



Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

2015 anaw 2

An Act of the National Assembly for Wales to make provision requiring public bodies to do things in pursuit of the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in a way that accords with the sustainable development principle; to require public bodies to report on such action; to establish a Commissioner for Future Generations to advise and assist public bodies in doing things in accordance with this Act; to establish public services boards in local authority areas; to make provision requiring those boards to plan and take action in pursuit of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in their area; and for connected purposes. [29 April 2015]

Having been passed by the National Assembly for Wales and having received the assent of Her Majesty, it is enacted as follows:

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

1 Overview

- (1) This section is an overview of the main provisions of the Act.
- (2) Part 2 of this Act—
 - (a) explains what is meant by “sustainable development” and requires public bodies to carry out sustainable development (sections 2 and 3);
 - (b) requires the bodies to set well-being objectives that are to contribute to the achievement of well-being goals and to take steps to meet those objectives (section 3)
 - (c) requires the bodies to do those things in accordance with the sustainable development principle (section 3);

Status: This version of this Act contains provisions that are prospective.

Changes to legislation: Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 10 March 2022. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (d) explains what the well-being goals are and what it means to do things in accordance with the sustainable development principle (sections 4 and 5);
 - (e) requires indicators that measure progress towards achieving the well-being goals (section 10), and reports on future trends in the well-being of Wales (section 11), to be published by the Welsh Ministers;
 - (f) requires the bodies to report annually on their progress towards meeting their well-being objectives (sections 12 and 13 and Schedule 1);
 - (g) requires the Auditor General for Wales to carry out examinations into the extent to which public bodies set objectives and take steps to meet them in accordance with the sustainable development principle (section 15).
- (3) Part 3 of this Act—
- (a) establishes the office of Future Generations Commissioner for Wales (section 17 and Schedule 2);
 - (b) provides for the Commissioner to promote the needs of future generations by monitoring and reporting on the extent to which the public bodies are setting and seeking to meet their well-being objectives in accordance with the sustainable development principle (section 18);
 - (c) provides for the Commissioner to carry out reviews of public bodies (section 20);
 - (d) establishes a panel of advisers to the Commissioner (sections 26 to 28).
- (4) Part 4 of this Act—
- (a) establishes a public services board for each local authority area in Wales and sets out who else a board may work with (Chapter 1);
 - (b) requires boards to improve the well-being of their area by contributing to the well-being goals, which they are to do by assessing well-being in their area, setting local objectives designed to maximise the board's contribution (within its area) to the achievement of the well-being goals and taking steps to meet those objectives (Chapter 2, section 36);
 - (c) requires boards to do those things in accordance with the sustainable development principle (Chapter 2, section 36);
 - (d) requires boards to publish local well-being plans setting out their local objectives and how they propose to take steps to meet them (Chapter 2, section 39);
 - (e) makes specific provision about how local well-being plans apply to community councils and how, in that way, a community council may contribute to the activity of the public services board in its area (Chapter 2, section 40);
 - (f) provides for boards to merge or otherwise collaborate ^{F1}, and to demerge (Chapter 3).

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 1(4)(f) inserted (20.3.2021) by [Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021 \(asc 1\)](#), s. 175(3)(q), [Sch. 14 para. 1\(2\)](#)

Commencement Information

- I1** S. 1 in force at 16.10.2015 by [S.I. 2015/1785](#), [art. 2\(a\)](#)

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PART 2

IMPROVING WELL-BEING

Sustainable development and well-being duty on public bodies

2 Sustainable development

In this Act, “sustainable development” means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle (see section 5), aimed at achieving the well-being goals (see section 4).

Commencement Information

I2 [S. 2](#) in force at 1.4.2016 by [S.I. 2016/86](#), [art. 3](#)

3 Well-being duty on public bodies

- (1) Each public body must carry out sustainable development.
- (2) The action a public body takes in carrying out sustainable development must include—
 - (a) setting and publishing objectives (“well-being objectives”) that are designed to maximise its contribution to achieving each of the well-being goals, and
 - (b) taking all reasonable steps (in exercising its functions) to meet those objectives.
- (3) A public body that exercises functions in relation to the whole of Wales may set objectives relating to Wales or any part of Wales.
- (4) A public body that exercises functions in relation only to a part of Wales may set objectives relating to that part or any part of it.

Commencement Information

I3 [S. 3](#) in force at 1.4.2016 by [S.I. 2016/86](#), [art. 3](#)

4 The well-being goals

The well-being goals are listed and described in Table 1—

TABLE 1

Goal	Description of the goal
A prosperous Wales.	An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops

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	a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
A resilient Wales.	A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).
A healthier Wales.	A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
A more equal Wales.	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).
A Wales of cohesive communities.	Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.	A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
A globally responsible Wales.	A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

Commencement Information

I4 [S. 4](#) in force at 1.4.2016 by [S.I. 2016/86](#), [art. 3](#)

5 The sustainable development principle

- (1) In this Act, any reference to a public body doing something “in accordance with the sustainable development principle” means that the body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- (2) In order to act in that manner, a public body must take account of the following things—

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- (a) the importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs, especially where things done to meet short term needs may have detrimental long term effect;
- (b) the need to take an integrated approach, by considering how—
 - (i) the body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals;
 - (ii) the body's well-being objectives impact upon each other or upon other public bodies' objectives, in particular where steps taken by the body may contribute to meeting one objective but may be detrimental to meeting another;
- (c) the importance of involving other persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and of ensuring those persons reflect the diversity of the population of—
 - (i) Wales (where the body exercises functions in relation to the whole of Wales), or
 - (ii) the part of Wales in relation to which the body exercises functions;
- (d) how acting in collaboration with any other person (or how different parts of the body acting together) could assist the body to meet its well-being objectives, or assist another body to meet its objectives;
- (e) how deploying resources to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may contribute to meeting the body's well-being objectives, or another body's objectives.

Commencement Information

I5 [S. 5](#) in force at 1.4.2016 by [S.I. 2016/86](#), [art. 3](#)

6 Meaning of “public body”

- (1) For the purposes of this Part and Part 3 of this Act, each of the following persons is a “public body”—
- (a) the Welsh Ministers;
 - (b) a local authority;
 - [^{F2}(ba) a corporate joint committee;]
 - (c) a Local Health Board;
 - (d) the following NHS Trusts—
 - (i) Public Health Wales;
 - (ii) Velindre;
 - (e) a National Park authority for a National Park in Wales;
 - (f) a Welsh fire and rescue authority;
 - (g) the Natural Resources Body for Wales;
 - (h) the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales;
 - (i) the Arts Council of Wales;
 - (j) the Sports Council for Wales;
 - (k) the National Library of Wales;
 - (l) the National Museum of Wales.
- (2) Section 52 enables the Welsh Ministers to amend the meaning of a “public body”.