

Report on Wales' future landscapes published

The Group was established to explore the recommendations of the Marsden Report into the future of Wales' designated landscapes, which provided 69 recommendations, the range and scope of which were considerable.

The [report](#) says designated landscapes should be the leaders of the sustainable management of natural resources in their areas and emphasises the importance of joint-working to achieve this.

It recommends the Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales and all designated landscapes provide assistance and support to other landscape managers across Wales, including landowners, farmers and the wider rural community, on issues such as biodiversity, access and protection, in order for the whole society to benefit fully from our landscapes.

The report acknowledges the challenges the UK's exit from the EU poses, with so much of Wales' environmental legislation tied into EU laws and the uncertainty over future funding for agriculture, at a time when action is needed to build the resilience of our eco-systems. It concludes that genuine partnership is needed to ensure the best outcome for Wales.

Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas said:

“From the start the main feature of the working group was partnership, including everyone from national park authorities and areas of outstanding natural beauty, from agricultural and tourism businesses, voluntary organisations and trusts contributing equally to the discussions.

“The basic principle guiding our work is seeing and understanding the role of designated landscapes not as separate excluded areas, but as a distinctive part which could contribute to good practise for the rest of our country's landscape.”

The Welsh Government will now look at whether legislation needs to be changed to support the recommendations of the report. This includes looking at whether greater weight should be given to the importance of these areas and their ecosystems in decision making and whether governance arrangements should evolve to reflect local circumstances, rather than the current one-size-fits-all system.

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths said:

“Wales' landscape is a huge part of our identity and an important

national asset. It attracts tourism, outdoor recreation and local employment. It delivers benefits to our health and well-being and has been identified as having huge potential for developing greener energy solutions.

“This is why it is so important we are making the most of our iconic landscape. There is much we can learn from each other as we navigate our way towards a future outside of the EU.

“I thank the group for their work on this report. The next step is to deliver against the ambition, not in isolation, but together as part of the collaborative approach.”