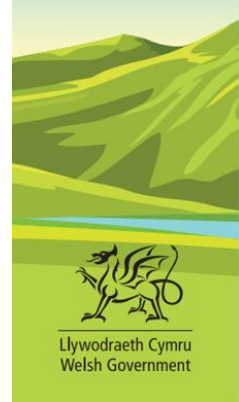


Deep Dive Designated Landscapes Working Group



Meeting Notes

Date of meeting: 11th April 2024

Time of meeting: 14:00-16:00

Attendees

Howard Davies, Chair, Andrew Blake, Wye Valley NL, Elinor Roberts, TCLW, Ruth Lovell, TCLW, Emma Story, TCLW, Graham Berry, Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB, Rhys Owen, Eryri, Keith Davies, NRW, Llyr Jones, NAAONB, Paul Sinnadurai, BBNPA, Tom Johnstone, TCLW, Simon Pickering, WG, Tom Cosson WG, Anna Jones, TCLW

● Welcome and introductions

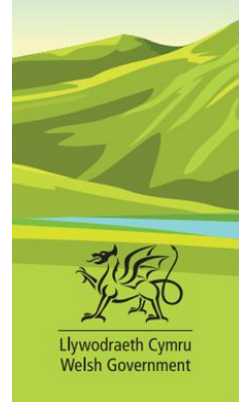
- HD welcomed everyone to the meeting
- The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the previous meeting.
- LIJ – Hannah from NAAONB is happy to attend a future meeting to give a presentation on green finance.
- Need to look at what comes steps come next as this will determine what we sort of funds we investigate.
- HD thanked everyone for their feedback and particularly RL who worked on the bank holiday to get it finished.
- HD – this is the last opportunity to suggest changes to the latest version.
- All previous iterations of the report will be saved, so all information and feedback will still be available.

● Report

- The group make 9 key recommendations at this stage
 1. Designated Landscapes should actively engage with, contribute to, and learn from global good practice in defining, planning and monitoring protected area management effectiveness.
 2. NRW's Updated Management Plan Guidance should provide a renewed focus and ambition and define the framework within which Deep Dive recommendations can be delivered.
 3. 'State of the Landscape Reports' should be explored as a mechanism to identify baselines, support objective setting, scenario plan, and target activity.
 4. The duty of regard is currently sub-optimal. The group recommends setting up a National Relevant Authorities Forum supported by an update of the current s62/s85 guidance in order to coordinate a more strategic response to exercising the duty
 5. Geographical Information System capability needs to be strengthened within Designated Landscapes, potentially through a collaborative programme and staff resource.



6. The breadth and depth of collaboration by Designated Landscapes needs to be widened, with consideration of access, inclusion, equity and justice forming an integral element
7. A Team Wales approach to shared governance, streamlined delivery, and risk management is essential if we are to tackle the technical challenges associated with consents, permitting, and grant funding.
8. The development of the SFS provides an opportunity to integrate the purposes of Designated Landscapes with incentives for positive farming practice. Specialist advisors, embedded in Designated Landscapes but working in partnership through TCLW, would enable a more consistent approach to farmer and land manager engagement
9. Further work is required to create a culture of respect, cooperation, and connection with Wales's natural environment, fostering a sense of stewardship and pro-environmental behaviour. Increased promotion of the Countryside Code, building on the new Countryside Code Strategy and Action Plan for Wales, and Welsh Government's Access Reform Programme have important roles to play here.

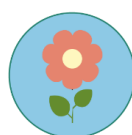


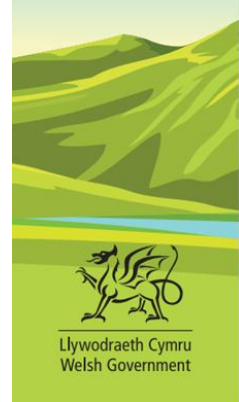
- TJ – general research suggests the Countryside Code is poorly understood by the public and people who do engage with it also struggle to take on board all the aspects of it.
- SP – felt the final recommendation was too narrow and too focused on Welsh Government. Need to think about what we need to do as a sector in terms of broadening access.
- WG funded NRW to do a review of the Countryside code and have developed a new strategy. There are ongoing attempts to modernise and adapt the code to respond to these concerns.
- AJ – echoing what SP said. Need to reflect on how we go through these processes and the voices and groups we involve when framing decisions.
- TC – thanked HD and RL for all their hard work in putting the report together.
- Forum of bodies suggestion – Firstly, would be good to explain what might change on the ground and secondly, maybe a name that has some recognition?
- HD – pulling together relevant bodies would enable a more strategic approach to the delivery of the duty.
- KD – maybe we can be a bit more specific in terms of what the potential benefits could be.
- Relevant authority bodies should also be a part of the Team Wales approach to ensure that DLs deliver, this can be achieved with the right tools and instructors in place.
- HD – gave a brief overview of the other groups reports and discussed the reports -
 - Monitoring & evidence group – full of read across. Proposing a monitoring framework. Fits in closely with the state of the area reports and management plan work. Highlighted importance of equitable governance. Importance of evaluating management effectiveness. Bringing stakeholders together to understand evidence. Proposal for a set of delivery principles.
- HD – one area of contention is resource requirements to actually deliver what is being highlighted.
- PS – would it be beneficial for all reports to have a summary of the summary and some sort of infographic to highlight what it being said.
- Risk that the reports won't be read so would be good to create something quick and snappy.
- HD – good idea and will look further into this.
- HD – brief overview and discussion on the OECM Nature recovery report –
 - OECM report – plays heavily into international best practice and use the IUCN as a fundamental starting point. Importance of effective



management and understanding effective conservation outcomes. Team Wales approach highlighted as critical, bringing together resources, communities, and mechanisms for delivery. Recognise the community and cultural element of landscape management.

- Some ambiguity over what is meant by protected sites at a UK level.
- OECM report presents us with the basis for an interesting conversation.
- TC – does our recommendation of more GIS capacity align with the evidence and monitoring group? This would presumably need to be plugged into a national scheme instead of just DLs?
- SP – the way of potentially setting up the OECMs may well drive the way in which money is allocated to nature recovery.
- KD – Ways of working under the well-being act and the management principles and how traditional practises form future thinking; essential to bring along the people who actually own and manage the land into the conversation.
- HD – CNP have published a report on National Parks health check and is an useful corroborating report. They are asking for a new deal for NPs which includes funding, identifying their role in agriculture and strengthening their duty of regard.
- HD – reminded everyone of the meeting in Cardiff on the 18th of April to discuss the reports.
- Please send any feedback and comments as this will be the last opportunity to add to the report.
- HD – four points to run through in regards to the report –
 1. Tone and style
 2. Focus and scope
 3. Technical content
 4. Burning issues
- PS – we have 2 Cabinet Secretaries to report to, and both will need a slightly different approach.
- HD – executive summaries will be given to the Cabinet Secretaries.
- PS – NPs almost at a disadvantage now because they aren't in with biodiversity and nature recovery.
- All happy and no comments for focus and scope
- PS – urge everyone to read the other reports before the meeting in Cardiff and go into the meeting well informed.
- HD – wording of the executive summary will be critical if it's going to be the main material the cabinet secretaries will see.
- Add in the work streams that we are proposing so they are clear what the next stages of the groups work might be.
- All happy and no comments for technical content.
- ES – section on planning. Couple of questions in this section that need the groups opinion on whether they agree with the stepwise approach.
- Do we need to mention it in the report?
- SP – made the comment because it was pointing towards a recommendation.
- HD - Stepwise approach is embedded in planning policy in Wales. Evidence we develop in management plans and local development plans could help provide a strategic framework to help deliver the stepwise approach.
- GB – have we addressed the response to the climate emergencies as a lot of the climate strategies that are pushing ahead are sometimes in conflict with nature recovery.
- HD – where are the points of contact for both areas of concern? How do we get wins on both sides?
- TJ – having planning in the report has a knock on impact on other areas in the report.





- HD – sensible response is to make a clear link between the benefits DLs bring through their management planning process and the additional information that can provide to underline any planning decisions.
- KD – this discussion has illustrated the understanding we have; that DLs can't deliver everything themselves and this comes back to the role of a relevant bodies forum to identify the potential barriers to actually delivering.
- HD – no need to go further into the planning detail, but there is a conversation that needs to be had.
- HD – will pull together the rest of the report as early as possible so that a copy can be circulated in advance of the meeting in Cardiff.

● NRW

- KD – items discussed at the previous meeting are still ongoing and relevant.
- Reminder that the consultation hub is still open for comments on the management plan guidance until the 30th of April. Please input if you haven't already done so.
- Gillespies have been commissioned to undertake a technical assessment to identify the candidate area for the new NP. This will be the national beauty assessment and the assessment of opportunities for outdoor recreation.
- In addition, we have also asked them to produce analysis of opportunities for benefiting nature and nature recovery in each area.
- TJ – National England have created a map showing existing areas of land that will count towards 30x30 and the potential areas. Would be good to have a conversation with them.
- GB – is there an opportunity to support the consultant as our work could align and might be a parallel exercise?
- KD – in the process of setting up a strategic advisory group where a lot of this detail work will be shared and discussed. There will be opportunities for input.

● WG

- TC – currently waiting for clarity due to the cabinet changes. SFS consultation responses being analysed. Officials are making sure they speak to Ministers first before making any changes or take next steps. INR scheme is still being spoken about, but unsure when it will be running.
- Suggested someone from TCLW or the deep dive group sits on a INRS steering group.
- PS – need to get together to discuss integrated funding programmes and we should be looking to form some sort of task and finish group between organisations to make a stronger picture?
- ES – surrounding private and green finance, is our role as DLs to point out the damage that can be done by poor funding mechanisms and poor delivery?
- RL – agree with PS. Potential here for some kind of forum where we look at the big funds, what's available and coordinate something with the people we would be working with.
- TC – agree with ES's point on the role of DLs and green finance, but they also have a role to engage with the good as well as the bad.
- LIJ – need to control the green finance funding and a funding workshop would be a great way forward. Currently working on a code of conduct about who we would work with.
- TJ – National Parks Partnership have got a series of in person knowledge shares around private finance for nature restoration.
- HD – whole issue of due diligence and guidance is valuable.
- LIJ – will be attending one of the sessions.





● Engagement

- HD – met with Wales Environment Link and had a positive meeting and a lot of interest in the report.

● AOB

- PS – we have been invited to give evidence to a Senedd Committee session on the SFS on May 9th.
- RL – putting the SFS evidence paper in by the middle of April. Taking what was in the joint Tirweddau Cymru response and reworking that a bit to make some key messages a little clearer. RO will be attending on behalf of the partnership.
- AB – National Landscapes launch event at the Senedd on the 24th of April.
- LIJ – will share the link to the event.
- TJ – last day in the role on the 19th of April. Let him know if there is anything outstanding or should have been handed over.
- HD – thanked TJ for his work over the past few months and wished him all the best in his new post.
- PS – working on a TCLW response to the environmental government’s body consultation.
- HD – please read through the other reports while we pull together the latest iteration of our report, before the meeting in Cardiff.

Action	Owner	Status
Circulate National Landscapes launch event information	LIJ	

