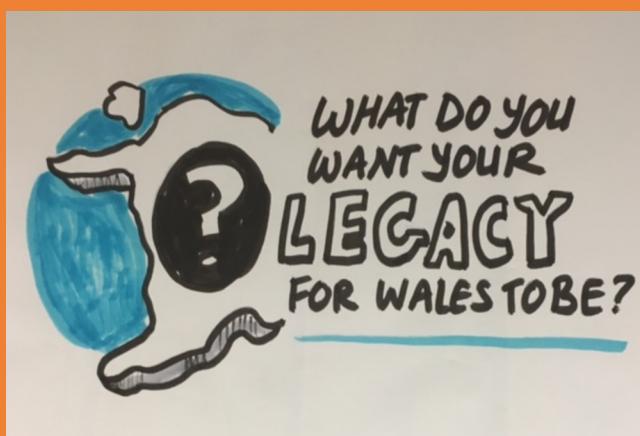


Talking Future Generations

the conversation so far





Sophie Howe

Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

Since I took up post in April it's already clear just how much the Well-being of Future Generations Act, and its potential to change things for the better, really means to people across Wales.

We've been working really hard with partners to set up the office and infrastructure ready to support public bodies to get to grips with the Act. And it's been a priority for me to get out there and listen to people, whether they are the professionals with a responsibility under the new legislation or the communities so hopeful for the changes it will bring.

By November, I will have met with all 44 public bodies. I have also contributed to more than 100 events championing future generations both here and abroad. I have met with ministers, third sector leaders, a range of experts and spoken at national events including the Hay Festival and the Royal Welsh Show.

Importantly, I also held a series of meetings throughout Wales attended by several hundred people who talked to me about the big issues in their communities and how the Act can facilitate positive change and encourage community involvement.

It is clear from feedback that people want to engage and contribute but all too often have "consultation fatigue". So I am committed to finding the right ways to involve people using traditional and innovative methods. People are also frustrated at not receiving feedback.

So this report sets out what I have learned from the stakeholder meetings and how this will be informing the areas I prioritise as your Commissioner, together with the information gathered during the visits to public bodies and the Wales We Want consultation, which engaged over 7,000 people.

We are now bringing all of this together with an evidence base on the key issues, challenges and opportunities facing Wales now and in the future.

Early in the New Year we will outline, in more detail, the areas I intend to focus on over my term of office.

In the meantime, you can get in touch via contactus@futuregenerations.wales or [@futuregenymru](https://twitter.com/futuregenymru)

Thank you,

Potential priority areas

Based on what you've told me so far, these are the issues emerging as potential priority areas. I will be working with a range of experts and partners to develop a better understanding of these issues and their significance for future generations before finalising the areas that I will focus on.

- **Early years, with a particular focus on Adverse Childhood experiences, and on childcare;**
- **Economic prosperity, including challenges around employment and skills**
- **Future trends, including population trends such as an ageing population**
- **Climate change, environmental resilience and energy generation**
- **Poverty, deprivation and disengagement**
- **Interconnectivity, including an intergrated approach to city region deals, M4 relief road, metro system and community infrastructure**
- **Rural infrastructure and the future of farming**
- **Health inequalities with a particular focus on preventative healthcare**
- **Community resilience, with a focus on language and identity, physical infrastructure and affordable housing**

Meetings with
44
public bodies

Contributed
to over
100
events

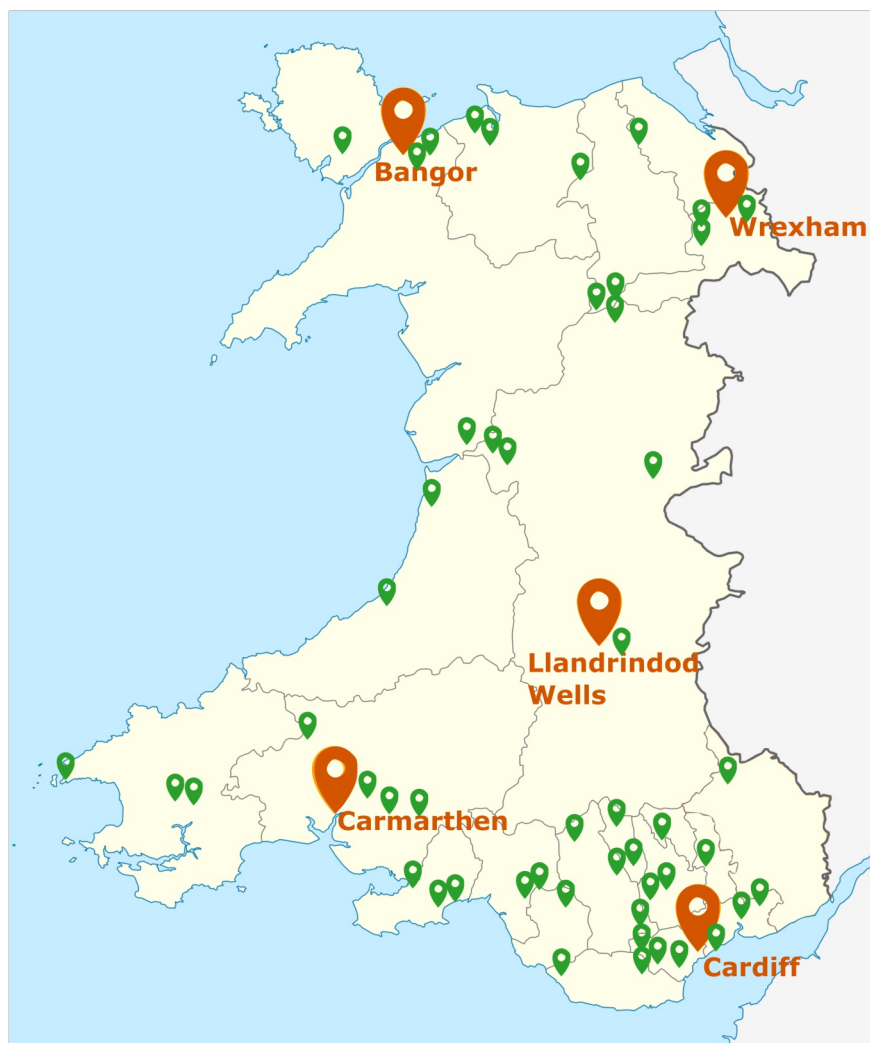
190
Public
engagements



Locations of stakeholder events



Other engagements
(full index at back of report)



The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

"What Wales is doing today, the world will do tomorrow"

United Nations, 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The aim is to make public bodies think more about the long-term, work better with people, with communities and each other and seek to prevent problems occurring and tackle common issues by taking a more joined-up approach.

The Act also creates the role of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales - the guardian for the interests of future generations in Wales. Her role is to support the 44 public bodies, including the Welsh Government, to work towards achieving the well-being goals and to monitor and report on their progress.

What are the big issues?

Employment

Lack of employment opportunities for young people, high numbers of NEETS (not in employment, education or training), many people in low paid, part time work.

Rurality and interconnectivity

Disconnection of places with transport and services, made harder by challenges of an ageing population. Particular issues about the quality of health services in different places, including over the English border and the impact of this on people's lives.

Deprivation and disengagement

Deprived areas are noticeably run down, and the people who live there tend to be the most disengaged. In particular, young people feel like they are "moved on" from programme to programme.

Role of the third sector

Organisations deliver a range of vital services but are focused on survival due to short term funding cycles.

How could the WFG Act help to create change, and who needs to create change?

“ The people making the decisions need to walk the same path as the people on the ground. ”

Public bodies and PSBs should take account of their 'community voice' and there should be careful consideration about how information from communities is fed into decision makers to avoid 'filtering' of what people are saying.

Involvement and engagement

"In Flintshire they were consulting about the closure of 3 schools. They asked parents if they were black, white, gay, male female etc. but didn't ask if any of the parents couldn't drive. The school was only accessible by car..."

Sharing best practice

It is important that people can have a point of access to share their experiences and ideas.

Using digital technology to share best practice needs to be carefully considered as many areas of Wales have poor broadband connections.



Prevention

Services seem to wait until they reach crisis point and then intervene, and a different approach is needed. However, whilst shifting resources to prevention is crucial, public bodies also need to recognise that the story of service users is of equal importance

Public Services Boards

PSBs are an opportunity to jointly focus on cross-cutting problems, but there needs to be a greater focus on the long term and on meaningful involvement.

The Assessments of Local Well-being should focus on 'root cause' analysis of issues in an area.

Timescales for change

There is a clash between political and generational timescales which makes it hard to act for the long term. There is a fear about making decisions based on long term trends, in case the trends are wrong and it would be very helpful if funding streams were aligned and focused on the long term. Short term funding creates capacity issues, as people are focused on finding succession funding.

"There needs to be a clear pathway for residents and community organisations to be able to talk to people that make decisions. Also we need two-way communication – we don't just want a consultation event, people want to be kept in the loop and told 'now that you've asked us this, how we're going to act'. People feel consulted to death and public bodies need to understand how to engage with people effectively."

What are the big issues?

Accessibility and rurality

Access to services and facilities such as health-care (attracting consultants is difficult). Poor infrastructure in rural areas including public transport and ICT infrastructure/broadband. Ageing population and increasing isolation, and rural/fuel poverty.

Affordable housing

Lack of housing, particularly for young people. Current planning system (Local Development Plan) not supporting affordable housing.

Employment and skills

Lack of jobs particularly for young people leading to outward migration. Empty town centres. Lack of basic (parenting) skills affecting generations.

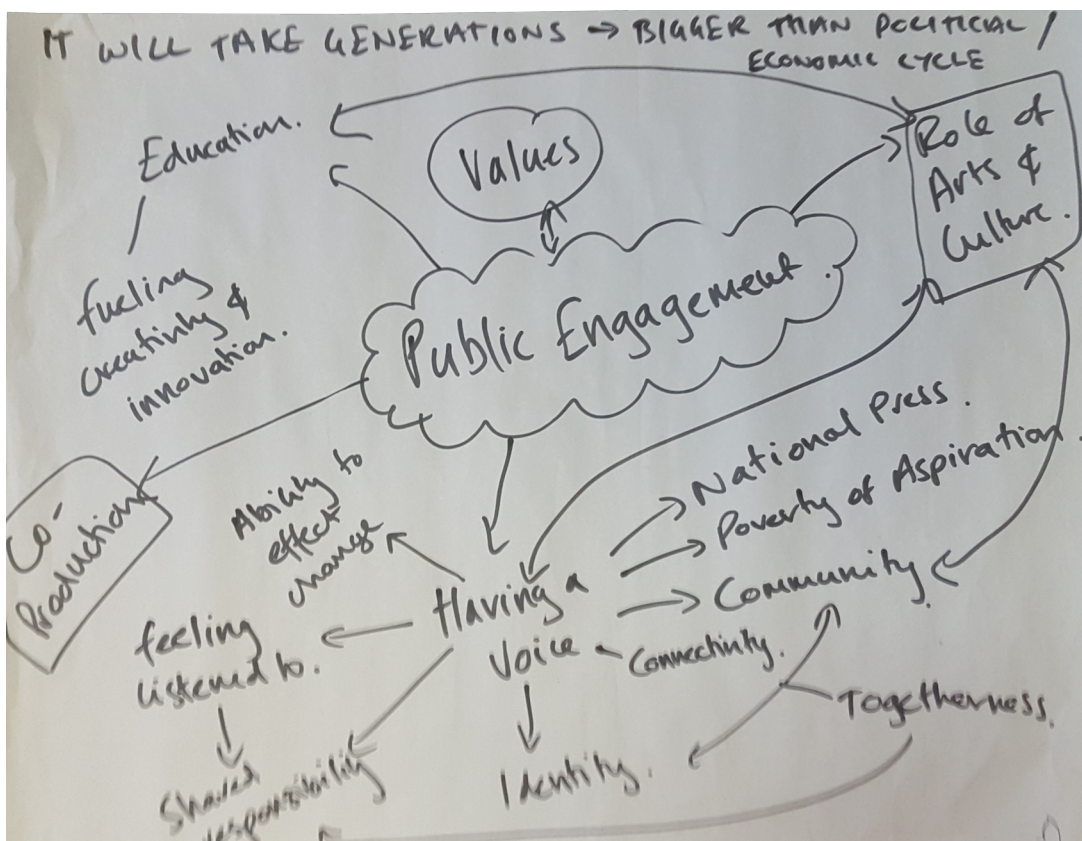
Environment, resilience and renewables

Community renewable opportunities not being realised. Impact of farming on environment; lack of resilient, biodiverse, healthy environment. Issues around food resilience and security at same time as food advertising leading to obesity. Lack of awareness of key issues, particularly of climate change.

Active citizenship and involvement

Building sustainable communities, need to engage and involve local communities to build on knowledge, expertise and get ownership.

Current bureaucracy – micro-management of projects, short-term funding and uncertainty about future of funding (EU), conflict of long-term planning vs short-term opportunities.



How could the WFG Act help to create change, and who needs to create change?

Involvement and engagement for true collaboration

Better, more active citizenship engagement and involvement is key - empowerment and building on the skills and capacity of local people and local assets. Need to work better together and design things collaboratively from the start, ending 'dependency culture' and encouraging greater individual responsibility (for example through mentoring, time-banking, volunteering).



Capacity Building

The public sector should make the most of all resources available locally and recognise the value of local volunteers to support change. The WFG Act is an opportunity to cut through regulation/bureaucracy and free people up to innovate through leadership (not management), personal responsibility and collaboration. Need to support families and communities to share the skills 'of old' for future generations.

"After this event I will integrate principles and goals into core business; focus on how/what I do today impacts on the future; ensure my engagement today assists the future."

“

We have produced our community place plan which has interventions in line with the 7 well-being goals. This is a long term plan that relies on community input and aims for the community to take ownership.

”

Communication and education

We need to move from a “can’t-do” to a “can do” attitude; the media has a key role in terms of promoting positive change. The WFG Act should focus on encouraging leadership (at all levels) to show what can be achieved – we need to be brave, and to publish success so that others can follow. Need to promote individual responsibility, educate the workforce and young people.

"I will help local businesses to understand how they impact on to the global environment and how they can engage with local social initiatives to improve the wellbeing of their staff"

"

Culture Change

What

Loneliness NEEDS

- local services & we ports
- employment / apprenticeship opps for young people
- loss of intergenerational transfer of finance & skills
- Equality of delivery
- Preventive - demand management
- Accountability
- Political vs generational time scales
- Ensuring added value two partnerships (PSB)
- Scrutiny
- CVCs - strategic overview or capacity

Who

- FG Commissioner
- NAO Funding
- Public citizens
- CVCs
- Citizen panel
- What level will action happen?
- Businesses?
- Community - geographical equality
- Research Institutions
- Third sector
- Welsh govt.
- Convergence
- Community councils
- NRW
- Public bodies
- Private sector CVCs NGOs

How

- PSB: joint focus on crosscutting
- Communication across old partnership
- Evidence base
- Root causes analysis (Response analysis wellbeing plans)
- Pooled budgets + unorthodox funding
- WB assessment + plan - take account of community voice
- Assets assessment

What are the big issues?

Reconnecting communities

People need to feel engaged and connected, everyone needs to be involved but in new, innovative ways because many people have 'consultation jaundice'. Engagement can't just be a one-off, people need to understand the difference their input has made and how the outcomes link to the well-being goals. Engagement should include mapping all determinants that enable people and communities to cope with key issues. The recent referendum vote shows that there is a big need to reconnect decision makers and communities, and combat distrust and apathy.

City region and community planning / infrastructure

The City Deal and the planning decisions that it influences must be tested against the WFG Act.

The perception is that it is about big ego projects rather than investing in tried and tested projects. Local development planning should take account of a range of needs including housing, infrastructure, services and biodiversity. There is a risk of generic plans and solutions that are not meaningful at the very local level, the role of community councils and community asset transfers shouldn't be underestimated. Community resilience should be built through self-sufficient approaches, particularly in relation to food production.

Employment and population trends

Lack of employment opportunities and high numbers of NEETS (not in education, employment or training) and where jobs are being created they are not the type of jobs that lead to improved well-being. Financial poverty is limiting people's choices and opportunities, which is leading to widespread dissatisfaction. There is poverty of education, aspiration, resources, voice and opportunity. In some areas there is a tension between what older people (who can vote) want and what younger people (who can't vote) want. There are wider issues about the aging population, including recognising the skills and contributions of older generations.

How could the WFG Act help to create change, and who needs to create change?

Information sharing

There should be more information sharing, including information on benefits and best practice. The pooling of resources toward the development of specific local community plans would help give a framework to PSB's on what is required to make plans real. The FG Commissioner's office has a role in providing a way to answer ongoing enquiries as public bodies are trying to implement the requirements of the WFG Act.



Scrutiny and challenge

Scrutiny of the WFG Act is vital and will determine accountability of local authorities and PSB's. Scrutiny or reporting from communities is an important element, and it should be representative of the diversity of communities. It is important to not just do scrutiny for scrutiny's sake, but to make sure it is effective, and to make sure that what comes from scrutiny is interesting – more than just 'dry minutes'.

“ Transparency is crucial. We must balance the present 'top-down' approach with grass-roots 'bottom-up' initiatives to restore people's faith in the future, and in their government and make them aware of their own ability to change things for the better locally in practical and pragmatic ways ”



This [agenda] will take generations and needs to be co-produced, taking into account community engagement, power sharing, listening. Everyone has expertise.

Public Services Boards

Partnership working is challenging and PSBs need to ensure it works, for example through sharing budgets. Agenda sharing between public bodies and asset mapping of social assets will enable access to resources for transformational change. PSBs need to work at the high level and community level, through creating both strategic and more local place-based issue conversations.

Prevention

One of the biggest challenges is how to move to a preventative approach with limited and reducing finances whilst maintaining existing services. 'One year' budgets make this particularly difficult, and in some bodies 'early intervention' teams have been cut back. There are some leading examples of prevention – for example Police work on trying to stop perpetrators and victims coming into the system, but still need to respond to crisis situations.

Involvement and engagement

Involvement should be about having a two-way dialogue and having the skill to build consensus, tracking experiences and creating a narrative around the use of shared public services that can inform how to improve them. Communities don't always understand the constraints of local authorities and other public bodies, so involvement should help communicate these.

[Following this event I will be] engaging with marginalised and disempowered people, including immigrants and refugees to ensure their voices are heard in the process.

Collaboration across sectors

Different bodies need to understand each others' priorities and contributions – one way to help this would be to arrange secondments across different organisations / sectors. There are a range of bodies not included in the legislation but that still have an important role to play because they are active and visible in communities – including third sector organisations, police and housing associations.

“We are already noticing an improvement in 'silo' working in public bodies. There is also clearer engagement with us in the third sector!”

Leadership and communication

The Commissioner has a key role in creating the environment for the approaches and behaviours that the WFG needs. There is an issue about how the media reports what happens and doesn't give broader enough perspectives – for example in relation to climate change. Information about the WFG Act should be available at all levels, even down to ward level. There should be leadership in terms of audit – people are told to be innovative but are wary about doing things differently.

“The message needs to come from our Leaders. Need to embrace the Act/buy in. I need to influence this – the opportunities and positives, not just the challenges.”

What are the big issues?

Employment and deprivation

More high value jobs are needed, to reduce youth migration. A high number of households are living in poverty and isolation is a problem. The viability of town centres and impact of out of town centres.

Health inequalities

Outcomes for people are unequal; Adverse Childhood Experiences, lack of access to childcare and childhood obesity.

Community and cultural spaces

Community spaces and natural resources need to be utilised more and the way we design houses can contribute to mental and physical well-being. Language and culture are important to the area and community spaces should be safe for play and physical activity.

How could the WFG Act help to create change, and who needs to create change?



Public awareness, communication and education

Local people need to know what the WFG Act is to be involved effectively - basic, simple, interesting and standardised communications and messages are needed. Public awareness of the Act is needed for those on the ground and in our communities, being clear about managing expectations and responsibilities – what can people do for themselves? Educational bodies can play a role – schools should be promoting the Act and developing global citizens for the future, and universities can share research that is relevant to the Act.

Services and Public Service Boards

How do we develop services to suit all needs; lack of information on services is a barrier to involvement and collaboration. PSBs need to achieve a shared common agenda, which makes sense at a local level, and should drive the local agenda with 'bottom up' evidence and demonstrate community engagement through providing evidence of actual need. There is a big expectation on PSBs to spread the word but they may not have the space, time and resource to have the 'WIDER' conversations. A common database would support effective involvement and partnership working although it will be important not to 'over engage' or conduct 'fake' consultations without real intention to listen and act.

Some communities are dis-engaging themselves due to over consultation or the lack of any real change.

Culture change and accountability

The five ways of working are important in creating change such as through the integration of services and a co-ordinated public sector approach to big issues. Accessible and consistent guidance about the application of the WFG Act is needed for all sectors and painting a picture of the future will help create a vision.

Culture change is needed in the public sector to do things differently and to look at the Act as an opportunity, not a problem. The short term approach of the public sector compared to the long term needs of the community is a challenge and commitment to listening and to change is required. Communities are taking more of an interest in services and taking part in planning and scrutiny. Accountability must be encouraged through the Act and auditing will help ensure change is delivered.

“A cultural change is needed to celebrate these real successes and awareness of these should be spread across North Wales to inform decisions.”

“Real change needs to be led by the community - they need to be inspired. More help is needed to allow public bodies to support and advise communities on taking initiatives forward to become resilient.”

Good practice across organisations and sectors

There is no need to duplicate or start afresh with everything, there is already a lot of good work happening which is in alignment with the WFG Act. Businesses large and small should be engaged to share this common agenda and ensure progress through appropriate actions, for example through less sugar in products, being carbon neutral etc. Social and not for profit enterprises can also create change. Town and community councils are assets and local organising structures to encourage change at local level, including the encouragement of asset transfer arrangements.



What are the big issues?

Employment and innovation

Need greater support for enterprise so that innovation can start and flourish in a rural setting, will lead to better opportunities for employment.

Rurality and infrastructure

More affordable housing and sustainable homes will address young people's migration out of the area. Transport infrastructure and IT connectivity. Need greater collaboration with other parts of Wales.

Energy

Renewable energy infrastructure and community benefit and ownership of projects.

Community engagement and opportunities

Improved economic, educational and cultural opportunities to retain and attract younger people. Community engagement and building on social capital to make better more long term decisions, to ensure that the organisations representing communities are making best use of resources.

How could the WFG Act help to create change, and who needs to create change?

“

Do we need so many public bodies (town councils and community councils) delivering services – could some roles be shared?

”

Public Services Boards

The Act needs to create a culture of equal partners so that real people can influence decisions, it needs to be an asset based methodology not just looking at needs. There are opportunities for greater involvement by Town and Community Councils to develop local plans and help deliver services at a local level. Third sector representation in decision making can be improved through greater connectivity between local groups and high level decision makers within the PSB.

Shared vision and collaboration

The Act is an opportunity to develop a shared vision and improved collaboration to make areas better. The two-way communication between PSBs and communities needs to be improved and sustained – it needs to be a continuous conversation not a short consultation. Services need to collaborate to share resources, in order to reduce inefficiencies and to make better use of public money and local knowledge.

“Support to encourage local communities to hold public bodies to account and work with public bodies more effectively. Make public bodies ‘enablers’, currently inhibitors in a lot of different cases.”

“Carrot and stick! Be bold and hold to account, but people need to understand why the stick is being wielded.”

Timescales, and culture change

There are opportunities for long term thinking, about “the Powys of the future” and to move away from short term/political cycles way of working. This needs to be demonstrated from Welsh Government Ministers down to local councillors. Opportunity to engage with young people to help shape the vision for their place, which might mean collaboration with other places in England. Demand on services and funding reduction must mean different ways of working – this needs creative minds and break cultural tendencies within institutions.



Boldness and challenge

The FGC needs to be bold to ensure that public bodies keep doing the right things and not returning to old practices, including through exercising her powers to challenge. Change needs to involve local people - if communities are able to influence change, then they need to engage with the issues.

“Building resilient communities need to work together not in silos – how is this addressed, incentivised or governed?”

“The FGC needs to make sure the change happens and the blame culture isn’t moved around, and that all seven goals are promoted.”

Organisations engaged with:

A Regional Collaboration for Health (ARCH)	Chwarae Teg
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board	Citizens Advice Cymru
Academi Wales	City and County of Swansea
All Wales Criminal Justice Board	City of Cardiff Council
Arts Council of Wales	Climate Change Commission for Wales
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	Commissioner for Sustainable Futures
Association of Voluntary Organisations	Community Energy Wales
Auditor General for Wales	Concern Universal
Bangor University	Constructing Excellence in Wales
Barnardo's Cymru	Construction Youth Trust Cymru
Bat Conservation Trust	Conwy County Borough Council
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	Cwm Taf University Health Board
Bevan Commission	Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg
Bevan Foundation	Cymorth Cymru
Big Lottery Fund	Deloitte UK
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Denbighshire County Council
Blake Morgan	Disability Wales
BMA Wales	Diverse Cymru
Boots Alliance	Down to Earth Project
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority	Early Action Task Force
Bridgend County Borough Council	Ecodyfi
British Gas	Electoral Reform Society
BT Wales	Emergence
Business Cymru	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Business in the Community Cymru	Estyn
Business Wales	Ethisphere
Caerphilly County Borough Council	Fairtrade Wales
Caerphilly Public Service Board	Farmers Union for Wales
Cambridge University	Finland National Audit Office
Cancer Research Cymru	Finnish Environment Institute
Capital Law	Finnish Ombudsman
Carbon Trust	Friends of the Earth Cymru
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	FSB Wales
Cardiff Business School	Gas and Electricity Markets Authority
Cardiff Capital Region City Deal	Global Learning Programme Wales
Cardiff Capital Region Growth and Competitiveness Commission	Good Energy
Cardiff Metropolitan University	Grayling Cymru
Cardiff University	Groundwork
Carmarthenshire County Council	Gwent Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Carmarthenshire Public Service Board	Gwynedd Council
CBI Wales	Hay Festival
Centre for Alternative Technology	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)
Centre for Regeneration Wales (formerly CREW)	Hub Cymru Africa
Ceredigion County Council	Hywel Dda University Health Board
Chartered Institute of Housing	Incredible Oceans
Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)	Insight Wales Consulting Ltd
Children's Commissioner for Wales	INSPIRE
Children's Rights Unit	Institute of Primary Care and Public Health
	Involve

Legal Wales	RNIB Cymru
Llamau	Royal College of Physicians
Local Government Data Unit	RSPB Cymru
Media Academy Cardiff	RWE
Melin Homes	Samaritans
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	School of International Futures
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and Authority	Scouts Wales
Mind Cymru	Smart Energy GB
Monmouthshire County Council	Snowdonia National Park Authority
MTR Corporation	South East Wales Regional Partnership Board
National Assembly for Wales - Cross Party Group on Rural Affairs	South Wales Chamber of Commerce
National Assembly for Wales – Assembly Members	South Wales Fire Service and Rescue Service and Authority
National Assembly for Wales – Committee Clerks	South Wales Police
National Botanic Garden for Wales	South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI)	Spice
National Library of Wales	Sport Wales
National Museum Wales	Stonewall
National Procurement Service	Sustain Wales
National Offender Management Service	Sustainable Development Coordinators Cymru
Natural Resources Wales	Swansea Public Service Board
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council	TATA Steel
Netherwood Sustainable Futures	Tenovus Cancer Care
New Economics Foundation	The Climate Group
Newport City Council	The Green Valleys
North Wales Fire and Rescue Service	The Older People's Commissioner for Wales
NSPCC Wales	The Open University in Wales
Nudjed	The TYF Group
NUS Wales	The Welsh NHS Confederation
Oxfam Cymru	Tidal Lagoon Power
Oxford Martin School	Torfaen County Borough Council
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority	Torfaen Public Service Board
Pembrokeshire County Council	TUC Cymru
Peopletoo	UK Committee on Climate Change
Play Wales	UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development (UKSSD)
Pobl Group	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Positif Politics	Vale of Glamorgan Youth Mayor's Office
Powys County Council	Velindre NHS Trust
Powys Teaching Health Board	Violence against women
Public Health Observatory - Health Intelligence	Violence Reduction Unit Scotland
Public Health Wales	Voluntary Arts Wales
Public Policy Institute for Wales	Wales Alliance for Global Education
Public Services Ombudsman for Wales	Wales Audit Office
Public Services Staff Commission	Wales Co-operative Centre
PWC	Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Quebec Government Office in Washington	Welsh Centre for International Affairs
Race Council Cymru	Welsh Collaboration for Health and the Environment
Renewable UK Cymru	Welsh Government – Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	

Welsh Government - Cabinet Secretary for
Education
Welsh Government – Cabinet Secretary for Finance
and Local Government
Welsh Government - Cabinet Secretary for Health,
Well-being and Sport
Welsh Government - Cadw
Welsh Government - Chief Medical Officer
Welsh Government – Deputy Minister for Skills and
Science
Welsh Government – First Minister
Welsh Government – NHS Wales Director
Welsh Government - Office of Chief Scientific
Adviser
Welsh Language Commissioner
Welsh Local Government Association
Welsh Sports Association
Welsh Water
Welsh Women's Aid
Wildlife Trust Wales
Women in Public Life
Women Making a Difference
Women's Equality Network
WRAP Cymru
Wrexham County Borough Council
WWF Cymru
YFC Wales
Young Foundation
Youth Cymru
Youth Sport Trust