in Britain). There are now 46 AONBs in the United Kingdom, with a total of 33 in England, 4 in Wales, one on the border between Wales and England and 8 in Northern Ireland.

1.2.6 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are landscapes rich in history, culture and heritage that have developed over thousands of years. This is why AONBs were classified as Category V landscapes by the World Conservation Union (IUCN). Landscapes in this Category were defined in 1994 as an:

“Area of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of such areas.”

1.2.7 The AONB Management Plan has a key role to play in terms of the relationship between the standard of the landscape, the economy and local people and seeks development which sustains and respects all these aspects. This encapsulates sustainable development which is at the heart of the Management Plan.

1.3 The Llŷn Peninsula

1.3.1 The Llŷn Peninsula, or Penrhyn Llŷn in Welsh, is renowned for its diverse and interesting coastline. The beautiful landscape was the basis for its designation. The AONB encompasses around one quarter of the peninsula a total of 15,500 hectares, mostly along the coast, but it also extends inland and includes prominent igneous protrusions.

1.3.2 Llŷn, whose complex geology includes ancient pre-Cambrian rock formations, is a natural extension of the Snowdonia massif. The geology is typified by the wide variation of coastal landscapes, ranging from the steep cliffs of Aberdaron Bay and promontories to the sand dune systems in the Abersoch area. The highest point in Llŷn is the Eifl (564m) mountain range which levels out to a plateau that extends towards the sea and the black

rocks of Mynydd Mawr at the tip of the Peninsula. The area is typified by narrow and winding roads, farms and whitewashed cottages and also includes open areas of ancient common land.

- 1.3.3 Ynys Enlli, which is within the AONB, is a very special island. Its links with Christianity date back to a very early period and pilgrims from near and far have flocked there over the ages. It occupies a prominent place in Welsh folklore and, according to legend, 20,000 saints are said to be buried here. The island has an abundance of historic remains and buildings and is home to a rich variety of wildlife.
- 1.3.4 The peninsula itself also boasts a rich heritage, with important archaeological sites of all periods. These include flint scatters discarded by our earliest prehistoric ancestors about 10,000 years ago to twentieth century military remains. Most of the peninsula and Ynys Enlli are included on the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales (Cadw 1998).
- 1.3.5 In general, agriculture in Llŷn comprises small traditional units and this has helped to protect the landscape and the environment. However, in common with other places, the agriculture industry has witnessed many changes over the years which have resulted in a sharp fall in the number of people who make a living out of farming. There has also been a decline in the fishing industry. Full-time fishermen are few and far between, although there are a number of part-time fishermen. Mineral extraction workings and quarrying industries were extremely important in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- 1.3.6 Due to the lack of job opportunities many local young people and people of working age have moved away and have been replaced by people who have moved in from other parts of Wales and the UK. Many incomers are retired which has increased the percentage of older, non-economically active people, but of late there has been more families moving in. Most incomers have no knowledge of the language or culture and this has had an impact on the cultural character of the area and the use of the Welsh language - however the percentage of Welsh speakers is still among the highest in Wales.
- 1.3.7 Tourism is vital to the local economy, but puts seasonal pressure on local services, infrastructure and the environment. Many of the coastal villages such as Abersoch and Nefyn are now popular tourist destinations. These popular tourist resorts see an increase in population, travel and activities during the holiday season, as well as during other times of the year, although to a lesser degree. This means that the area as a whole is under pressure, but more so along the southern coastline due to the level of activity on the beaches, roads, car parks, boat launching areas and on the sea itself.

1.4 Why is it necessary to prepare an AONB Management Plan?

1.4.1 Section 89 (2) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 places a responsibility on relevant local authorities, such as Gwynedd Council, to: *“prepare and publish a plan which formulates their policy for the management of the area of outstanding natural beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it”*. It also states subsequently in the Act (**Section 84**) that local authorities should:

“take all such action as appears to them expedient for the accomplishment of the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty or so much of it as is included in their area.”

1.4.2 The AONB Unit, Gwynedd Council and the AONB Joint Committee lead on the work of preparing and co-ordinating the Plan. Representatives of numerous organisations and bodies on the JAC include Gwynedd Council, Community Councils, Agricultural Unions, The National Trust and Cyfeillion Llŷn.

1.4.3 It is important to note that even though it is Gwynedd Council and the JAC who are responsible for preparing the Plan, the Plan is relevant to all individuals living and working in the area, all types of visitors and the various organisations and bodies that are active locally.

1.4.4 The Management Plan is one of the most important documents as regards the future of the AONB. Other key documents include Gwynedd key Strategies, the Local Development Plan (which deals with the planning system) as well as other Strategies and Plans by other active organisations in the area.

1.4.5 The Management Plan is a document which provides an overview of all other relevant plans and acts as a means of interlinking them, as well as co-ordinating other strategies and actions. The Management Plan has a vital role therefore in terms of ensuring that the provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 are met, including the responsibilities placed upon every public body *“to have regard for the purpose of the AONB”* in their actions (**Section 85**).

1.5 What is the purpose of the Management Plan?

1.5.1 The purpose of the Management Plan is to manage change in a positive way and influence developments within the area. The Management Plan also supports improvements in the local economy and social welfare in a way beneficial to the natural beauty and other special features.

1.5.2 The Review of the Condition of the AONB forms a core part of the Plan and is crucial in order to oversee the condition of various resources in the area. This information will need to be monitored and updated and will indicate trends and changes over time. Actions beneficial to the AONB can be

promoted based on the information gathered and detrimental developments controlled or limited.

1.5.3 Preparing a Management Plan using this balanced and logical approach will provide a comprehensive and clear picture of the area's condition, agreement on how the area should be managed and the inclusion of suitable measures for achieving this. Consultation is clearly a crucial element of preparing and reviewing the Management Plan in order to secure the agreement and co-operation of various bodies and individuals.

1.5.4 Another of the Plan's key functions is to promote and raise awareness of the AONB. This will include demonstrations to show what these areas have to offer in terms of enjoyment, leisure opportunities, health benefits, local produce and so forth. The Plan will also indicate what developments exert pressure on the area and identify its proposals which should hopefully, in turn, generate backing to support the area. In addition, the Management Plan also:

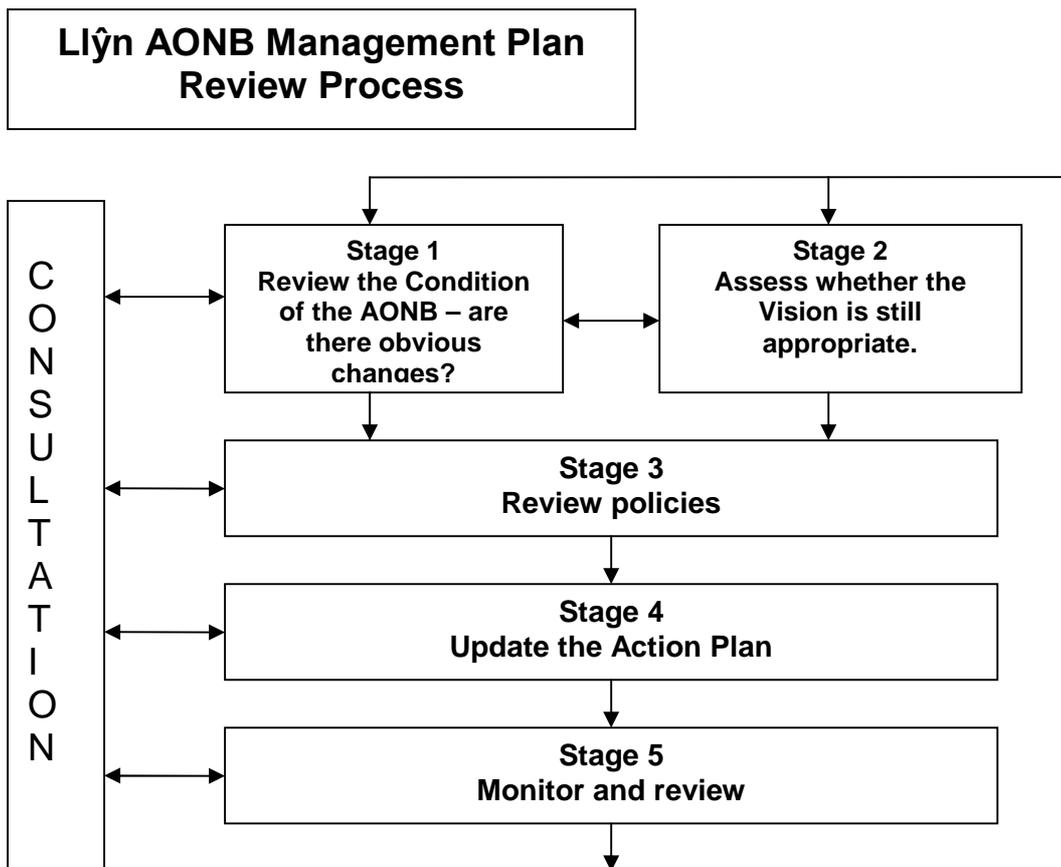
- Determines where activities and resources should be directed;
- Helps support grant applications.

1.6 How was the Plan reviewed?

1.6.1 The Countryside Council for Wales provided detailed guidance on how to review AONB Management Plans in a document published in 2009 namely "Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – Guidance on Reviewing management plans". The Guidance states the need to address many key issues in order to effectively revise the Management Plan.

1.6.2 Also, in order to revise the Plan in this instance, Natural Resources Wales commissioned Craggatak to prepare guidelines on how to incorporate the Ecosystem Approach into the Management Plans.

1.6.3 The following diagram broadly shows the various stages of reviewing the Plan:



1.6.4 As is evident from the diagram, consultation is vital when reviewing the Management Plan. Whilst reviewing the Plan, the AONB Unit had regular consultation with co-workers, partners and the public:

- Gwynedd Council key staff;
- Organizations stated in Section 85 of the Countryside Act as 'relevant organizations' such as Community Councils, Statutory Contractors, etc.
- Local Members;
- Local relevant bodies and organizations such as the Farming Unions, Cyfeillion Llŷn and the National Trust (mainly through the Joint Committee)
- Local individuals - through events, questionnaires and website.

1.7 How will the Plan be implemented?

1.7.1 This Plan will be implemented by the AONB Unit, various Departments within Gwynedd Council and through the work of the partners such as Natural Resources Wales, Keep Wales Tidy and the National Trust. It will be the AONB Unit co-ordinating the work of implementing the Plan in co-operation with the Joint Advisory Committee.

1.7.2 The AONB Unit is located at the Gwynedd Council Offices, Ffordd y Cob, Pwllheli. The other main responsibilities of the Unit are:

- Co-ordinating the work of the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC);
- Promote policies and actions to safeguard, improve and manage the AONB;
- Lead the Council's work on AONB's nationally;
- Raise awareness and increase the understanding of the area;
- Make representations on development applications;
- Search for funding opportunities and prepare grant applications;
- Develop and lead projects which benefit the AONB;
- Provide the Council and its partners with professional advice on duties and responsibilities;
- Manage and deliver the Sustainable Development Fund.

1.7.3 The Llŷn Joint Advisory Committee was established in 1997. Its members include Gwynedd Council, Community Councils, Farming Unions Representatives, the National Trust and other public and voluntary bodies. Its role is to advise local authorities and other bodies on general countryside and environmental management issues and act as a forum for discussion. The Joint Committee has been responsible for co-ordinating the work of reviewing this Management Plan through a series of meetings.

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This Management Plan for the designated Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is relevant to all individuals, organisations, businesses and establishments who operate in the area. Even though the Plan relates to a fairly small part of Wales, what happens in this area has the potential to influence other areas and the wider environment.

2.1.2 Recently (2014) the Welsh Government, in the Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales has set a great challenge to the designated landscapes:

“I want to see our designated landscapes become international exemplars of sustainability. They should be living landscapes with vibrant, resilient communities, with extensive outdoor recreation opportunities, thriving ecosystems and rich biodiversity. With the right leadership they have the potential to be areas where new innovative solutions to the challenges of sustainability in fragile rural areas are tried and tested, understood and publicised”¹.

2.1.3 The Management Plan has been prepared within a complex framework of global, international, national and local issues. The Plan has to tie in to a wide range of plans, strategies, policies and initiatives from other bodies and associations

2.1.4 It is not possible to go into great detail and quote vast sections of documents. Instead a summary is given of the issues in question with reference made to sources and further information – often on websites. Some of the most relevant information is also included in the Appendix to the Plan. In order to try and provide a fairly clear picture of the situation, the relevant context was divided into the following categories: **Global, European, National and Local.**

GLOBAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

2.2 Global warming and climate change

2.2.1 Facts and other information show that global warming is actually happening and that it is having an effect on the climate. This is a very serious issue that could potentially have a significant influence on the world in which we live.

2.2.2 Evidence of this change is clear and obvious and a picture of the world-wide situation in 2014 is available from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).²

¹ The Minister for Natural Resources, Welsh Government (March 2015) A letter to designated landscapes governing bodies.

² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) www.ipcc.ch

- 2.2.3 There are two ways of responding positively to climate change. **Mitigation** involves addressing the causes of climate change (e.g. reducing greenhouse gas emissions, maintain levels of stored organic carbon in soil or increasing levels of CO₂ that is taken from the atmosphere). **Adaptation** involves adjusting to the likely effects of climate change on the environment, communities and economy (e.g. reduce sensitivity to adverse effects of climate change, to respond to potential opportunities, and develop a better understanding of the likely effects of any changes).
- 2.2.4 Responding to climate change requires an integrated approach and an understanding of the interactions between the environment, the economy and the local community. The AONB Management Plan needs to address its response to mitigation and adaptation in relation to climate change by identifying impacts and include appropriate actions.

2.3 Ecosystems and connectivity services

- 2.3.1 In 1992 under the leadership of the United Nations in Rio de Janeiro, most countries of the world signed the Treaty of Biological Diversity.³ This is when the term ecosystem as follows:

"Ecosystem" means a dynamic complex of plants, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit"

- 2.3.2 Ecosystems provide a wide variety of services relating to the environment, produce and public welfare. Usually, ecosystem services are classed in four categories, namely:

- **Supporting services:** such as nutrient cycling, oxygen production and soil formation.
- **Provision services:** such as food, fuel and water.
- **Regulating services:** such as climate regulation / taking carbon from the atmosphere, air quality management, regulation of erosion, water purification, pollination and regulation of natural hazards.
- **Cultural services:** health benefits, spiritual experience, recreational activities and enjoyment.

- 2.3.3 The **ecosystem approach** describes a strategy for integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and fair sustainable use of these resources. It is based on 12 principles (see Section 3 for more information on this).

³ Treaty of Biological Diversity (1992) www.cbd.int/ecosystem

2.3.4 The Welsh Government has committed the country to adopt an ecosystems approach to maintaining and enhancing its natural resources (see below).

2.4 Protecting Nature and Natural Resources

2.4.1 AONB's, along with National Parks, belongs to a network of so-called protected landscapes. An AONB is part of Category V landscapes defined as:

“A protected area where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value: and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values.”⁴

2.4.2 It is **essential** that Category V landscapes have the following characteristics:

- Landscape and / or coastal and island seascape of high scenic quality and / with habitat, flora and fauna and cultural characteristics;
- A balancing interaction between people and nature continued over time that has credibility or a reasonable desire to restore that credibility.
- Unique or traditional land use patterns.

2.4.3 It is also **desirable** to have the following characteristics:

- Opportunities for recreation and tourism that matches the lifestyle and economic activities
- A socially unique or traditional organisation as seen in practice, local approach or beliefs;
- Recognition by artists of all kinds and cultural traditions (now and in the past);
- Potential for ecological restoration and / or landscape.

EUROPEAN MATTERS

2.5 The European Landscape Convention

2.5.1 Although not directly part of the legal framework of the European Union, the individual states have supported the European Landscape Convention (Treaty). This contains important implications in terms of areas of outstanding natural beauty:

- Article 1 contains definitions of what is meant by "landscape", "landscape policy" and "landscape policy objective". It also defines "protected landscape" "landscape management" and "landscape design";
- Article 2 contains the definition of the scope of the term landscape that includes urban areas as well as rural and natural landscapes throughout Europe;
- Article 5 requires all stakeholders to recognize in their legislations that landscape is an essential component of people's habitat, is an expression of their heritage and the foundation of their identity. It requires them to ensure

⁴ www.iucn.org

that the public is involved in developing and implementing policies to protect and enhance the landscape. Policies are also required to complement the landscape with other policy areas including urban and regional planning.

- 2.5.2 As defined in the Treaty, landscape means: "area, as it is perceived by people, whose character derives from the action and interaction of natural factors and / or factors relating to people." The ' The Landscape Convention therefore aims to promote the protection and management of all types of landscapes including natural, rural, urban as well as on land, on water and on the sea.
- 2.5.3 The United Kingdom confirmed adherence to this Agreement in November 2006.

2.6 The Gothenburg Declaration (Protocol) 2001⁵

- 2.6.1 The European Union defined a clear target in the 2001 Gothenburg Summit, which was *"that biodiversity decline should be halted by 2010"*. This was put into action through a document entitled *Communication on Halting Biodiversity by 2010 and Beyond* (Brussels, May 2006). The document outlined the scale of the problem and took a general overview of the adequacy of the EU's response.
- 2.6.2 The document noted four policy areas for action together with ten key aims in order to achieve the target by 2010. A number of these are relevant to Welsh AONBs (See CCW's Guidelines for more details). Therefore AONB management plans have an important role with regard to contributing towards realising the objectives of halting the decline of biodiversity, promoting conservation work and helping biodiversity to adapt to the effects of climate change.
- 2.6.3 In May 2012, the cohorts who supported the statement agreed to make a number of reforms, including a commitment to further reduce emissions until 2020.

2.7 The Water Framework Directive⁶

- 2.7.1 The Water Framework Directive is the most important piece of legislation from the European Commission in relation to water, and its intention is to improve and integrate the way water companies are regulated across Europe. In Wales, much of the implementation work will be done by the Environment Agency, through River Basin Management Plans and Catchments Flood Management Plans.
- 2.7.2 The Framework came into force in December 2000 and the aim is for member states to try and *"achieve good chemical and ecological status in inshore and*

⁵ www.unece.org/env/lrtap/multi_h1.html

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/index_en.html

coastal waters by 2015". A second management circle is to be achieved by 2012 and the third by 2027.

2.7.3 The specific aim of the Framework is to:

- improve the status of water ecosystems and the status of associated wetlands that are dependent on water ecosystems, and prevent their decline;
- promote the sustainable use of water;
- reduce water pollution;
- ensure that groundwater pollution is gradually reduced.

2.7.4 The consultation on the second River Basin Management Plan in Wales ended in April 2015 and it is expected that new requirements will be in place by October.

2.8 The Common Agricultural Policy⁷

2.8.1 Following changes to the Common Agriculture Policy introduced in 2005, farm payments were separated from agricultural production levels – through the Single Payment system. The Glastir system was established by the Assembly in 2012, with the intention of putting more emphasis on tackling climate change and helping to provide services and environmental produce.

2.8.2 The 2014 – 2020 period will see far-reaching changes to the CAP once again there is no doubt that this will lead to a reduction of support that Europe gives to agriculture. A transition period of five years began in early 2015 to introduce a system of Direct Payments Basic (BPS). The new procedure is based on the amount of land that a farmer is farming with 30% of the payment will depend on green measures to protect the natural resources that make it possible for food production.

2.8.3 The changes made to the Common Agricultural Policy aim to create an agricultural industry that corresponds better to the market. However, subsidy is still necessary to keep the industry going as most businesses would not be viable on the basis of the income generated from farming only. In relation to agriculture, the issues that need to be monitored are:

- production levels – in order to prevent agricultural production levels from falling lower than the level necessary to maintain the supply chain and the processing industries;
- undertaking agricultural activity that is consistent with the need to meet wider objectives in relation to landscape and biodiversity.

2.8.4 Welsh farmland is divided into one of three regions - Heathland, Greatly Disadvantaged areas and areas of Disadvantage and grassroots areas together. Heathland payments are limited to land higher than 400meters

⁷ <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/>

rather than the land shown on the 1992 map. This has limited the proportion of the AONB will be regarded heathland – parts of the Eifl, Gyrn Goch and Gyrn Ddu.

2.8.5 The Wales Rural Development Plan (2014– 2020)⁸ includes measures that support agriculture and rural areas, namely Axis 1 – Improving the Competitiveness of the Agricultural and the Forestry Sector; Axis 2 – Improving the Environment and the Countryside; Axis 3 – The Quality of Life in Rural Areas and Diversification of the Rural Economy; and Axis 4 – LEADER.

2.8.6 The next Rural Development Plan for Wales will concentrate on the following:

- competitiveness (on the farm and in the supply chain)
- the environment (agri-environment work, woodlands, renewable energy)
- the community (access to services and LEADER ways of working).
-

2.8.7 It is expected that the Plan, which is relevant to the AONB, will be approved by 2015.

2.9 Strategic Environmental Assessment

2.9.1 In 2001, an EU Directive was introduced which means that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) must be undertaken for relevant plans and programmes. The Directive was made law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations.

2.9.2 The requirement to complete a Habitat Management Assessment was also introduced under European legislation. This became mandatory under the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 2007.

2.9.3 The details of the SEA and HMA requirements are in appendix ().

2.9.4 Although these Assessments have complicated and slowed down the process of reviewing Management Plans, there are a number of advantages to the processes, as they ensure :

- that the plans do not include anything that could damage the special features of the AONB;
- that issues pertaining to sustainability are given adequate attention;
- that management plans are integrated with other relevant plans and strategies;
- that there is a means of ensuring that there is no clash between policies;
- that the interests of internationally important sites for biodiversity are not damaged;

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<http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/farmingandcountryside/cap/ruraldevelopment/?s kip=1&lang=cy>

- that policies for protecting and enhancing protected landscapes are improved
- results are integrated in to the Management Plan review process.

THE UK CONTEXT

2.10 Sustainable Development Strategy

2.10.1 The UK's position on sustainable development is set out in the document *Securing the Future: Delivering the UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy* (2005). The document notes that there are two basic principles for achieving sustainable development in the UK, namely:

- ***Living within environmental limits.*** *Respecting the earth's limited environment, resources and biodiversity – in order to improve our environment, ensure that nothing impedes the natural resources necessary for life, and ensuring that they stay the same for generations;*
- ***Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society.*** *Satisfying the diverse needs of every individual in communities already in existence and those of the future; promoting personal well-being; promoting social cohesion and inclusion; and creating equality of opportunity for all.*

2.10.2 The UK Commission for Sustainable Development ended in 2011. Even though each Government department is responsible for ensuring that policies and activities contribute to sustainable development the responsibility for leading on developing and implementing the policy on an UK level is now within the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

2.11 Major Infrastructure Developments

2.11.1 The 2008 Planning Act introduced a new regime in England and Wales for processing and deciding on major national infrastructure projects. These cover the areas of energy, transport, water, waste water and waste. Since 2011 the responsibility for processing these lies with the Planning Inspectorate.

2.11.2 A relatively few number of projects have been processed so far; eight have been registered and processed in Wales but none in the Gwynedd area. The nature of the projects in question makes it unlikely that similar applications are received within the AONB but applications for such developments occur in some areas (e.g. Wylfa).

THE WELSH CONTEXT

2.12 Sustainable Development

2.12.1 The Welsh Government is committed to sustainable development through Section 121 of the Welsh Government Act 1998. Sustainable Development is defined by the Welsh Government in the document One Wales: One Planet (2009) as development that enhances the economy, the social and environmental wellbeing of people and communities, and achieving a better quality of life for our own and future generations:

- In ways which promote social justice and equality of opportunity; and
- In ways which enhance the natural and cultural environment and respect it's limits - using only our fair share of the earth's resources and sustaining our cultural legacy.

2.12.2 Because of this emphasis on sustainable development the Welsh Government will:

- insist that the national bodies it sponsors (such as Natural Resources Wales) show how sustainable development is integrated in their work
- aim towards sustainable development work in its own policies, many of which will affect the AONB (e.g. in agriculture, forestry and planning).

2.13 Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales

2.13.1 25% of the area of Wales is designated landscapes. They include three National Parks and five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.13.2 As part of the review of designated landscapes, the Welsh Government commissioned a panel chaired by Professor Terry Marsden to advise on two issues:

- The purposes of the landscapes and the benefits of having a single designation
- The governance and managing arrangements of the two designations

2.13.3 A report on Phase One - and the Government's response to it – was published in March 2015. The report makes six recommendations which include expanding the AONB purposes and statutory duties and changing the name to "National Landscapes of Wales".

2.13.4 The Panel's Final Report was published in autumn 2015. The report includes the findings of Phase 1, and also Phase 2 which considers the management and governance of the designated areas. A total of 69 recommendations have been made in the Final Report.

2.13.5 There are significant and far-reaching implications to the recommendations of

the Review Panel and the Minister Carl Sargeant established a Working Group to consider how to implement them.

2.14 Well-being of Future Generations Act

2.14.1 This Bill became law in April 2015. Its purpose is to:

strengthen existing governance arrangements for improving the well-being of Wales to ensure that current needs are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

2.14.2 The act:

- identifies objectives to improve the wellbeing of Wales;
- introduces national indicators that will measure the difference that is made to the well-being of Wales;
- appointed a Commissioner of Future Generations for Wales to be an advocate for future generations;
- make Local Services Boards and well-being plans statutory requirements for integrated community planning.

2.14.3 AONBs and National Parks are considered good places to test practical new approaches to sustainable development. In the future, it is expected that designated landscapes will manage natural resources and try to reach the six goals of well-being set out the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) as indicated in the table below

Aim	Description
Prosperous Wales	An innovative and productive economy, with low carbon emissions, using resources more efficiently and proportionate; which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities for a skilled and educated population.
Resilient Wales	A natural bio diverse environment with healthy and operational ecosystems that helps social and ecological resilience and can adapt to change.
Healthier Wales	A society where people's physical and mental well-being is as well as possible and where the best choices and behaviors are understood for future health benefits.
A more equal Wales	A society which enables people to fulfill their potential regardless of their background or circumstances.

Cohesive communities.	Attractive communities that are viable, safe with good connections.
Vibrant culture where the Welsh language flourishes	A society that promotes and protects the culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and leisure activities.

2.14.4 The designated landscapes, including Llŷn AONB are expected to play their part, and contributed to a range of other policy areas - including the economy, health and welfare and tackling poverty - as well as environmental issues.

2.14.5 The Assembly is also committed to the Green Dragon Standard - an environmental management system based on sustainability. An International and European Environmental Management recognition (ISO 14001 and EMAS) can be achieved if the requirements are met. Since sustainable development is core to the Management Plan the Plan also contributes to Gwynedd Council's aim of achieving the Green Dragon Environmental Management Standard.

2.15 Regulation at sea

2.15.1 The purpose of the 2009 Marine Act was to streamline marine regulations and legislation and improve procedures in order to have more collaboration and understanding. The Act includes sections on creating a Marine Management Organisation; planning; licensing activities; protecting nature; controlling fisheries; modernising and simplifying enforcement powers and access to coastal land. It is hoped that the Act will ensure that the marine and coastal environment are managed more effectively and in a more sustainable manner.

2.15.2 It is the UK Government's responsibility to achieve some duties in relation to the sea, whilst other duties are devolved to the Welsh Government.

2.15.3 In coastal areas such as the Llŷn peninsula, it is imperative that we consider the relationship between the land and the sea. Indeed, the close relationship with the marine environment was a reason for the area's designation and is one of the area's special qualities. The links between land and sea are numerous and varied, with social and economic dimensions as well as environmental ones. A number of documents are available that provide further guidance on the consideration that needs to be given to the features and the relationship between the land and the sea.

2.16 Planning in Wales

2.16.1 The Planning Act (Wales) received Royal assent on 6th July 2015.

2.16.2 There are five main aims to the Act:

- a more modern framework for providing a planning service - under the new Act, it will be possible to make planning applications directly to

Welsh Ministers under certain circumstances

- reinforcing the plan based approach - the Act introduces a legal basis for the preparation of the National Development Framework and Strategic Development Plans
- improve resilience - the Act allows Ministers to order for local planning authorities to work together and that local planning authorities are merged
- placing greater emphasis on the initial process of development management system and improve it - the Act introduces a statutory pre-application procedure for certain categories of planning applications
- enable effective enforcement procedures and appeals - the Act makes changes to enforcement procedures to ensure direct and meaningful steps are taken when planning regulations are broken and to make the appeal system more transparent and efficient.

2.16.3 Along with proposed changes to secondary legislation, policies and guidelines, the Act will:

- help to provide homes, jobs and infrastructure needed by Wales
- offer opportunities to protect and enhance our most important built and natural environments
- supporting the use of the Welsh language.

2.16.4 The strategic framework for guiding development in Wales has been set at this stage in the Wales Spatial Plan – People, Places, Futures 2008 Wales and the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan. However, the above Act introduces a provision to create a National Development Framework and Strategic Development Plans.

2.16.5 Planning policy guidance is given by the Welsh Assembly Government in the Planning Policy Wales document which was revised in 2015. The document provides guidance for a national policy regarding planning matters including Sustainability, Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Heritage and Coastline, Conserving the Historical Environment, Supporting the Economy, Transport, Housing, Tourism and Pollution. With regard to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it notes:

“AONBs have equal status with National Parks in terms of beauty, their landscape and scenery and the highest status of protection must be given to both against inappropriate development. This equal status means that National Parks and AONBs must be treated in the same way in development planning policies and development control decisions. In National Parks and AONBs, development planning policies and development control decisions must place great importance on protecting and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of these areas.”

2.16.6 In addition to the main policy document is a series of documents providing guidance on planning issues relating to specific developments – which is the Technical Advice Note (Wales).

2.17 Natural Resource Management Programme

2.17.1 The Natural Environment Framework (Living Wales) led to the creation of the Natural Resources Management Programme in 2014. The programme includes:

- policy on managing natural resources, including setting national priorities;
- Environment Bill
- making 'ecosystem based management' an integral part of our work. This will include demonstration projects to show the advantages respectively; we can learn through them how and when to implement
- work with Natural Resources Wales and coordinate the performance management arrangements;
- communicate, engage and share information.

2.18 The Environment Bill

2.18.1 The Bill was introduced on 11 May 2015. Its purpose is to create legislation that is necessary to plan and manage natural resources in Wales in a more sustainable and coordinated manner.

2.18.2 According to the Welsh Government, the advantages are:

- assisting the work of addressing environmental challenges that we face and to focus on the opportunities that our resources offer
- establish statutory targets to reduce carbon emissions and budgets to support their delivery
- addressing issues relating to the operation the charge on carrier bags
- improve the processes for waste management
- simplify the law on environmental regulatory systems including shellfish fisheries management, marine licenses, flood risk management and land drainage.

2.18.3 The AONB Management Plan will address many issues that are central to the new Framework such as sustainable development, ecosystem services, limits to growth and climate change.

2.19 Heritage Bill

2.19.1 The Heritage Bill was introduced during May 2015. The Welsh Government has stated that the Bill is intended to:

- protect listed buildings and scheduled monuments more effectively;
- manage the historic environment in a more sustainable way;
- ensure greater transparency and accountability in terms of opinions and decisions made about the historic environment.

2.20 Shoreline Management Plans

- 2.20.1 The Welsh Government is to require local authorities, Environment Agency Wales and other bodies involved in coastal management work to produce together Shoreline Management Plans for the entire Welsh coast.
- 2.20.2 SMPs are un-statutory high level policy documents, for planning for flood risk management and coastal erosion. SMPs provide large-scale assessment of the risks of coastal erosion and coastal flooding and offer policies to help manage these risks.
- 2.20.3 SMP management policies are designed in order to create long- term sustainability (for the next 100 years). Management policies for all parts of the coast are suggested and consider various factors such as the location of coastal communities, present defences, tourism areas and amenities, conservation and heritage sites and the wider natural environment.
- 2.20.4 The various policies suggested in the Shoreline Management Plans are:
1. Keep the line: meaning that defences are maintained, repaired or upgraded in line with their current alignment.
 2. Move the line forward: meaning that new defences are built on the sea side of the original defences.
 3. Managed alignment: allow the shoreline to move back in a controlled manner.
 4. No active intervention: meaning that the alignment continues to evolve naturally if the defences (if there are any) fail.
- 2.20.5 The first generation of SMP's were completed in the early 2000's and the next generation in 2011/12. It's likely that another review of SMP's will be held fairly soon, within the next 5 to 10 years.

2.21 Other National Strategies and Plans

- 2.21.1 The Assembly Government publishes a number of national strategies and plans, on various subjects that are relevant to Llŷn and the AONB. The need to support and protect the environment and sustainable development will be considered in these documents because of the Assembly's commitment to sustainable development on a national level. All these documents are relevant considerations for local plans and strategies produced by authorities such as Gwynedd Council.

GWYNEDD

2.22 Corporate Strategies

- 2.22.1 The *Singled Integrated Plan for Gwynedd and Anglesey* incorporates a vision and an operation plan for the Local Services Board for the 2013-17 period.
- 2.22.2 The purpose of the Plan is "to work together to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area by 2025." "Promoting and sustaining our environment" is one of eight key issues that has been identified as the "complex and long" issues that will need to be addressed
- 2.22.3 In May 2013, Gwynedd Council adopted its *Strategic Plan* for 2013-2017. The main aim of the Plan is to set the Council's vision for 2013-2017. It is annually revised and the 2015-17 Strategic Plan was approved by the Council's Cabinet following a public consultation in June 2015.
- 2.22.4 The Council's vision during this period is to "continue to meet the needs of Gwynedd's residents regardless of the Council's dwindling resources..... by transforming services to be services that we are able to maintain the future."

2.23 Natur Gwynedd

- 2.23.1 Natur Gwynedd is the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for areas in Gwynedd situated outside the Snowdonia National Park.
- 2.23.2 It was developed by a wide partnership of establishments and individuals. The Natur Gwynedd Plan states what needs to be done to protect our wildlife and highly important natural habitats.
- 2.23.3 Natur Gwynedd objectives are:
- helping to conserve biodiversity of Gwynedd and, therefore, to contribute to biodiversity conservation in Wales, the UK and the world.
 - developing effective local partnerships to make sure that what we do will be maintained in the long term.
 - increase knowledge of the biodiversity of Gwynedd.
 - raising public awareness of biodiversity in Gwynedd.
- 2.23.4 The *Gwynedd Council Environmental Strategy – Protecting the Environment for Today and Tomorrow* was adopted in 2002 and revised in 2005. The Strategy has been prepared in order to give direction to the Council's work of improving and protecting the local and world-wide environment.
- 2.23.5 It states in the introduction to the Environmental Strategy that high priority will be given to:
- Reducing private and industrial waste, encourage recycling and reusing and promote ways of saving energy;

- Protecting and enhancing the area's natural environment and wildlife
- Encouraging people to enjoy, respect and become more aware of the richness and contribution of the local environment
- Maintaining and enhancing the quality of the built area in a way that respects and enhances the culture, environment and local character;
- Promoting effective and sustainable transport that will provide more choice for consumers.

2.24 The Development Plan

2.24.1 The Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in 2009. The UDP is currently in the process of being replaced by the Joint Local Development Plan Gwynedd and Anglesey. The Plan's Deposit Draft has been subject to a formal consultation period up to the end of March 2015. The UDP is expected to be adopted in late 2016 / early 2017 having received and considered the Inspector's Report on the comments / objections received.

2.24.2 The UDP contains specific policies about the AONB and other statutory and un-statutory designations as well as specific planning issues such as new housing, traffic, economic developments and tourism. In addition, the Gwynedd Landscape Design Guidance and the Gwynedd Design Guidance are important related documents.

2.24.3 These planning tools play a key part in the protection and development of the AONB. Appropriately implementing the policies of the Planning Designs and Guidance is also highly important. This will form part of the Process made by planning officers and relevant Committees of the Council. The AONB Unit will have the opportunity to comment on planning applications that could affect the designated area.

2.25 Other Plans and Strategies

2.25.1 In addition to the above a number of other plans and strategies influence the AONB and are relevant for consideration in the context of the Management Plan. These can be divided into two types, namely, single purpose plans i.e. dealing with forestry or the economy, tourism etc., or Funding Schemes that would include agri-environment schemes, forestry grants etc.

2.25.2 Many of the plans and strategies prepared by Gwynedd Council, on a large number of issues, are single-purpose plans that must comply with the Community Strategy and Environmental Strategy. The most apparent of these with respect to relationship and impact on the AONB are the Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy, Gwynedd Tourism Strategy, Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Gwynedd Local Transport Plan, Gwynedd Cycling Strategy, Waste Disposal and Recycling Plan and the Floods and Coastal Erosion Policy.

2.25.3 A number of plans and strategies prepared by partners are also relevant. The most prominent of these are the Pen Llŷn and Sarnau Special Area of Conservation Action Plan (a partnership with various organisations including Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Water) and Natur Gwynedd Biodiversity Action Plan. The Natur Gwynedd Plan is the one which operates locally to comply with the Assembly's responsibility in terms of protecting biodiversity on a national level.

2.25.4 There is also a variety of public and private organisations operating within the AONB and these produce a number of plans, strategies and policy statements or other documents that could be relevant to the area's future. Below is a list of the main organisations which are relevant to the AONB:

Natural Resources Wales	Welsh Water/Dŵr Cymru (Glas Cymru)
SP/ MANWEB	National Grid
Cadw	National Trust
British Telecom	Telecommunication Operators/ providers
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust	

2.25.5 Some of these organisations and agencies are under a specific obligation to consider the well-being of the AONB under the Access and Rights of Way Act 2000 (Section 85). Under the requirements of the Act these organisations and agencies must have "regard for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty when exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in the area of outstanding natural beauty". It is the responsibility of Gwynedd Council to raise awareness of this obligation, engage in a positive dialogue and assess how the various organisations and agencies conform to this responsibility.

3. The Ecosystem Approach

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This review of the Llŷn AONB Management Plan is based on the ecosystem approach of managing the natural environment. This has been undertaken by following the guidance prepared on behalf of Natural Resources Wales by Craggtak, as well as a number of other relevant background documents.

3.1.2 In essence, the Ecosystem approach is a method of considering nature and the natural environment before anything else. Although the landscape and coastline of Llŷn is very beautiful with a wealth of wildlife, more than this is provided by nature and the natural environment. In reality there is a great value to the services the natural environment and ecosystems provide, and it is important to recognise them, to appreciate them and aim to sustain them.

3.2 Ecosystems

3.2.1 Defining an ecosystem is an important starting point. The Convention on Biological Diversity – CBD) and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) defines an ecosystem as:

“A dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit”.

3.2.2 Biodiversity is the foundation of the ecosystem. Nature has an inherent value and contributes a great deal to the continuous well-being of people and society. It is not only beauty and views that are provided but food, jobs, building materials, and a basis for farming, forestry and quarrying.

3.2.3 The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) was established in 2001 by the United Nations. The purpose of the Assessment is to try and anticipate what the impact of change will be on ecosystems, on the wellbeing of people and communities in the future and to suggest measures to care for and enhance the condition of ecosystems globally. Over 1,300 experts contributed to the work that assessed the condition of the world's ecosystems and the services they contribute, and measures were suggested in order to maintain, restore and promote making sustainable use of ecosystems.

3.2.4 The findings of the MA were that human actions had depleted a great deal of the earth's natural resources placing a strain on the environment and making it difficult for the world's ecosystems to sustain future populations. It was concluded that it would be possible to undo a great deal of the

damage by changing policies and practices – but the essential changes have not thus far been adopted.

3.3 Ecosystem Services

3.3.1 As we have explained the natural environment provides ‘services’ for us to live. These provisioning services include food, work opportunities, trees, building materials and a wide range of other products. In addition, the environment is responsible for matters such as water purification, nutrient cycling, provision of fresh air etc. By now there is an agreement that it is possible to place these Ecosystem Services in four categories as follows:

- **Provisioning Services** – products such as food, fibre and medicine.
- **Regulating Services** – water purification, maintaining air standards and climate regulation.
- **Cultural Services** – well-being by contact with nature and education.
- **Supporting Services** - processes required for other services such as soil formation and nutrient cycling.

3.3.3 The following is a more detailed analysis of the Ecosystem Services in the above four categories:

Provisioning Services

- Food – ecosystems provide the circumstances for food to grow. The majority of food comes from farming systems but there are also natural sources such as fish, trees and food from natural sources e.g. blackberries, mushrooms.
- Raw materials: Ecosystems provide a variety of materials for building and fuel - including trees, fuel and oil.
- Fresh water: Ecosystems play an essential part in the water cycle, by regulating the flow of water and water purification. Forests and vegetation regulate how much water is available locally.
- Medical Resources: A variety of plants that are used as natural medicines are provided by wildlife and ecosystems and providing raw materials to the pharmaceutical industry.

Regulating Services

- Local climate and air quality standards. Trees provide shelter whilst forests regulate rainfall and water provision. Trees are also important to dispose of air pollution.
- Carbon storage – ecosystems regulate global climate through carbon dioxide storage and treatment – greenhouse gases.

- Limiting extreme climate events – ecosystems form a buffer in the case of some extreme circumstances e.g. trees stabilise steep hills and wetland areas absorb water.
- Treating waste water – wetlands and peat lands filter and purify water.
- Preventing erosion and maintaining soil fertility - vegetation protects land from erosion and healthy ecosystems maintain land fertility.
- Pollination – insects and wind pollinate trees and other plants, and so do some birds.
- Biological Regulation – ecosystems control pests and diseases via the natural order of predators and parasites e.g. birds, bats and insects.

Habitat or Supportive Services

- Habitat for species – everything is provided for species – food, water, shelter. Some species will be dependent on different ecosystems at different times e.g. birds, fish, mammals.
- Sustain genetic diversity – namely the difference between different populations and species.

Cultural Services

- Recreation and physical and mental health e.g. walking or outdoor sports affording an opportunity to keep healthy and to relax.
- Tourism – Ecosystems and biodiversity are the basis for special types of tourism that contribute to the economy of areas/countries and benefit communities.
- An aesthetic appreciation and inspiration for the culture of art and design. There is a close connection between language, knowledge and the natural environment and wildlife and the natural environment have inspired art, culture and science.
- Spiritual experience and sense of place – there is a spiritual link with special locations e.g. Bardsey and wildlife and the natural environment is linked to religion and customs.

3.4 What is the Ecosystem Approach Management Method?

3.4.1 Management based on the ecosystem is defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity as follows:

“A strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way”.

3.4.2 In addition, the Convention has defined 12 principles to implement EA – however they may be adapted for a purpose. The Welsh Government has

accepted the 12 principles for implementation according to the ecosystem approach in this country. A summary of the principles are noted below:

Principle 1: The objectives of management of land, water and living resources are a matter of societal choice.

Principle 2: Management should be decentralised to the lowest appropriate level.

Principle 3: Ecosystem manager should consider the effects (actual or potential) of their activities on adjacent and other ecosystems.

Principle 4: Recognising potential gains from management, there is usually a need to understand and manage the ecosystem in an economic context.

Principle 5: Conservation of ecosystem structure and functioning, in order to maintain ecosystem services, should be a priority target of the ecosystem approach.

Principle 6: Ecosystems must be managed within the limits of their functioning.

Principle 7: The ecosystem approach should be undertaken at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales.

Principle 8: Recognising the varying temporal scales and lag-effects that characterise ecosystem processes, objectives for ecosystem management should be set for the long term.

Principle 9: Management must recognise that change is inevitable.

Principle 10: The ecosystem approach should seek the appropriate balance between, and integration of, conservation and use of biological diversity.

Principle 11: The ecosystem approach should consider all forms of relevant information, including scientific and indigenous and local knowledge, innovations and practices.

Principle 12: The ecosystem approach should involve all relevant sectors of society and scientific disciplines.

3.5 How can the Ecosystem Approach entail making better policies?

3.5.1 There are a number of benefits from using the ecosystem approach to making effective policies:

- Gives a better analysis of the matters in question.
- A means of defining options and discussing with others.
- A way of assessing costs / benefits of options
- Taking decisions with the minimum cost and the maximum benefits
- Working with partners to realise the policy
- Evaluating and adapting the policy bearing in mind the benefits provided by the Natural Environment

3.6 Incorporating the Ecosystem Approach in the Management Plan

3.6.1 The Ecosystem approach seeks opportunities to work with natural systems to realise the objectives and policies. It will measure the negative and beneficial impact of policies on the services provided by nature/the natural environment. Undertaking this effectively will in the long term, on a wide scale, entail looking beyond the usual policy boundaries, undertaking an evaluation of the services in question and include those that benefit from the Services and those who provide.

3.6.2 As part of the review of this Management Plan, we have sought to give attention to all the relevant issues in terms of incorporating the Ecosystem Approach. The relevant matters are listed below, but it has to be noted that resources did not permit us to give detailed attention to all the matters noted.

- Confirm what are the area's Special Qualities
- Consider all the designated area in terms of the ecosystem and services as well as the adjacent area if required.
- Identify services/benefits of the area's ecosystem and consider how policies would change /influence them.
- Give value to the changes in eco services, in order to consider them as part of the cost/benefit.
- Seek opportunities to use ecosystem services to realise policies.
- Identify legal and biophysical limitations in terms of the policy options and see how these will change over time.
- Identify the risks to the natural environment from the policies and how these could change over time.
- Consider all who may be affected by the changes to ecosystem services as a result of the policies contained in the Plan.

4.0 THE LLŶN PENINSULA – A SPECIAL PLACE!

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The Llŷn Peninsula was one of the first areas in Britain to be designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty back in 1956. To the present day, there are only five AONBs in Wales - the others are Anglesey, Clwydian Range, Gower Peninsula and Wye Valley.
- 4.1.2 The main basis for designating part of the area as an AONB in 1956 was the natural beauty of the landscape and coast, wide-ranging views and the undeveloped nature of the area. These features continue to make the area special, but for the purposes of the Management Plan, it is important to attempt to make a more detailed analysis of the area's special features and define all of its qualities.
- 4.1.3 When we refer to "qualities", this is a reference to the feature or element of the area's character that is special, unique or "valued". After identifying and defining the special qualities, we can proceed to measure the size and condition of these features (and the resources that are part of them), including measuring what changes have occurred over time and continue to happen.
- 4.1.4 Some of the area's qualities will continue to be relatively unchanged, such as the beautiful landscape and varying coastline as they are based on the area's geology and vegetation. However, in the case of some qualities there has been some deterioration over time, such as a reduction in the size and quality of habitats, wildlife and historical buildings.
- 4.1.5 A number of conservation designations have been made in different parts of Llŷn. These acknowledge the high value of the landscape, coast, geology, wildlife and habitats, remains and historical buildings. Additional information regarding these designations has been included in the assessment of the area's condition. The most important tier of designations is the European designations such the Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar sites. Following this, we have the National designations, then regional designations and then local designations. The key designations are ones that are based on legislation (statutory), whilst more local or regional designations are usually non-statutory.

4.2 The Special Qualities

- 4.2.1 Considerable attention was given to identifying and defining the special qualities of the area in the original Management Plan and that work remains relevant. The work included considering various sources of information and evidence base including the views of local people and visitors. In brief, these were the main sources considered:

- Conservation designations;
- LANDMAP Landscape Assessment;

- Professional views of different officers and experts;
- Public opinion of both locals and tourists;
- Sources of inspiration for literature and poetry.

4.2.2 Based on this work, it was concluded that a number of qualities were relevant to Llŷn with a series of features contributing towards each specific quality. For example, if the beauty of the landscape is the quality, the features that contribute to that include geology, vegetation, field boundaries etc.

4.2.3 When reaching conclusions regarding the qualities for the purpose of the Plan, an attempt was made to be specific and clear in terms of the Llŷn AONB rather than including broad headings that could be relevant to any area. Therefore, for the purpose of this Management Plan, the following were defined as the special qualities of the Llŷn AONB:

- Landscape, Coast and Sea
- A clean environment and tranquillity
- A wealth of wildlife
- Historic environment
- The Welsh Language and Culture
- Close-knit communities
- Skills and economy with its roots in the local area
- An opportunity to roam and enjoy

4.2.4 To follow, there is an outline of the area's qualities according to the above-mentioned categories illustrated by examples to demonstrate why these features are special. More facts and information about the AONB's resources is available in the Review of the Condition of the AONB.

4.3 Beautiful landscape and coast

4.3.1 Llŷn is an area of beautiful coastal and rural landscape that offers striking views. The landscape varies from fertile lowlands to igneous hills that are dotted around the area such as Garn Fadrun, Garn Boduan and Foel Gron. The vegetation creates a strong visual impact by creating a colourful picture that changes from season to season.

4.3.2 From the hilltops, excellent views are to be had to every direction and the coastal nature of the area is obvious. The Llŷn landscape is divided into a patchwork of roads, streams and rivers such as afon Desach, afon Geirch, afon Daron and afon Soch. Traditional field boundaries, mainly cloddiau and stone walls are also a prominent feature in the landscape and a very important historical resource.

4.3.3 The coast forms an important part of the appearance and character of Pen Llŷn. It varies greatly – parts of the northern coastline are rocky but sandy beaches are to be found here and there such as Nefyn, Towyn and Whistling Sands. Larger beaches are to be found on the southern

coastline and sand dunes are to be found in the Abersoch area. The features include high cliffs, caves, stacks and islands, promontories and stone and sandy beaches with interesting local names.

- 4.3.4 Traces of people's habitation on the landscape contribute to the visual character of the landscape. The most rural parts are characterised by small houses and cottages and individual farms – similar to parts of south-west Ireland. Because of the lack of other developments, there is a strong feeling of an unspoilt, natural landscape to Llŷn. Small, dispersed villages are also characteristic of the area. Because of their compact nature and the traditional building materials, they usually blend naturally into the landscape.
- 4.3.5 As a result of its striking natural beauty, Llŷn has made an impression on artists, including local artists such as Elis Gwyn Jones, Emrys Parry and Rob Piercy, along with some who came to the area for a period of time to practice their craft. Pictures of the striking views of Llŷn are very prominent in the work of artists, with views of the sea, sunset, various landscapes, the coastline, cottages and local characters frequent themes.

4.4 The Changing Sea

- 4.4.1 The sea is never far away on the Llŷn Peninsula and has greatly influenced the area's character. The Sound (*Swnt*) that lies between Bardsey Island and the mainland demands respect – it can be raging and dangerous as many currents meet here.
- 4.4.2 The sea gave subsistence to generations of Llŷn people and a number of coastal villages grew in the area as a result of the fishing industry. Small ports were developed in a number of areas along the Llŷn coast in the seventeenth century and Nefyn was one of the busiest. Agricultural produce would be exported through the ports and goods such as pepper, cloth, crockery, vinegar etc. were imported. Coal was also imported to many small ports in Llŷn and coal yards or the remains of coal yards can be seen in many places today, such as Porth Ysgaden, Whistling Sands and Aberdaron. Lime kilns were developed near some of these ports, and their remains can be seen in several places such as Abersoch and Porth Ysgaden.
- 4.4.3 The construction of sailing ships developed to be an important industry in Pwllheli, Nefyn and Porthdinllaen throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century. As a result of this industry, a tradition of seafarers developed in the area and a number of men from the area, in particular from Nefyn, succeeded to become captains. A Maritime Museum has been established in Nefyn to keep the relics of the period and to record the history.
- 4.4.4 Piers were developed in order to serve the quarrying and mineral industries, such as for exporting granite in Trefor, Porth y Nant and Carreg y Llam and in Hell's Mouth and Porth Ysgo for vessels which carried

manganese from the Rhiw area. The remains of some of these structures can still be seen on the beaches today.

- 4.4.5 Naturally, the sea has played a prominent part in the area's culture. A number of shipwrecks have occurred along the shores and there are many stories collecting bounty off the beaches and even about attracting ships to difficulties. There are also tales of smuggling and pirates associated with Llŷn. Descriptions of the sea are obvious in the work of poets also and tales of seamen, ships and shipwrecks are common.
- 4.4.6 In the present day, the sea is a valuable economic resource in terms of pleasure boats, jet-skis, fishing etc., and the beaches attract thousands of locals and tourists in the summer.

4.5 A clean environment and tranquillity

- 4.5.1 The Llŷn Peninsula, in particular at its western point, is one of the few areas where peace and tranquillity can be found. Something like this is a "feeling" or impression of a place and it is difficult to identify and measure it clearly. Despite the changes that have occurred over time and the fact that places are busier, parts of Llŷn continue to be very rural and peaceful in their nature. The poet, J. Glyn Davies has given a very vivid description of Llŷn that refers to this feeling of tranquillity:

*Heulwen ar hyd y glennydd a haul hwyr, a'i liw
Ar y mynydd,
Felly Llŷn ar derfyn dydd,
Lle i enaid gael llonydd" - J.Glyn Davies*

- 4.5.2 A number of different elements, not just a single thing, contribute to creating this tranquillity. The types of things that contribute are the absences of large scale developments (houses or industry), few motorists and traffic, very little traffic to disturb the peace, very few things moving and little light to disturb the darkness of night. The distant and peripheral nature of the area has again been a key factor in terms of creating and maintaining this quality.
- 4.5.3 In addition to being peaceful, levels of pollution are low here in Llŷn. Again, due to the remote nature of the area, there haven't been many significant developments and industries here, traffic levels are low apart from during the main holiday periods. The quality of the soil, air, water and seawater continues to be very high here.

4.6 Wildlife and habitats

- 4.6.1 A wealth of wildlife lives in various habitats in the Llŷn Peninsula. Over time, the rural and agricultural character of the area, as well as the calm and non-polluted nature of the area, has contributed to the continuation of a number of species that are now considered rare in the British Isles.

- 4.6.2 Nowadays, natural or semi-natural vegetation, namely unimproved and uncultivated land such as heaths, wetlands and woodlands are rare in the United Kingdom. Despite the fact that they are in decline, heaths are a prominent and important feature in Llŷn and wet, dry, low and coastal heaths are to be found here. They contribute not only as a habitat and a landscape feature, but also on a historical and cultural level and as a leisure resource (many of the heaths in the area are common lands). The heaths sustain a wide variety of interesting pastures and plants in addition to the heather and gorse that are so colourful during August and September.
- 4.6.3 Another important feature in Llŷn is the coastal habitat including cliffs, slopes, coastal land, beaches and sand dunes. The cliffs and slopes maintain a variety of vegetation that is slowly developing into coastal pastures and heaths and they are also home to a variety of sea birds as well as a habitat for hornets and some rare invertebrate creatures.
- 4.6.4 Due to the importance of a number of marine habitats and species seen in the Llŷn a'r Sarnau area, for example the reefs and the estuaries, the area has been designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats and Species Directive. The reefs support a wide variety of flora and fauna communities including a variety of seaweed forests, sponges and sea squirts.
- 4.6.5 The grey seal is common to the area, along with otters, harbour porpoises and bottlenose dolphins that can be seen in the seas on the southern coast. Also, the location and special features of the bay is a suitable habitat for the Risso's dolphin.
- 4.6.6 Due to its rural landscape a varying coastline Llŷn is a habitat for a large variety of land birds and sea birds, some of them being rare species. Among the rare birds is the chough that is used as the AONB's logo. In 2002, there were 67 sites and pairs in Gwynedd with a vast number of these in Llŷn. Other bird species of European importance are to be found here also, including: the Puffin, the Guillemot and the Manx Shearwater.

4.7 Historic Landscape

- 4.7.1 People have lived in Llŷn for thousands of years. Archaeological remains, from individual sites and monuments, to the broader landscape with its distinctive field and settlement pattern, link today with the distant past. They remind us that Llŷn is an ancient place where generations of people have lived.
- 4.7.2 The earliest evidence for human occupation dates from around 10,000 years ago, a period known as the Mesolithic. Chipped stone and flint have been discovered and tools such as knives and scrapers. From the Neolithic period (4,500-2,500 BC) there are burial chambers and standing stones and also of significant importance from this period, there is an ax factory on Mynydd Rhiw.

- 4.7.3 The most striking remains from early civilisation in the area are the Iron Age hill forts located on many hills in the area such as Garn Boduan, Garn Fadrun, and Penarfynydd in Rhiw. The largest fort is Tre'r Ceiri, 460m above sea level. This was an important defence fort and any oncoming threats could be seen from afar. It's fascinating that much of the fort is still standing – the main defence wall is clearly seen as well as the remains of about 150 circle huts.
- 4.7.4 Religion along the ages has left its mark on Llŷn – in terms of the landscape, its history, the society and the culture. In terms of historical remains, a number of stones with inscriptions on them dating back to the Early Christian era (5th Century) have been discovered in Llŷn, for example, with the names of the priests VERACIVS and SENACVS that were discovered near Capel Anelog, Uwchmynydd. Also, from the same era, monk training schools, small churches (*llan*) that developed into prominent church sites were established, such as in Clynnog Fawr, Llanaelhaearn and Aberdaron. A number of these early sites were named after the Celtic Saints such as Beuno (Clynnog, Pistyll and Carnguwch), Hywyn (Aberdaron) and Cwyfan (Edern and Tudweiliog).
- 4.7.5 From a more recent era, remains of former industries of Llŷn such as the granite quarries and mineral mining, survive. Associated with them are the inclines, stages and docks used to export these raw materials, many of which can be seen clearly to the present day. In this period, before mass transport, communities grew up around industries forming settlements and villages in places such as Trefor, Llithfaen and Nant Gwrtheyrn. The granite quarries provided the stones for building many of the buildings in Llŷn in this period and the majority of the traditional and listed buildings of the area have been built from local granite.
- 4.7.6 Some other historical structures of interest are to be seen in Llŷn such as the remains of two old windmills and transport related structures – such as bridges, stone stiles and milestones.
- 4.7.7 Even though there are no Roman remains in Llŷn (as far as we know) there are many other archaeological remains over a long period of time found here. Llŷn is unique in that sense and this is reflected in the fact that the area is included on the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historical Interest in Wales prepared by Cadw, the Countryside Council for Wales and ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) 1998. The register notes that Llŷn possesses: *“a great and unparalleled wealth and diversity of, most often, smaller scale archaeological and historic features, which together form a cohesive and integrated whole, demonstrating both the continuity and territorial unity of Lleyrn from possibly prehistoric times onwards.”*

4.8 Historic Buildings

- 4.8.1 The ordinary people of Llŷn lived in cottages – and usually, these were built in a simple way and in very little time. Those that have survived have been

re-roofed with slate and the best examples have been listed by Cadw. Traditionally, many of the small cottages that are part of the Llŷn landscape have been based on “*tai unnos*” (one night houses). These cottages were built with the materials that were closest to hand, namely soil, stones and mud.

- 4.8.2 A significant number of interesting farmhouses and agricultural buildings are to be found in Llŷn, as a thriving agricultural area. There are some small farmhouses, whilst others are substantial and are connected to prominent families of noblemen such as Bodwrdda, Meillionydd and Castellmarch. Many farmhouses and buildings were developed by the Estates, such as Glynllifon, Nanhoron and the Faenol.
- 4.8.3 Many historical religious buildings are to be seen in Llŷn as religion has played an important part in the development and culture of the area from the Christian period onwards. Remains of a Monastery from the 6th Century are to be seen on Bardsey Island, whilst ancient churches on the pilgrims’ path are to be seen in places such as Clynnog Fawr, Llanaelhaearn, Llangwnnadr and Aberdaron.
- 4.8.4 Chapels were built on a wide scale in Llŷn as a result of the development of Nonconformity from the mid seventeenth century onwards. The first Congregational chapel, namely Capel Newydd Nanhoron, was built in 1769 and following this, a significant number of chapels were built by various other denominations across the area.

4.9 The Welsh Language and Culture

- 4.9.1 Llŷn is one of the heartlands of the Welsh language which is one of the oldest languages in Europe. Here, the Welsh language is a live language and is used daily in the home, chapels and churches, in school, shops, the workplace and on the street. Also, the language is visible everywhere on signs, posters and in the local paper: “Llanw Llŷn”. Agricultural fields and places in Llŷn have Welsh names, as well as most of the farms and houses.
- 4.9.2 Not only is the Welsh language a communication language for life and business on a day to day basis, but it is also the language of literature and poetry and is part of the special culture of the area. Other important elements of the local culture are the anecdotes, legends, superstitions, sayings, characters and place names.
- 4.9.3 Religion continues to play an important part in the culture of the people of Llŷn. In times gone by, the saints were very prominent and regular pilgrimages were made to Bardsey Island. A vast number of local churches were dedicated to the early saints. Later on, chapels were established by different denominations across Llŷn, however, audiences have decreased greatly. Linked to the chapels came the *Eisteddfod* tradition that still continues to this day.

4.9.4 Local characters also contribute to the culture of Llŷn. Amongst the famous historical characters were Dic Aberdaron – who could, apparently, speak 15 languages, and the old medicine woman of Bryn Caniad, Uwchmynydd who cured every type of condition with home-made medicine and ointment.

4.10 People and Communities

4.10.1 In Llŷn there are close-knit communities that have been developed over a long period of time. As with all areas there have been changes within the communities over the years – people from outside the area moved in for work purposes, to retire or in order to change their lifestyle.

4.10.2 People have also moved out of the area – mainly in order to obtain education or to find work. To date, the local communities have been able to absorb these developments without a major change in its character and structure and no excessive impact on local culture and use of the language. Measures such as the Council’s Welsh language education policy have also been important in this respect.

4.10.3 The local people and the communities they form have maintained the Welsh language and the special Welsh culture. Customs, anecdotes and information have been passed down from one generation to the next.

4.10.4 Because the community contributes to the area’s character, it is important to try and ensure that the well-being of these communities. Therefore, there is a need to address people’s needs in terms of housing, services and facilities, leisure, employment and jobs.

4.11 Economy and skills

4.11.1 Traditionally in Llŷn, emphasis has been placed on work that is linked directly to the environment – namely the primary industries. Farming and fishing have developed since very early times and they continue to be important to this day as they maintain families, provide local produce and maintain other industries. In addition, a special culture is linked to these activities – full of customs, anecdotes and colourful characters.

4.11.2 In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the quarries and mineral mining industries became important industries. These works provided work for a vast number of people and a number of quarrying villages grew, such as Trefor, Pistyll and Llithfaen. The remains of the industries are to be seen on the landscape of the area today – mining remains, old buildings and equipment and waste heaps. Two stone quarries continue to be active in Llŷn, namely Nanhoron and Trefor, and they provide stones for local industries.

4.11.3 Many other local businesses are important to Llŷn’s economy. There is a tradition of being self-employed in Llŷn and in the olden days there was a high proportion of joiners, blacksmiths and farm workers here but today, many builders, electricians, carpenters etc. are to be found. In addition to

providing work, a number of small rural businesses also maintain skills that are ways of maintaining historical features in the area, such as *cloddiau*, stone walls, historical buildings, etc.

4.11.4 In the absence of any major built attraction the tourism industry in Llŷn is mainly based on the special qualities of the area – the beauty, the beaches, the clean environment and the peace. The industry provides jobs and helps maintain local businesses and contributes substantially to the economy, but there are some negative impact on some of the special qualities as well. The aim must be to manage the industry in order to benefit the area; however, it must be ensured that this is not done to the detriment of the features that create the special character and charm of the area.

4.12 A place to roam

4.12.1 There are many opportunities to roam and enjoy the natural beauty and historical features of Llŷn. Public footpaths were an important way of getting about in the past and they were frequently used in rural areas like Llŷn. The County Council and Community Councils maintain and protect the network of paths because of their importance in terms of walking and enjoyment.

4.12.2 As well as the network of public footpaths, there are a myriad of small rural lanes that weave their way along the peninsula and connect areas together. On the whole, the roads are relatively quiet and there are opportunities to walk, cycle and ride horses along them also.

4.12.3 The paths along parts of the coast, are the old paths by Pilgrims who walked along the shore towards Bardsey, stopping at churches such as Clynog and Llangwnnadi. Developing a National Coastal Path has been a great benefit. With money and resources, parts of the original route have been improved and new sections that run near the coast have been added.

4.12.4 There are substantial areas of common land in Llŷn, such as Mynydd Tir y Cwmwd, Foel Gron and Mynydd Rhiw – these lands provide an excellent opportunity to roam more informally and view and enjoy wildlife, different plants and striking views. The common lands have not been improved agriculturally and many of them are unimproved heaths – a habitat that is now scarce on a national level.

4.12.5 One of the main attractions of Llŷn are the wonderful beaches along the north and south coast. There are gravel and pebble beaches but also beaches of fine sand in areas such as Nefyn, Porthdinllaen and Whistling Sands. Some beaches are well-known and therefore busy in the summer, but there are more secluded and tranquil beaches also – ideal locations for some peace and quiet.

5.0 A VISION FOR THE LLŶN AONB

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section of the Plan moves on to consider the area's future and how the Plan can be of benefit to the AONB. The basic aim of the Management Plan is to deliver the core purpose of the AONB – which is to conserve, maintain and enhance the area's natural beauty and special qualities. To realise this it will be necessary to influence activities that are detrimental or beneficial to those qualities.

5.1.2 The Vision is the long term aim for the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is a specific statement and therefore it is necessary to look further into the future beyond 2019, when the Management Plan is to be reviewed again. The initial Vision referred to 2020 but during the review it was decided that 2040 was a suitable milestone for the revised Plan.

5.1.3 Of course the Vision needs to give attention to the special qualities of the AONB but it will also refer to likely future developments and local and global trends. In addition, when reviewing the Vision reference was made to::

- Future developments and local and global trends
- the interaction between environmental quality and supporting economies and local communities – which are at the root of sustainable development
- climate change and the responses to it
- the wide range of natural services and benefits the special environment of the AONB offers and provides

5.2 Basic Principles

5.2.1 Prior to setting a Vision for the area it was decided to establish a set of principles which will form the basis for the Management Plan itself. These principles were defined following the consideration of the fundamental reasons for the AONB designation, the long-term well-being of the area, sustainability and relevant local and global issues.

5.2.2 During the Management Plan review process the principles were re-assessed and four new principles were drawn up for 2010-15. The revised principles can be seen below:

PRINCIPLE 1

Preserve, maintain and where appropriate restore features which make Penrhyn Llŷn special and unique.
--

5.2.3 It is a combination of qualities and assets that make Llŷn a unique area and these form an important part of the area's character. These characteristics or qualities were defined in previous sections of the Plan and they include the landscape, wildlife, historic environment, communities and language. The main focus of the Management Plan will aim to conserve, maintain and where possible enhance these qualities.

- 5.2.4 It is also important to ensure that any new developments permitted are in keeping with the area and therefore issues such as size, scale, design and materials will be important. Often, the impact of new developments in the landscape and environment can be lessened through measures such as location, suitable design and landscaping
- 5.2.5 The planning system will play an important part in this by assessing development applications and not permitting developments which would have an unacceptable impact on the AONB or attaching conditions to make developments more acceptable.

PRINCIPLE 2

Take steps to promote sustainable development and prepare for future climate change.

- 5.2.6 The Management Plan and the activities of the AONB Service have an important role to play in raising awareness regarding local and global environmental issues, sustainable development and the implications of climate change.
- 5.2.7 Raising awareness and local implementation can contribute to national action to reduce pollution, save energy, minimise travelling and try to ensure that development is sustainable in the long-term. Also, attention has to be given to the possible impact of climate change and rising sea levels, especially in coastal areas such as Penrhyn Llŷn.

PRINCIPLE 3

Identify, promote and develop an appreciation of the environmental services and benefits provided by AONB.

- 5.2.8 National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty were designated for their Natural beauty and they are special areas of the countryside and the coast. In addition, these areas have an important role to play in providing opportunities for all types of activities for relaxation and leisure for local people and visitors. Presently there is more and more awareness of the importance of such opportunities and the benefit these areas can offer in terms of the health and general welfare of the population.
- 5.2.9 This Management Plan and the actions that emanate from it will contribute a great deal to raising the awareness of local people of the opportunities on their own doorstep. Also, there are opportunities to convey similar messages to all types of visitors who come to Llŷn. The Plan also raises the awareness of leaders in the fields of health and welfare as well as politicians regarding what protected landscapes can offer.

PRINCIPLE 4

Support the people and communities who work and live in Llŷn and encourage involvement in AONB activities and the area's future.

5.2.10 It's important to realise that the Llŷn AONB is a living landscape. The local people and the communities they form bring life, variety and colour to the area as well as being instrumental in safeguarding many of the qualities which make the area special and unique. These people need to be supported and also encouraged to take a more proactive role in the AONB's management and the area's future.

5.3 The Future of Llŷn

5.3.1 The Vision was formulated on the basis of the information gathered and presented in the previous sections of the Plan. These sections define what is special about Llŷn, assess the condition of these qualities and what activities place pressure on them or are of benefit to them. In addition, the Vision has regard to the founding principles referred to at the beginning of this section.

5.3.2 **Therefore, this is the Vision for Llŷn in the year 2040:**

AN AREA OF BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE AND COAST WITH A WEALTH OF WILDLIFE WHICH PROVIDES A RANGE OF NATURAL SERVICES. HISTORIC FEATURES BEING RECORDED AND VALUED AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES SUPPORTING THE WELSH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.

5.3.3 In order to be more specific regarding specific qualities in the area, individual visions were formulated that are more detailed. These visions set out a scenario as regards the condition of each of the qualities in the future.

5.4 The Landscape, Coast and Seascape

5.4.1 The natural beauty of the landscape, the coast and the associated views were the reasons for the AONB designation in 1957 and the Heritage Coast in 1974. The above Vision aims to maintain these special natural qualities and an important part of this is that any future new developments are of a good standard and in keeping with the area's environment.

5.4.2 The vision adopted for the future is as follows:

A Peninsula of plateau land and prominent hills with a beautiful coastline. Stunning natural views and a close relationship with the sea. New housing, roads and other developments blending in well with the AONB environment.

5.5 A clean environment and tranquillity

5.5.1 Presently Llŷn is an area with low environmental pollution and the Vision anticipates that this will continue with perhaps some improvements in the future. It is also hoped that the low levels of activities, noise and sky glow in Llŷn will be maintained and therefore the tranquil and peaceful character of the area will continue.

5.5.2 The vision can be seen below:

Low levels of pollution, noise and sky glow and a tranquil, isolated and peaceful atmosphere.

5.6 Habitats and Wildlife

5.6.1 Unfortunately, many natural habitats in Llŷn have deteriorated significantly during the second half of the last century due to agricultural mechanisation and some are now a rare resource. Heathland and some other important habitats need to be safeguarded and restored and their management improved in order to realise the vision.

5.6.2 The rural and coastal character of the area and also its unpolluted nature means that it is a haven for a wealth of wildlife. It is hoped that Llŷn will continue to be a habitat for a great variety of animals, reptiles, insects, birds and marine creatures including some that are now rare in European countries.

5.6.3 The vision is:

Heathland and other key habitats of Llŷn being safeguarded and managed effectively and the abundance of wildlife being maintained and safeguarded.

5.7 The Historic Environment

5.7.1 The Llŷn and Bardsey Island area is included on the Register of Landscapes of Exceptional Historical Interest in Wales as a recognition of the area's historic environment wealth.

5.7.2 As was seen in the previous section of the Plan, the area's historic environment includes a vast variety of resources. These resources include early archaeological and historical remains such as standing stones and forts, remains of industrial activities such as old quarries, mining works, coal yards and lime kilns. In addition, there are historical buildings and traditional parts of villages which are an important element of the built heritage. Studies indicate that some historical buildings are in danger due to lack of care and maintenance and unsuitable developments which impair their character and appearance. However, on the whole, traditional parts of villages have maintained their original character well.

5.7.3 It is also hoped that there will be more information available on the historical environment and more opportunities to visit sites and buildings.

5.7.4 See the vision adopted for the future is:

Historic characteristics such as standing stones, hedges, wells, churches and cottages being protected and properly maintained. Good

opportunities for visiting and learning about remains, historical sites and important buildings in Llŷn.

5.8 People and Communities

5.8.1 The people who live and work in the area contribute to its character and identity and maintain traditions, the language and culture. By having fair living conditions and opportunities for enjoyment and to make a living in the area the Vision envisages that communities will be stable and will flourish. The local residents and the communities will in turn be a means to sustain another special characteristic of Llŷn, namely the Welsh Language and culture.

5.8.2 The vision can be seen below:

Stable communities enjoying a good quality of life with people and children being aware of the area's history and traditions and sustaining the Welsh Language and culture.

5.9 The Welsh Language and Culture

5.9.1 Llŷn has a unique local culture with a special Welsh dimension and the Welsh language is an integral part of this. The Welsh language and culture is under considerable threat due to outward migration from the indigenous community and immigration of people who are often unaware of the area's history and culture. Through activities, projects and campaigns in the years to come the hope is that the Welsh Language will continue to be the main language in the area in 2030.

5.9.2 The other aspiration is that local linguistic and cultural elements will be recorded and promoted during the period in question, via various projects by communities, public authorities and other enterprises.

5.9.3 See the vision below:

Welsh being the main language of Llŷn, Welsh names being used and the Welsh culture flourishing and well documented.

5.10 Work, Produce and Skills

5.10.1 Over the centuries primary traditional industries such as agriculture, mining and fishing have had a strong influence on the area's character and have been the foundation of the local economy. It is believed that they will still contribute to the Llŷn economy, however, the adoption of more sustainable methods of operating would be of great benefit to the area's special qualities. In addition, small self-employed businesses in Llŷn are important for the rural economy and contribute to the economy and character of the area.

5.10.2 The tourism and leisure industry make a significant contribution and helps maintain local services. However, it is also obvious that there are some detrimental side effects linked to certain qualities related to the industry. In future, it is hoped that a balance can be struck between profiting from the industry, reducing its impact and sustaining the quality of the environment. Developing the industry on the basis of sustainability offers significant benefits to the local economy and in terms of the effect on the special qualities.

5.10.3 The vision is as follows:

That agriculture, fishing and quarrying continuing to provide employment and quality local produce. Tourism and other small rural industries to contribute to the local economy without impairing the area's special environment.

5.11 Paths and Access

5.11.1 Rights of way and rights of access are important as a resource to an area such as Llŷn. Without these rights it would not be possible to gain access to extensive parts of the area and coastline. In future, it is hoped that these rights will be safeguarded and that the paths are maintained, although we realise that priorities will have to be based on resources. Research work has indicated that there are opportunities to improve the provision for the disabled in Llŷn and by 2040 it is hoped that improvements will have been introduced in certain places where that is practicably possible.

5.11.2 Another aim will be to ensure that the increase in the use of rights of way, cycling and use of public transport in the future – on the basis of well-being and public health, increase the appreciation and enjoyment of the AONB and for the benefit of the environment. Therefore, raising awareness is important as well as management to reduce conflicts and develop better relations between owners, managers and various user groups.

5.11.3 The vision adopted for the future is:

Rights of way and land with access rights being enjoyed without obstacles and improved access opportunities for the disabled. Walking, cycling, horse riding and non-motorised leisure water activities are popular activities.

Agenda Item 9

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	18 November 2015
TITLE	Gwynedd Challenge
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Service manager
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Gwynedd Challenge is the name given to the exercise undertaken by Gwynedd Council on how to deal with the Council's future budget deficit. This includes making financial cutbacks to the value of £7 million.
- 1.2 The deficit exists because the grant given by Welsh Government is decreasing while inflation and increased need for services persists. Gwynedd Council intends to increase Council Tax to meet some of the deficit but significant financial cutbacks will also need to be made, in addition to further savings. More information on the financial situation can be seen on the Council's website.

2.0 POSSIBLE CUTBACKS

- 2.1 Due to the above Gwynedd Council's Cabinet considered a long list of possible financial cuts. Information had been provided to members on the different services, including the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) service, which referred to work undertaken, statutory implications, grants etc.
- 2.2 There followed a series of workshops with Members to discuss the various options before the Cabinet decided on a list of cuts to be included in the public consultation. Ending the AONB Service was one measure which it was decided to include; it was noted this would produce savings of **£39,150** for the Council.

3.0 CONSULTATION ON GWYNEDD CHALLENGE

- 3.1 The Council then moved on to arrange public consultation on the possible cutbacks under the Gwynedd Challenge banner. The importance of getting the opinion of Gwynedd's people's was stressed. It was arranged to gain public feedback on the matter through:
 - Call-in meetings – at 19 locations within Gwynedd
 - Public Forums – at 13 Secondary School locations in the County
 - Questionnaire – paper and electronic versions available.
- 3.2 The consultation method is different to the usual in that it provides an opportunity for individuals and organisations to choose which services they would decide to

retain – up to a total of £5 million. A whole raft of services are included including environmental services, road maintenance, public transport, leisure centres etc.

- 3.3 With some of the services there are options to retain different levels which produce more/ less financial savings. With the AONB Service there is only one option which is to retain the service.
- 3.4 Clearly there are significant implications to these cutbacks throughout the County, including for the Llŷn area.

4.0 THE AONB SERVICE

- 4.1 It's possible to choose the AONB Service as one of the services to be retained by filling in the paper or online questionnaire. However, the whole questionnaire will need to be completed and some, for whatever reasons, might not wish to do that. On enquiry it was agreed that the AONB Service could be directly supported by writing or emailing the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services.
- 4.2 We wrote to you as members of the Joint Advisory Committee to draw attention to Gwynedd Challenge and the threat to the AONB Service. We also contacted work partners, SDF grant recipients and other who had benefited for AONB related work to highlight the situation and seek their support.
- 4.3 We also understand that the Council has consulted directly with various bodies such as NRW, CPRW and the National Association of AONBs.

5.0 THE NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Originally the consultation period was due to end on the 13th of November but has now been extended until the end of the month.
- 5.2 Following this the response to the consultation exercise will be assessed – however there is no information as yet regarding how this will be done.
- 5.3 It is understood that the cutbacks will then be discussed at a meeting of the full Council in early 2016 and decisions will be made on which cuts are to be implemented from April 2016 onwards.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 Accept the information.

Agenda Item 10

MEETING	Llŷn AONB Joint Advisory Committee
DATE	18 November 2015
TITLE	Review of Welsh Designated Landscapes
PURPOSE	Inform members
AUTHOR	Llŷn AONB Service manager
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the information.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides information on the situation regarding the Review of Designated Landscapes commissioned by the Welsh Government.

2.0 REVIEW OF DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES

- 2.1 A Panel of three people were appointed to conduct the Review of Designated Landscapes in 2014, namely Professor Terry Marsden, Dr Ruth Williams and Mr John Lloyd Jones.
- 2.2 Part 1 of the Review looked at the purpose of the designating landscapes and the pros and cons of categorising these landscapes under one designation. A report on the findings of Part 1 of the Review was presented to the JAC in March 2015 and at the time it was decided to send some additional comments to the Review Panel.

3.0 STAGE 2 OF THE REVIEW

- 3.1 The Panel then went on to consider Part 2 of the Review – which considered how National Parks and AONB's were being governed and managed. Details and papers related to Part 2 of the Review were presented to the JAC held on the 24th of June 2015.
- 3.2 Following a discussion a series of comments were made regarding Part 2 of the Review and the AONB sent these on to the Review Panel. Comments and representations were also made on Part 2 by other AONB Units, National Park Authorities and various other organisations which had an interest in the subject. In addition, the Review Panel held a series of meetings with individuals and organisations attending.

4.0 FINAL REPORT

- 4.1 By now the Review Panel have completed the Final Report and it has been presented to the Welsh Government.

4.2 The Final Report is a substantial document which contains 69 Recommendations. A summary of the report has been attached as an Appendix and a copy of the full version is available from the AONB Unit.

4.2 A Statement on the Review was issued by the Minister, Carl Sargeant on October Hydref 29th; a copy is included in the Appendix. Amongst other things the Statement notes:

“I want these areas which are valued for their natural beauty to be thriving living landscapes containing vibrant, resilient communities, opportunities for outdoor recreation and rich ecosystems...

The report makes 69 recommendations covering a raft of proposals and observations on purposes, principles, vision, governance models, planning, and funding. The scale and scope of these recommendations is considerable, and further work is now needed to understand their potential benefit and their consequences.”

4.3 There are far-reaching implications to the recommendations put forward in the Report and increased expectations regarding Designated Landscapes in the future. In order to move the matter forward the Minister has decided to set up a working group, under the leadership of Lord Dafydd Ellis-Thomas, to consider the recommendations.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Accept the information.

APPENDICIES

A copy of the press statement made by Welsh Governemnt, October 29th 2015

A summary of the Final Report on the Review of Designated Landscapes of Wales.

Written Statement - Publication of the Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales

Last updated 29 October 2015

Carl Sargeant Minister for Natural Resources

Today I have published the report from the Independent Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales.

In late September last year I commissioned a panel of experts, chaired by Professor Terry Marsden, to appraise and better understand whether the designated landscapes of Wales – our National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – have the purposes, management and governance arrangements to meet the significant opportunities, and challenges, we face today and into the future. I want these areas which are valued for their natural beauty to be thriving living landscapes containing vibrant, resilient communities, opportunities for outdoor recreation and rich ecosystems.

I am pleased that the report has sought to reflect the imperatives of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and Environment Bill to connect and increase social, economic and environmental benefits from these important areas. The Panel have endorsed my view that a fresh approach to purposes and governance is long overdue, and I agree with their summary that this is necessary to better respond to increasingly complex environmental challenges, inequalities in well-being and health, and to deliver more vibrant rural communities.

The report makes 69 recommendations covering a raft of proposals and observations on purposes, principles, vision, governance models, planning, and funding. The scale and scope of these recommendations is considerable, and further work is now needed to understand their potential benefit and their consequences.

I have asked Lord Dafydd Ellis-Thomas AM to lead a Future Landscapes Working Group, involving representatives of the national parks, AONBs, interest groups, business, and local government. The group will explore these recommendations and the case for reform which is aligned to the priorities for public service reform in Wales, and report their findings next year.

National Landscapes: Realising their Potential

The Review of
Designated Landscapes
in Wales

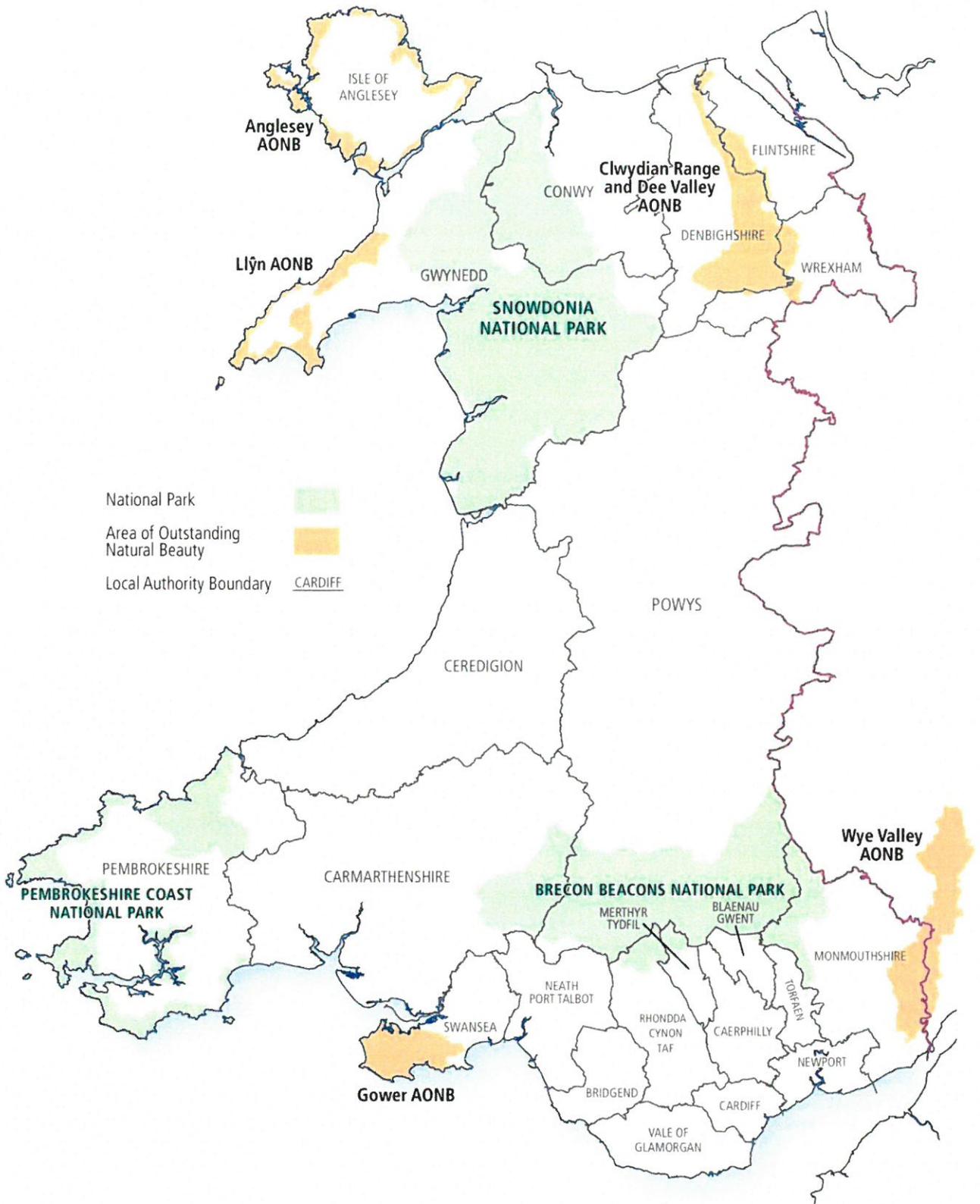
Final Report

Professor Terry Marsden

John Lloyd-Jones

Dr Ruth Williams

Map 1: The Statutory Designated Landscapes of Wales



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 April 2014

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Chair's Foreword

Over the past year I along with panel members Dr Ruth Williams and John Lloyd Jones have been working for the Minister for Natural Resources to undertake an independent review of the Designated Landscapes of Wales. The Minister wants to “ensure that our designated landscapes are best equipped to meet current and future challenges while building upon their internationally recognised status”.

We were tasked with and encouraged to create a visionary and lasting approach which enables these nationally important areas to meet the radically different challenges and conditions compared to when they were first established in the immediate post-war era. The very fact that they are still there and so highly valued by so many is indeed testament to the vision and innovation displayed by their founders of that period; and whilst there have been some technical modifications regarding their status over the proceeding period, it is important to respect the durable success of the designations over the full sixty or more years since their inception.

Despite their success, and indeed partly because of it, we have agreed with the Minister that it is important and timely to take an independent, fresh, longer term and visionary approach to the purposes that underpin their protected status, and their overall governance at this particular juncture. Balancing their twin original objectives of preserving their natural beauty and encouraging their public access, are just as important now as in the immediate post-war period; a time when it was clearly recognised that it was necessary to extend and protect public rights of access to our most cherished and distinctive landscapes. These public rights and demands have not diminished in significance, but designated landscapes face new additional, and one can argue, more complex challenges that simply did not exist seventy years ago.

These are encapsulated in this final report and found within the wide range of evidence we received in writing and in person; and clearly encompass the wider role of these places as internationally recognised environmental and natural landscape assets, their living and vibrant cultural and socio-economic significance, and their potential role to continue to meet the public and well-being needs of future generations. Together with the Welsh Government's clear commitment to sustainable development and well-being, we need to ensure that our most

cherished landscapes have the tools to maintain and enhance their role for succeeding generations, such that they can equally experience and benefit from these.

In the course of the review, the panel has found that a fresh approach to the purposes and governance of Wales' designated landscapes is overdue. This is for at least three reasons. First, the scale and complexity of the environmental challenges (such as climate change and bio-diversity loss) now facing us in the 21st century are of a completely different order to those recognised in the immediate post-war period, when these designations were first established. The designated landscapes must play a leading and innovative role in order to deliver and restore a low-carbon, then post-carbon, world which needs to evolve over the coming few decades (see Royal Society, July 2015). Second, the scale of the relative spatial and social inequalities in well being, health, education and access to outdoor recreation demand far more from the designated landscapes in improving a wider and more diverse consumption of their natural and physical assets. Third, and in direct relation to the first two points, these areas need to be the home of far more vibrant rural communities, where the young can be retained, trained and attracted by sustainable homes and jobs.

The designated landscapes are now far more than passive 'green lungs' for the urban populations; they are as we state in our vision, the new, dynamic and productive **'factories of well-being'**.

It is with this in mind that the panel embarked on its work and produced the report you are reading now. This final report presents all of the findings and recommendations of this review, compiling the stage 1 findings and recommendations associated with the nature of the Designations and their Purposes and Duties; and stage two, which has reviewed governance arrangements, planning functions and effective representation and accountability.

Over the past year we have taken a wide range of evidence upon which to basis our findings and recommendations, locally, nationally and internationally. In this report we have distilled a suite of Principles which have informed the changes to the Purposes. We have then set out a new Vision for the National Landscapes, which represent 25% of the land area of Wales. The final sections set out in detail the recommended Governance arrangements for delivering this Vision.

We propose a new and comprehensive National Landscape Governance Framework for our internationally recognised National Landscapes. We commend these recommendations to the

Minister, and believe that they will enhance the performance of the landscapes in contributing more fully to the Welsh Government's policy agenda and ambitions across the environmental, health and well being, economic and community development and educational fields. They will also enhance participation and accountability both nationally and locally and across a wider range of diverse groups.

Throughout the course of the first stage of the review we have been struck by the enthusiasm for this endeavour from a wide variety of stakeholders. They have also echoed the unique and distinctive position that the designated landscapes hold in the cultural life of Wales and the UK.

Acknowledgements

I would, once again, like to commend the collegiate spirit, work commitment and experienced judgement displayed by my colleagues, Dr Ruth Williams and John Lloyd Jones in arriving at the collectively agreed recommendations.

The Review, in its totality, has benefitted greatly from the public interest it has generated and the written and spoken contributions from across Wales, and beyond. The panel wish to thank all of the contributors for their knowledge, experience and passion for all of our designated landscapes.

The panel also wishes to acknowledge the excellent secretariat support it has received from the Welsh Government's Designated Landscapes team, consisting of Greg Pycroft, Ieuan Llŷr Jones and Emily Kennedy. We also wish to thank Dr Marc Adams for the research support he provided during the course of the second stage and the Sustainable Places Research Institute (PLACE) at Cardiff University which has hosted the majority of our meetings.



Professor Terry Marsden
Chair

The Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales

Executive Summary and Recommendations

The Review of Designated Landscapes in Wales was commissioned by the Minister for Natural Resources, Carl Sargeant AM in 2014 to “ensure that our designated landscapes are best equipped to meet current and future challenges while building upon their internationally recognised status”.

He also wanted us to consider the governance and management arrangements of Wales’ eight designated landscapes; how any future governing body/bodies would best promote collaboration and joint working while avoiding duplication and how any future governing body would best reinforce local accountability and decision making. We were also asked to consider the future role of National Park Authorities as planning authorities and to consider the promotion of diversity on the boards of bodies managing these areas.

Over the past year we have taken a wide range of evidence, locally, nationally and internationally, upon which to basis our findings and recommendations these are set out in greater detail in the following Chapters.

This report presents a set of recommendations that meet the requirements set by the Minister and are interconnected (see Figure i). We have produced a suite of guiding **Principles** which have, in turn, informed the changes we have made to the **Purposes** of designated landscapes in Wales. We then set out a new **Vision** for the National Landscapes, which represent 25% of the land area of Wales, and finally set out our recommended **Governance Framework** for delivery.

Our perspective of our designated landscapes has changed, they remain, in some sense the passive ‘green lungs’ for the urban populations, but they also have the potential to become

Figure i: Governance from principles to delivery



dynamic and productive ‘factories of well-being’. Our recommendations help our designated landscapes realise that potential and we look forward to the support of the Welsh Government to allow this ¼ of Wales deliver for the Nation as a whole.

The Principles

Recommendation 1

Our guiding principles are:

- **We need to examine the refreshed purposes within a medium to long term time frame, so as to give equivalent continuity in the future to that achieved over the past sixty years.**
- **It is important, however, not to be too reliant on the past in formulating a new and refreshed vision for the designated landscapes which recognises the significant challenges they face in the future.**
- **To align the purposes such that they recognise that both designations have over some considerable time been operating de-facto and to varying degrees beyond their original remits.**
- **That any changes in purposes and accompanying duties should be lasting, clear and likely to ensure and embody the precedence placed under ‘the Sandford Principle’, giving priority to the first purpose. It also became clear that if there were to be an increase in the actual number of purposes then the others would (a) need to give priority to the first if there were clear conflicts; and, as importantly, (b) the rest would be mutually reinforcing and binding on delivering the first. This “Sandford Plus” approach needs to link and integrate any additional purposes.**
- **There was also a strong argument for revisiting the statutory duties on related bodies, to clarify and strengthen them. This should ensure that the designated landscape bodies themselves and the relevant national and local organisations – including utility companies and the Welsh Government comply with both the purposes and duty.**
- **To realise the importance of international obligations; lessons and the opportunities they provide for Wales.**

- To ensure the purposes can continue to meet and encourage their relevant bodies to maintain, and exceed, international obligations and standards of nature conservation and landscape protection e.g. IUCN categories and the European Landscape Convention.
- To strive for purposes which are both enduring and have the ability to be applied to other candidate areas, including marine areas, at some future date.
- Any recommended changes made to the direction and/or wording of the purposes should be made in the context of them being: (a) clear, precise, unambiguous and consistent; (b) able to be clearly understood and convey clarity of direction; and (c) legally and technically robust.
- Any changes recommended should strike a judicious balance between providing overall consistency of purpose, and encouraging and celebrating the natural and cultural diversity of the family of protected landscapes themselves.
- To remain mindful of the strength and value of the National Parks and AONBs, and not to undermine their benefits across Wales.
- Avoid compromising these places through any unnecessary additional burden on the public purse; and enhance the efficiency of public funding where possible.
- To interpret the purposes and duties in ways that deliver across the whole Welsh Government policy agenda.

The Welsh Government should adopt these guiding principles.

Recommendation 2

There should not be a single designation.

The Purposes

Recommendation 3

There is **ONE** set of statutory purposes and an associated single statutory duty for both designations.

Recommendation 4

The Welsh Government should retain the names of “National Parks” and “Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty” (AONBs) as the key designations of the “National Landscapes of Wales”.

Recommendation 5

The Welsh Government should establish a consistent and resilient nomenclature, such that both designations collectively become:

“The National Landscapes of Wales”

“National Park” and “Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty” which are “The Equivalent Designations”

The Equivalent Designations would possess identical statutory purposes and duties

Recommendation 6

There should be **THREE INTERLOCKING** statutory purposes for both the National Parks and AONBs.

These are:

“To conserve and enhance the distinctive landscape and seascape qualities of the area¹.”

(the Conservation Purpose)

“To promote physical and mental well-being through the enjoyment and understanding of the landscape of the area.”

(the Human Well-being Purpose)

“To promote sustainable forms of economic and community development based on the management of natural resources and the cultural heritage of the area.”

(the Sustainable Resource Management Purpose)

Recommendation 7

The Sandford Principle, confirming the primacy of the conservation purpose, will be applied across all the designated landscapes.

Recommendation 8

There should be a new single Statutory Duty that removes the weak “have regard to” prefixes in the current duties on relevant public bodies, and replaces them with a single and clear duty:

“To contribute to the delivery of the three purposes of the National Landscapes.”

¹ Where ‘landscape’ incorporates the total natural environment of the area, together with its biodiversity, human settlements and cultural aspects. It is particularly important to stress the significance of progressing bio-diversity protection and restoration in the Conservation Purpose and to promote progress towards international standards relating to the International Biodiversity Convention so far unattained in Wales. This also incorporates the European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe, 2000) definition as ‘ an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’ (Article 1a.). And it assumes the enhancement of ‘actions to conserve and maintain the significant or characteristic features of a landscape, justified by its heritage value derived from its natural configuration and/or from human activity’ (Article 1d.).

The Vision

The vision needs to preside and give direction to the dynamic and multi-level governance for these special places. The National Landscapes can then be positioned as leading and innovative places for capturing and integrating the environmental economy, and the well-being and sustainability goals, and installing them as regional hubs for sustainable rural development and the providers of ecosystem services.

Recommendation 9

A Vision for the National Landscapes of Wales

The National Landscapes of Wales are valued by the nation as important “factories of well-being”, improving the lives of current and future generations through their three purposes. Their special qualities are maintained, enhanced and widely appreciated. They are areas for innovative, place-based collaborations that address the economic, social and environmental challenges facing Wales, and are recognised internationally as leaders in the delivery of sustainable development.

Recommendation 10

As the 'factories of well-being' which we envision, the National Landscapes of Wales should develop and stimulate more local enterprise partnerships, sustainable affordable housing, green energy and retailing ventures.

Recommendation 11

Building on the community development initiatives in National Landscapes will require continuity of seed-corn funding for integrated projects which contribute to their three integrated shared purposes.

Recommendation 12

Welsh Government should empower the National Landscapes of Wales to become official centres for innovation and catalysts for regional development in rural Wales, within their environmental limits.

Recommendation 13

The Welsh Government should ensure that the National Landscapes of Wales can and do contribute to the Welsh Government's 'Partnership for Growth: Strategy for Tourism 2013-2020' – both collectively, and individually.

Recommendation 14

The Welsh Government should ensure that the National Landscapes are involved in all infrastructure planning and development in Wales such as the National Infrastructure Investment Plan, the Green Growth Strategy and the National Planning Framework.

Recommendation 15

The National Landscapes need to better understand their local and regional economies, and especially their tourism economies.

Recommendation 16

The Welsh Government should empower the National Landscapes to deliver its 'Green Growth' agenda, founded on a marriage of exceptional landscapes and sustainable development.

Recommendation 17

The Welsh Government should champion the National Landscapes as international flagships for Wales in the fields of sustainable development, health and tourism in particular.

Recommendation 18

The National Landscapes of Wales upgrade their health and well-being policies to align with the new second purpose. This can be linked to wider, deeper access and sustainable tourism dimensions.

Recommendation 19

The National Landscapes of Wales undertake more health and well-being related experiments in developing and reaching challenged urban and rural communities and sections of the population. These could be delivered jointly with local health boards.

Recommendation 20

The Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales should extend the coastal National Landscapes to cover adjacent sea areas and take an integrated approach to coastal resource management in these areas.

Recommendation 21

The National Landscape managers should ensure that coastal users are at the centre of their coastal management planning processes.

Recommendation 22

The successful Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum model should be applied more widely across the coastal areas of the National Landscapes.

Recommendation 23

The National Landscapes of Wales should interpret and incorporate recommendations 9 to 22 above into pan-Wales indicators and targets for management planning purposes and well-being reporting.

The Governance Framework

A New Framework for Wales' National Landscapes

In order to 'realise the potential' of the National Landscapes of Wales, to address the barriers and weaknesses and to attain an optimum fit between the reorganisation of purposes and duties - we recommend a new framework of governance. The framework encompasses all eight of the designated landscape management bodies and we hope they will all see its worth and contribute to its success.

Recommendation 24

The Welsh Government should adopt the following new Framework of Governance for the National Landscapes of Wales, as portrayed in Figures 16 (p.130) and 19 (p.164) and described in detail in all our following Recommendations 25 to 69.

National Park Authorities and AONBs: A Model for Delivering National Priorities Locally

We believe that a modified statutory identity based upon the Single Purpose Authority model for National Parks and the flexible multi-model governance approach for AONBs is the most effective approach for fostering greater local and regional representation, management and accountability. They are recognised internationally for effectively balancing national objectives

with local considerations. This approach should also provide the designated landscape bodies with further opportunities to draw in additional external funds and resources.

Recommendation 25

Retain the single purpose local authority model for National Park management.

Recommendation 26

Retain and develop flexible AONB management models.

Recommendation 27

National Park Authorities and AONB bodies will need to consider how they restructure themselves in order to deliver the three new purposes.

Recommendation 28

The Welsh Government should reduce the disproportionate regulatory burden on National Park Authorities that is designed for larger and more complex local authorities.

Recommendation 29

The Welsh Government should give National Park Authorities and AONB bodies the means of applying for and drawing down funding from a wider range of sources.

Leadership: A Radical Change in Institutional and Inter-agency Culture and Working

We want to shift the institutional culture of governance of the designated landscapes from one of “deference” to a more accountable and innovative one that enhances existing “soft” powers to convene.

Recommendation 30

The Welsh Government should establish a 'National Landscapes Partnership Board' as per Figure 17 (p.138).

Recommendation 31

The 8 National Park Authorities and AONB bodies should establish a light-touch 'National Landscapes of Wales Committee' as per Figure 18 (p.139).

Recommendation 32

The Welsh Government should work with the National Landscapes bodies and the relevant stakeholders through the Partnership Board and the National Committee to agree, and keep under review an over-arching 'Strategy for the National Landscapes of Wales'.

National Landscapes and National Government

Given the national importance of the designated landscapes to Wales we envisage a far higher profile for them within the National Assembly for Wales. We also envisage direct Ministerial engagement with the National Landscapes Framework.

Recommendation 33

The statutory Partnership Plans of each of the National Landscapes of Wales should be scrutinised by the National Assembly for Wales prior to adoption.

Recommendation 34

The National Assembly for Wales, as it evolves its own internal architecture, should consider the relationship between itself and the National Landscapes of Wales to maximise scrutiny and accountability.

Recommendation 35

The Welsh Government should set performance targets and indicators for the National Landscapes of Wales that derive from and align with the Well-Being Goals.

Integrated Planning and Reporting

It is both timely and more efficient to integrate the planning requirements of recent legislative developments into ONE statutory Partnership Planning exercise which embodies, at its centre, the statutory Partnership Plan, but also embraces plans concerning well-being and natural resource management.

Recommendation 36

There should be One statutory partnership planning exercise for each of the designated landscapes.

Recommendation 37

The statutory Partnership Plan for an area should integrate the current management plan, well-being plan and natural resources area statements.

Local Partnerships

Successful management of the special areas depends on productive partnerships with all those who have an impact on them. We want them to be even more relevant economically, socially and culturally, which will require enhanced and effective local engagement between all relevant stakeholders.

Recommendation 38

Formally constituted 'Partnerships' should be established in each National Park which are closely involved in the preparation and delivery of the statutory Partnership Plan.

Recommendation 39

The National Park Partnership should be chaired by the Chair of the National Park Authority.

Recommendation 40

There should be a formally agreed relationship between the National Park Partnership and the National Park Authority.

Recommendation 41

The AONBs should continue to develop their trusted partnership-working models, however we do not feel a 'one size fits all' would benefit the AONBs.

Fostering lateral relationships with Natural Resources Wales and local authorities

NRW will be a major source of professional advice on the sustainable management of natural resources from which the designated landscapes should benefit. As larger local authorities emerge existing links between them and their AONBs may prove too fragile, it is therefore essential to ensure continued strong links between local authorities and AONBs. We wish to reinforce and spread existing good practice across all eight designated landscapes.

Recommendation 42

Natural Resources Wales should build and make available to the Welsh Government an exhaustive list of their statutory duties and powers in relation to Wales' designated landscapes.

Recommendation 43

Natural Resources Wales will involve and champion the national landscapes on the relevant Public Service Boards.

Recommendation 44

Natural Resources Wales and local authorities will have regard to the statutory Partnership Plans in the conduct of their planning exercises in their area.

Recommendation 45

Natural Resources Wales will share data and provide professional advice on the sustainable management of natural resources to the National Landscapes.

Recommendation 46

Local authorities should reinforce and spread the best practice of their joint working in the AONBs across all eight National Parks and AONBs.

Forward Planning and Development Management

We found the case for removing planning powers from the NPAs unpersuasive, based on dated examples that did not reflect contemporary experience and largely based upon perception. The National Park Authorities, which manage the landscape of 20% of Wales, will need to be more integrated in the delivery of their three purposes. While planning will remain one tool amongst the several required to deliver the new purposes, it will serve a key function delivering consistency across our National Parks.

Recommendation 47

The National Park Authorities should retain their strategic planning policy and planning development control functions.

Recommendation 48

The Welsh Government should reinforce and support the provision of pre-application planning advice from the National Park Authorities.

Recommendation 49

The National Landscapes Committee should co-ordinate and help share the costs of training and education in land use planning matters especially for delivery of the new purposes.

Recommendation 50

The AONB bodies become a statutory consultee on planning applications with a potentially significant impact on the special qualities of their area.

Recommendation 51

A system of independent planning advice for AONBs across Wales is developed and resourced.

Recommendation 52

A suite of indicators on planning outcomes in the National Parks and AONBs is developed for the National Landscapes of Wales.

Local Representation and Diversity

We want to further harness the potential and passion of both the national importance and local opportunities in National Parks and AONBs, to ensure greater diversity in decision-making, and to build stronger bridges between the designated landscapes and their constituent local authorities.

Recommendation 53

Each National Park Authority should comprise: ½ nominated County Councillors, ¼ representatives of the national interest appointed by Welsh Government via open competition, and ¼ representatives of the local interest appointed via open competition by the members listed above.

Recommendation 54

The recruitment and appointment processes for the 'national interest' and 'local interest' members of National Park Authorities should include best practice to ensure diversity in the Authority's membership.

Recommendation 55

To develop and embed in all three National Parks the positive steps already piloted by the National Park Authorities to increase diversity on their Authorities i.e. the Mosaic, mentoring and Ambassador approaches.

Recommendation 56

The Welsh Government should remove the requirement for political balance of local authority members on National Park Authorities, to increase local representation. Thus Councillors appointed to National Park Authorities should represent wards within, or straddling, the National Park boundary. [Section 15 of the Local Government & Housing Act, 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.]

Recommendation 57

There should be formal reporting arrangements between the Councillors on the National Park Authority and their parent local authority.

Recommendation 58

The Welsh Government should place a statutory duty on local authorities to establish a formal committee to oversee the management of the AONB and to delegate the local authority's responsibility for preparing the AONB Management plan to this Committee (but not delegating its responsibilities under the duty to the AONB purposes and delivering its aspects of the Management Plan). We recommend this be renamed the 'AONB Delivery Committee' rather than the usual name: Joint Advisory Committee.

Recommendation 59

The Welsh Government should direct each AONB Delivery Committee to include at least one Cabinet member from each constituent local authority, at least two representatives of the national interest appointed by the Welsh Government via open competition, and at least two representatives of the local interest appointed via open competition by the rest of the members.

Recommendation 60

The Welsh Government should remove the requirement for political balance of local authority members on AONB formal committees, to increase local representation. Thus the Councillors appointed to AONB formal committees (in addition to the Cabinet members in Rx above) should represent wards within, or straddling, the AONB boundary. [Section 15 of the Local Government & Housing Act, 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.]

Recommendation 61

The appointment processes for the 'national interest' and 'local interest' members of AONB Delivery Committee should incorporate equalities best practice to ensure diversity of Committee's membership.

Recommendation 62

The AONBs should actively learn from, and apply, the NPAs' pilot programmes to increase diversity on their Delivery Committees. (This learning can be facilitated by the National Landscapes of Wales Committee.)

Recommendation 63

Natural Resources Wales should continue to be a key adviser to the AONB Delivery Committee.

Recommendation 64

There should be formal reporting arrangements between the Councillors on the AONB Delivery Committee and their parent local authority.

Funding Arrangements

We believe that funding arrangements for the designated bodies need to be streamlined and simplified. Effective performance requires sufficient support, including financial support, to deliver for designated landscapes. In the current economic climate the AONBs are especially vulnerable to having their base-line funding undermined due to the discretionary nature of their local government and NRW funding.

Recommendation 65

The Welsh Government should provide the annual core grant allocation to all National Landscapes of Wales, thereby removing NRW and local authority levies.

Recommendation 66

The Welsh Government should top slice the core allocation for specific strategic, collaborative and national initiatives (as currently allocated through SDF and competitive grants such as the Nature Fund).

Recommendation 67

The Welsh Government should manage accountability of core funding through an annual review process administered by an agreed performance criteria linked to the Well-Being Goals and to the statutory Partnership Plans of the National Landscape bodies.

Recommendation 68

The National Landscape bodies should have greater flexibility to leverage external funding sources. This will require a shift in the internal management structures and function of these bodies and, in the case of the AONBs their relationships with their partner local authorities.

Recommendation 69

The National Landscape bodies should have greater flexibility to generate their own revenue streams through developing a wider range of Payments for Eco-system services, in line with delivering their purposes. Their ability to use and draw down rural Development Plan and related EU funding will be important.

The New Governance Framework for Wales' National Landscapes

The new governance framework is an outcome of the evidence received and the careful deliberation of the panel over the past year. We believe that in its structures and processes it delivers a robust framework for more effectively delivering performance, leadership and direction, voice, accountability and public efficiency of the landscape areas, and in this it embodies a far more partnership-based approach with greater representation. It allows for the clear delivery of the revised set of purposes and, in our opinion will deliver the Welsh Government's ambitious legislative programme on the ground in the National Landscapes.