

Act Today for the Future: The Pathway to the Enactment of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act

Jane Davidson,
Future Design 2025



Grŵp Herio Cymru
Sero Net 2035

Wales Net Zero 2035
Challenge Group

<https://janedavidson.wales>

“What Wales is doing today, the world will do tomorrow.”

–Nikhil Seth, UN Assistant Secretary General

#futuregen



Lessons

from a

Small

Country

JANE DAVIDSON

1. Visioning

“Visioning means taking off the constraints of feasibility, of disbelief and past disappointments and letting your mind dwell upon its most noble, uplifting, treasured dreams”

Donella Meadows

1999 – new democracy, new duty for Wales

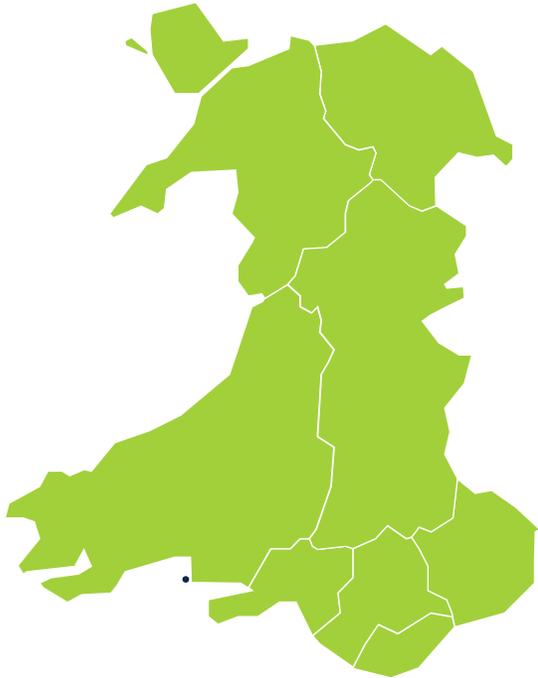
Government of Wales Act 1998

The Government has a duty to have a scheme setting out how it will **promote** sustainable development in the exercise of its functions.

Brundtland definition of Sustainable Development :

‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’

- the concept of **needs**, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- the idea of **limitations** imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs."



2. Networking

- “A network is non-hierarchical. It is a web of connections among equals, held together not by force, obligation, material incentive, or social contract, but by shared values and the understanding that some tasks can be accomplished together that could never be accomplished separately.”

Donella Meadows

Sustainable Development Commission input

- **Achieving a Sustainable Economy:**

Building a strong, stable and sustainable economy which provides prosperity and opportunities for all, and in which environmental and social costs fall on those who impose them (Polluter Pays), and efficient resource use is incentivised.

- **Promoting Good Governance;** Actively promoting effective, participative systems of governance in all levels of society – engaging people’s creativity, energy, and diversity.

- **Using Sound Science Responsibly:**

Ensuring policy is developed and implemented on the basis of strong scientific evidence, whilst taking into account scientific uncertainty (through the Precautionary Principle) as well as public attitudes and values.

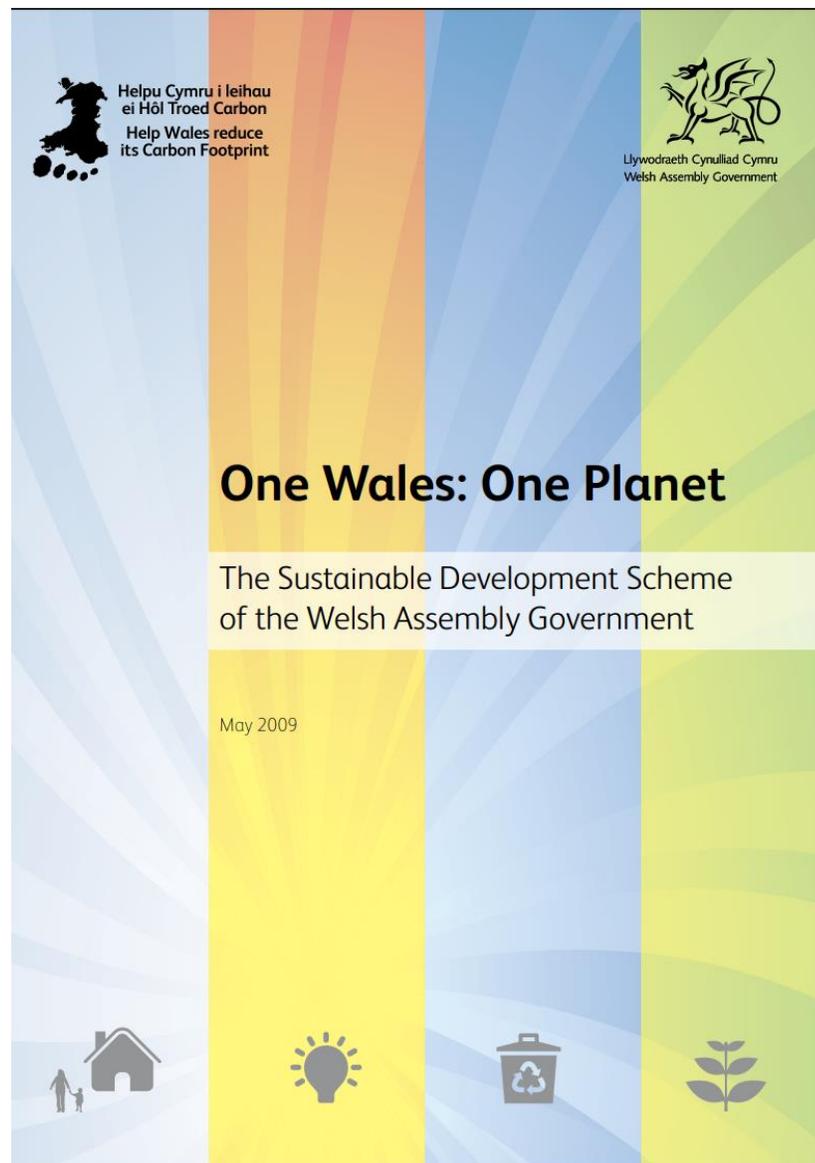
- **Living Within Environmental Limits:** Respecting the limits of the planet’s environment, resources and biodiversity – to improve our environment and ensure that the natural resources needed for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations.

- **Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society:** Meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal well-being, social cohesion and inclusion, and creating equal opportunity for all

‘One Future: Different Paths’ SDC 2005

One Wales One Planet 2009

- Lives within its **environmental limits**
- Has **healthy, biologically diverse and productive ecosystems**
- Has a **resilient and sustainable economy**
- Has **communities which are safe, sustainable and attractive**
- Is a **fair, just and bilingual nation**



The sudden end of the SDC – and its impact



**Sustainable
Development Commission**

Sustainable Development Commission logo

Formation	June 2001
Type	Non-departmental public body
Legal status	Closed as of 30 March 2011 ^[1]
Purpose	Independent adviser on sustainable development .
Location	London , Edinburgh , Cardiff , Belfast
Region served	United Kingdom
Official language	English, Welsh
Website	www.sd-commission.org.uk

Moving towards legislation....



In its manifesto for the 2011 election, the Welsh Labour Party outlined its vision for



" a sustainable Wales to become a 'one planet' nation by putting sustainable development at the heart of government; creating a resilient and sustainable economy that lives within its environmental limits and only using our fair share of the earth's resources to sustain our lifestyles."

Written Statement - Commissioner for Sustainable Futures

Jane Davidson, Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

First published: 1 March 2011

Last updated: 1 March 2011

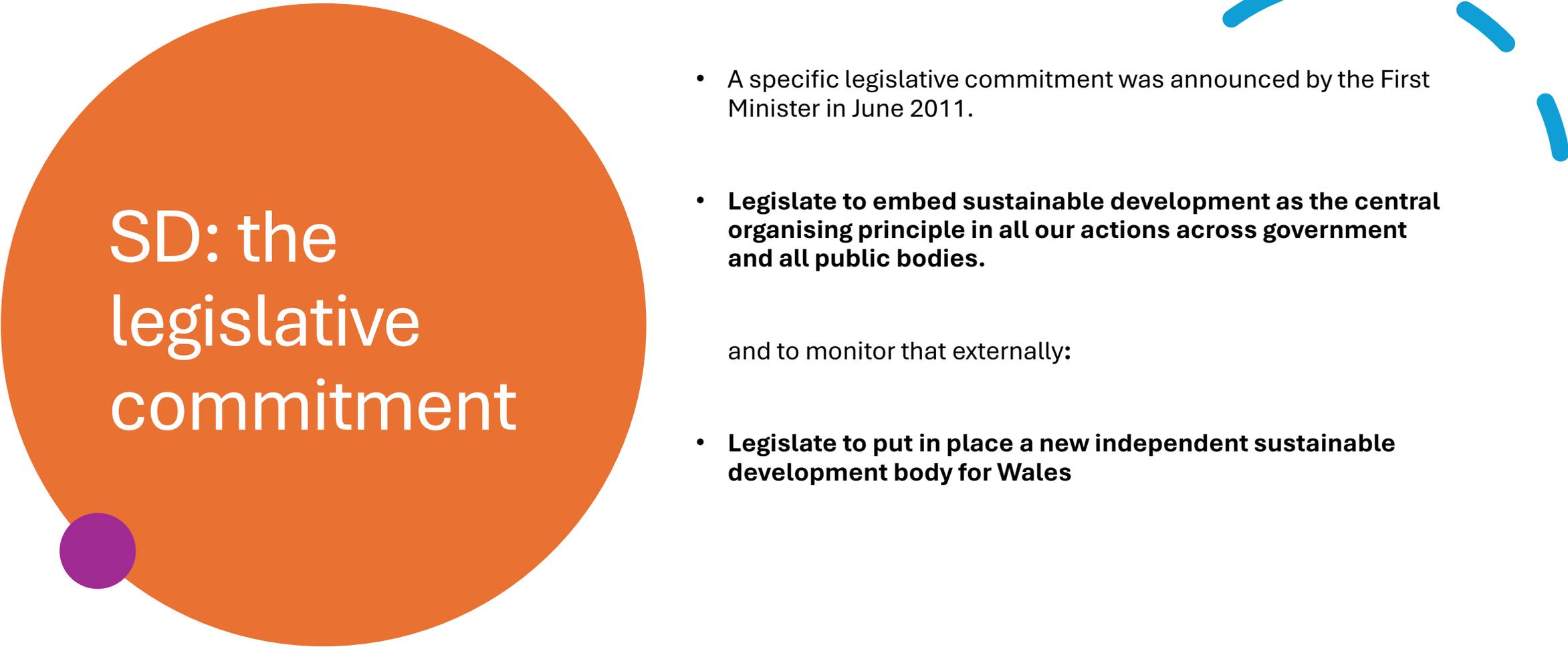
i This was published under the 2007 to 2011 administration of the Welsh Government

I am today announcing the appointment of Peter Davies as Commissioner for Sustainable Futures from 1 April 2011. Mr Davies is currently our Sustainable Development Commissioner for Wales, an appointment that will end on 31 March 2011.

Following the decision of the UK Secretary for State for the Environment to withdraw funding from the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC), the SDC will formally close down at the end of March 2011. We in Wales have always valued the work done by the SDC, and the SDC has made an important contribution to our sustainable development agenda.

I announced at the time my intent to continue to seek independent advice on sustainable development, drawing on the best practice from the UK, Europe and internationally, to inform us as we take forward our policies.

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SD: the legislative commitment

- A specific legislative commitment was announced by the First Minister in June 2011.
- **Legislate to embed sustainable development as the central organising principle in all our actions across government and all public bodies.**

and to monitor that externally:

- **Legislate to put in place a new independent sustainable development body for Wales**

3. Truth-telling

“A system cannot function well if its information streams are corrupted by lies...

Not: unrelieved pessimism

Nor: sappy optimism

But: the resolve to tell the truth about both the successes and failures of the present and the potentials and obstacles of the future

And above all: the courage to admit and bear the pain of the present while keeping a steady eye on a vision of a better future ”

Donella Meadows

Did the existing
arrangements
work?

The Scheme requires Ministers to 'promote' not deliver



No legal definition of SD



2010 Wales Audit Office report found SD not embedded in Government practice



2011 Policy report for WWF found SD not embedded across all portfolios



The Wales We Want National Conversation 2014



The Wales We Want is a National Conversation – first of its kind – and helped inform our ground-breaking Well-being of Future Generations (WFG) Act – one of the very few such laws in the world that legislates for sustainable development.

4. Learning

“Learning means exploring a new path with vigour and courage, being open to other people's explorations of other paths, and being willing to switch paths if one is found that leads more directly to the goal”

Donella Meadows

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – a duty to **deliver** (1)

- Long term
- Prevention
- Collaboration
- Integration
- Involvement



- Society
- Environment
- Economy
- Culture



... a duty to **deliver** (2) on 7 Goals linked to the SDGs

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); an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing fair work.

A resilient Wales

A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with health 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 wellbeing 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 globally responsible Wales. A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being, and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).



Grŵp Herio Cymru
Sero Net 2035

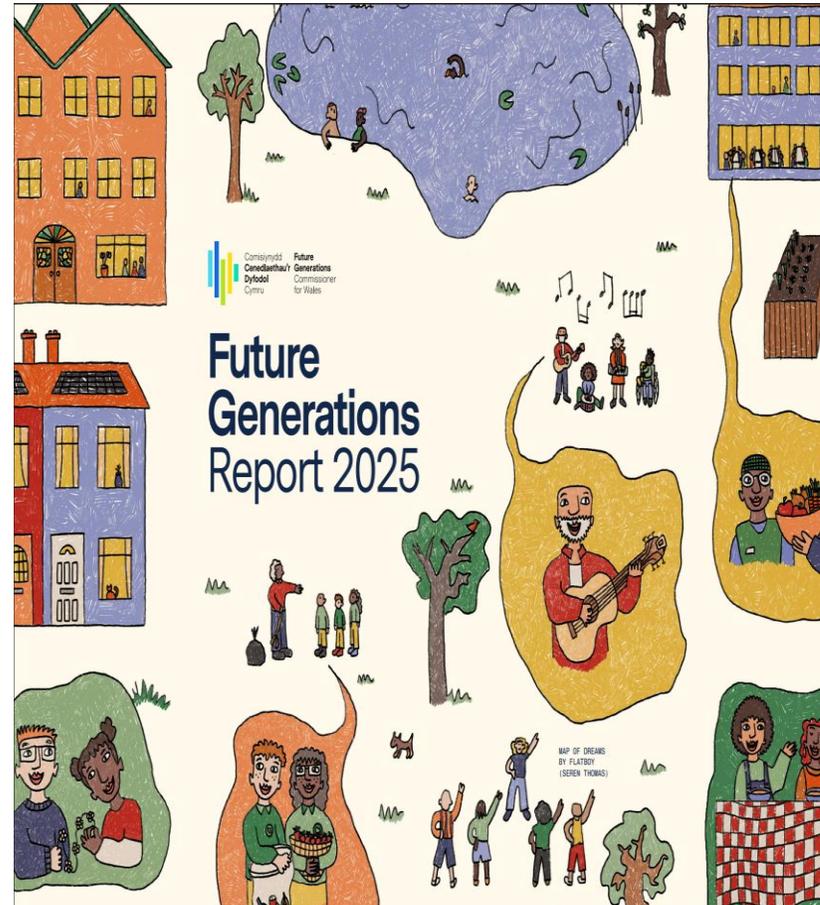
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Holding the government/public services to account

- The **Future Generations' Commissioner**
- The **Auditor General for Wales**
- The **Courts** – through judicial review



2025 Regulatory Views



INTRODUCTION

Without urgent action to address the climate and nature emergency, growing inequality and other long-term trends, we will be on track for an unrecognisable future, where the choices we have before us today are taken away, or made more difficult than we could ever imagine.

Our Well-being of Future Generations Act provides us with a pathway for improving lives now and in the future, so that when people now and in the future ask what we did to make Wales and the world better, we can say we did everything we could.

The Future Generations Report is designed to support politicians and public body leaders in making life better for people now and in the future.

Inside the full report, you'll find an assessment of progress, targeted advice and examples of positive change already happening through public services. My Future Generations Report for 2025 is structured around the missions and focus areas of my strategy **Cymru Can** because progress in each maximises our contribution to our seven well-being goals and offers a framework for tackling Wales' integrated challenges.

- My **Implementation and Impact mission** is about ensuring the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (WFG Act) fully delivers on its promise to improve lives now and in the future. My report makes clear that action is urgent, but Cymru has the power to meet these challenges and drive meaningful change.
- The **Climate and Nature mission** focuses on supporting public bodies on their journey towards net zero, climate resilience and nature recovery, including by challenging them to prioritise this agenda and lead action that balances environmental, social, economic, and cultural benefits.
- The **Health and Well-being mission** is to transform how public bodies in Wales keep people healthy, shifting the focus towards prevention and long-term well-being. Good health is more than hospitals and waiting times—it is shaped by our wider social and environmental factors. Public bodies must work together and with communities to tackle the root causes of ill-health and reduce health inequalities.
- Cymru is the only country in the world to place culture on an equal footing with social, economic and environmental well-being but the cultural and creative sectors face significant disruption. The **Culture and Welsh Language mission** is to support public bodies in championing culture, creativity and the Welsh language, ensuring they enrich the fabric of our communities and bring people together.

5. Loving

“The sustainability revolution will have to be, above all, a collective transformation that permits the best of human nature, rather than the worst, to be expressed and nurtured”

Donella Meadows



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Our Mandate

Commission independent advice to examine potential pathways to net zero by 2035. This will look at the impact on society and sectors of our economy, including how any adverse effects may be mitigated and the costs and benefits shared fairly



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<https://netzero2035.wales>

First stop: academic underpinning by Wales Centre for Public Policy at Cardiff University

Publications

PUBLICATIONS 10 APRIL 2024

How could Wales heat and build low-carbon homes by 2035?

Achieving net zero in Wales requires drastic reductions in emissions from new and existing buildings. Decarbonisation of domestic heating has a critical role to play...

ECONOMY, DECARBONISATION AND SKILLS WCPP PUBLICATIONS

ECONOMY, DECARBONISATION AND SKILLS

PUBLICATIONS 28 MARCH 2024

Decarbonising Wales' transport system while connecting people and places

Transport is the third highest greenhouse gas emitting sector in Wales. Decarbonising the transport sector while ensuring that the people and places of Wales are...

ECONOMY, DECARBONISATION AND SKILLS WCPP PUBLICATIONS

ECONOMY, DECARBONISATION AND SKILLS

PUBLICATIONS 25 JULY 2023

How could Wales feed itself in 2035?

To achieve the Welsh Government's net zero ambitions, Wales needs to reduce its agricultural emissions through changes to farming practices and increased carbon sequestration...

ECONOMY, DECARBONISATION AND SKILLS WCPP PUBLICATIONS

PUBLICATIONS 28 MARCH 2024

What could education, jobs and work look like across Wales by 2035?

Education and work form the backbone of people's lives, as well as being of crucial importance to the economic and social development of Wales...

ECONOMY, DECARBONISATION AND SKILLS WCPP PUBLICATIONS

ECONOMY, DECARBONISATION AND SKILLS

PUBLICATIONS 5 DECEMBER 2023

How could Wales meet energy needs by 2035 while phasing out fossil fuels?

Our outputs show that, while reaching the 2035 target is achievable, it will require fast and sustained action to increase electricity generation.

ECONOMY, DECARBONISATION AND SKILLS WCPP PUBLICATIONS

ECONOMY, DECARBONISATION AND SKILLS



<https://wcpp.org.uk/economy-decarbonisation-and-skills/>

Launch of 'Pathways to a Prosperous and Resilient Wales' September 2024

The published documents include 7 reports:

1. Summary report
2. Enabling the transition to net zero in Wales by 2035.
3. What could education, jobs and work, look like across Wales by 2035?
4. How could Wales feed itself by 2035?
5. How could Wales meet energy needs by 2035 whilst phasing out fossil fuels?
6. How could Wales heat and build homes and workplaces by 2035?
7. How could people and places be connected across Wales by 2035?



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WNZ 2035: How our Reports Work

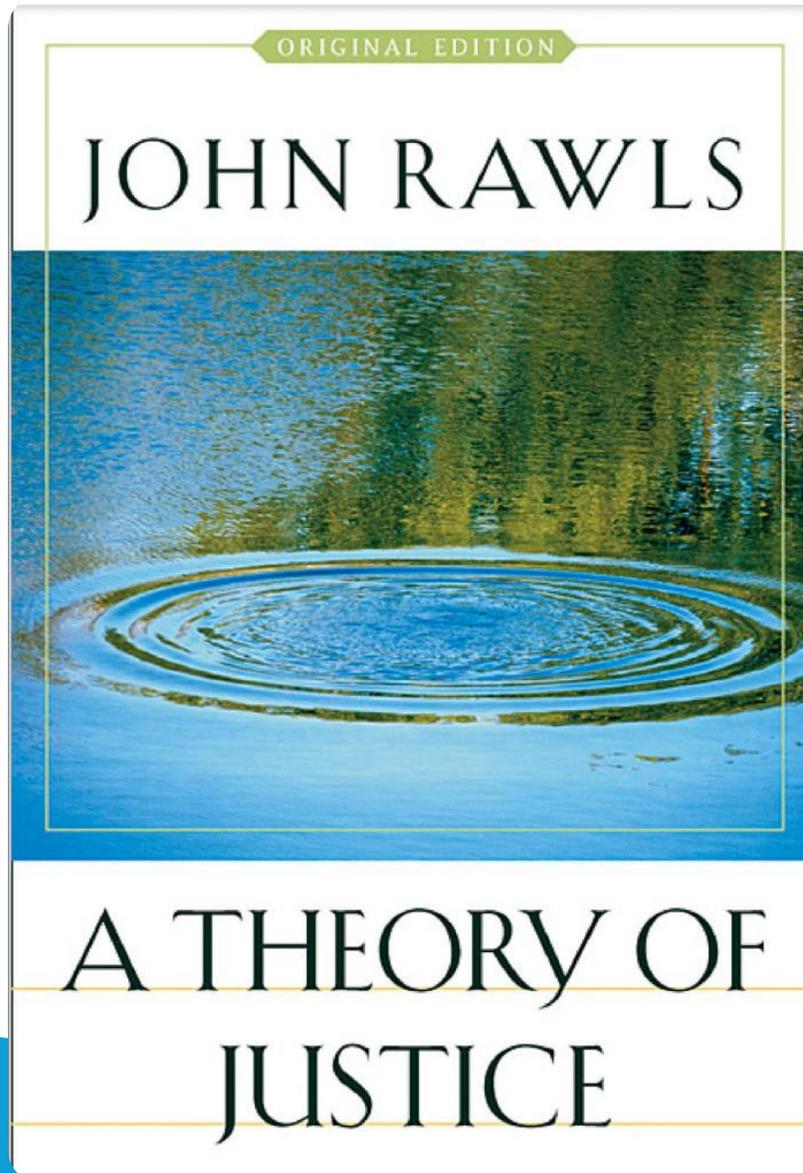
- Introduction – to the areas covered and why
- Pathway – immediate term 2025-2027/ Near term 2027-2030/Long term 2030-2035
- A Our Opportunity
- B Summary of pathway advice including references and case studies
- Our Approach



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	Immediate term (2025-2027)	Near term (2027-2030)	Longer term (2030-2035)
Primary and secondary education			
2.1 Establish climate action groups in every local authority in Wales by 2030	[Bar spanning 2025-2030]		
2.2 Commission a survey on teacher confidence to teach climate change and sustainability education and ascertain teacher training requirements by 2026	[Bar 2025-2026]		
2.3a Establish a range of named climate change and sustainability education (CCSE) experts from academia, teaching and the third sector who then deliver training, continuing professional development and support teachers and curriculum development between 2026 and 2035		[Bar spanning 2026-2035]	
2.3b Set up a space on the existing online Hwb network where CCSE resources can be shared and ensure that it is maintained and promoted to teachers across Wales by 2027		[Bar 2027-2027]	
2.4 Estyn assess sustainability throughout the AoLEs from 2026	[Bar 2026-2026]		
2.5 Work with exam boards to integrate CCSE into exam specifications across the Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs), drawing on project-based learning and practical, action-oriented experiences by 2029	[Bar spanning 2025-2029]		
Further education			
2.6 The new Commission for Tertiary Education & Research (CTER) and Qualifications Wales should establish a Just Transition Advisory Group by 2026	[Bar 2026-2026]		
2.6b Just Transition Advisory Group should review and reaccredit existing further education courses in consultation with Industry and Regional Learning and Skills Partnerships (RLSPs) by 2027		[Bar 2027-2027]	



“Do unto future generations as you would have past generations do unto you”

John Rawls ‘A Theory of Justice’
1971

"IN THE COURSE OF HISTORY,
THERE COMES A TIME WHEN
HUMANITY IS CALLED TO
SHIFT TO A NEW LEVEL OF
CONSCIOUSNESS.
TO REACH A HIGHER MORAL
GROUND. A TIME WHEN WE
HAVE TO SHED OUR FEAR AND
GIVE HOPE TO EACH OTHER.
THAT TIME IS NOW."

Wangari Maathai



Future Design for Creating a World Worth Inheriting

‘The Welsh Well-being Act
*‘is like a compass that serves
as a voice representing future
children, constantly asking us
to prioritise their happiness and
guiding us towards better
choices’*

Tatsuyoshi Saijo 2025

Tatsuyoshi Saijo

Future Design for Creating a World Worth Inheriting

The United Nations proposed a Special Envoy for Future Generations based on the Wales model at the Summit of the Future in New York in September 2024. Work on this was agreed by the #UN General Assembly.

‘A fo ben, bid bont’
If you want to be a leader, be a bridge

Jane Davidson
Chair, Net Zero Wales 2035



Grŵp Herio Cymru
Sero Net 2035
Wales Net Zero 2035
Challenge Group



ウェールズ発
「未来世代のためのウェルビーイング法」
ができるまで

未来 のために 今日 行動する

ジェーン・デイヴィッドソン 著

未来世代の幸福を、法で守る。

政府のあらゆる意思決定に「未来世代の幸福を組み込んだ世界初の法律」がウェールズで生まれた。この「小国」はなぜ、「今までと違う生き方」を選択し、「持続可能な開発」の理念を具現化することができたのか。立法を牽引した元大臣が、その思想、苦悩、そして実現への道筋を語り尽くす。

監修：中村民雄 / 明日香壽川 訳：加藤紗代

翻訳協力：特定非営利活動法人 未来世代のための市民委員会 チームメンバー [代表：河合史恵]

明石書店