

Making time for nature 2020

Welsh Water's revised
plan for maintaining and
enhancing biodiversity



December 2020

Foreword

Securing a healthy and sustainable natural environment is key to supporting the wellbeing of our customers and underpins every aspect of our economy and health as a nation.

We face a Biodiversity crisis in Wales, where our shared environment is under threat. It is essential that we play our role therefore in maintaining and improving the health of our environment. As described in this document, Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water is already helping to support nature through the fulfilment of our functions. For example, we are playing a major role in helping more of Wales' rivers achieve Good Ecological Status (as set out in the Water Framework Directive) with £200m of investment over the next 5 years in reducing nutrient levels in our discharges.

We are in the process of refreshing our "Welsh Water 2050" vision document in preparation for the next round of investment planning in 2024, to ensure our investments meet the long term needs of our customers and the environment. Our Vision will be set within the long term context within which Dŵr Cymru will operate in the years ahead. This includes several actions as detailed in this plan, which will directly support biodiversity and ecosystem resilience. More immediately we are progressing over £20m of investment working with partners in the Brecon Beacons, to secure improved water quality, and in so doing hope to see significant improvements in local biodiversity. Similarly, we are investing over £20m in developing with our regulator, Natural Resources Wales, sustainable management of natural resources schemes, again to improve the environment and biodiversity, all for completion by 2025.

The Welsh Government and National Assembly for Wales have used the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to place Dŵr Cymru and many other organisations in Wales under a strengthened biodiversity duty. This shared duty reinforces the message that helping nature to thrive will require concerted action by a range of organisations in Wales, including the Welsh Government itself, Natural Resources Wales and other government agencies, as well as regulated businesses like ourselves.

Dŵr Cymru is a company that is committed to doing the right thing. I believe that Dŵr Cymru must continue to look for opportunities to do what we can to support Wales' biodiversity in the short and longer term, while we carry out our day job of maintaining essential services for our customers at a price they can afford.

We know from our on-going customer engagement surveys that customers across our supply area expect and want us to enhance biodiversity and the environment in general, not least as this contributes to the well-being of the communities we serve. We are also very mindful of the environmental legacy we will leave for future generations, as demonstrated in our "Welsh Water 2050" vision document.

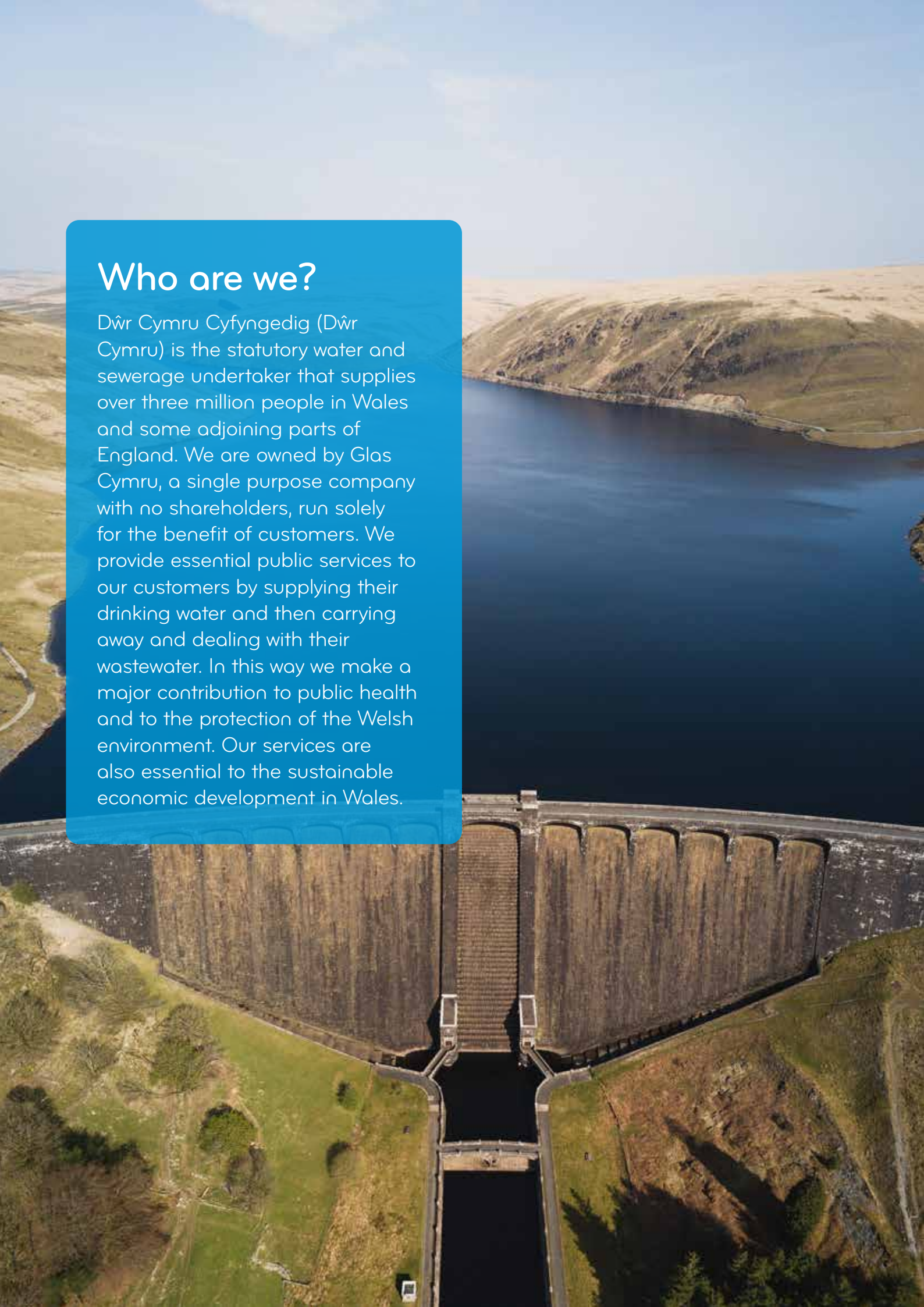
Our top priority must always be the supply of high-quality drinking water and wastewater services to our customers at an affordable price. Within that, this plan sets out how we are rising to the challenges we face by carrying out more and more of our functions in a manner which overtly supports biodiversity, so that the environment we hand on to future generations supports a rich variety of wildlife and plants for them to celebrate and cherish.



Peter Perry
Chief Executive Officer

Who are we?

Dŵr Cymru Cyfyngedig (Dŵr Cymru) is the statutory water and sewerage undertaker that supplies over three million people in Wales and some adjoining parts of England. We are owned by Glas Cymru, a single purpose company with no shareholders, run solely for the benefit of customers. We provide essential public services to our customers by supplying their drinking water and then carrying away and dealing with their wastewater. In this way we make a major contribution to public health and to the protection of the Welsh environment. Our services are also essential to the sustainable economic development in Wales.



Why do we need a plan?

Under Section 6(6) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 most public authorities in Wales, including Welsh Water, are required to prepare and publish a plan setting out what they propose to do to comply with their duty under Section 6(1) to "seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions."

In 2017, we published our first statutory plan under the Act, "Making time for nature", setting out specific commitments to biodiversity as we go about delivering our essential services to our customers and the environment.

We reported the progress of our commitment in "Doing the right thing for nature", a report published at the end of 2019, as required under Section 6(7) of the 2016 Act.

This Plan is a revision of the original 2017 'Making time for nature' to reflect progress we made by the end of 2019 and highlight our ongoing commitment to enhancing and maintaining biodiversity in the fulfilment of our functions.

Who is the plan for?

We hope that this Plan will be of interest to several audiences, including:

- Anyone who wants to find out how Welsh Water is meeting its strengthened duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016;
- Organisations, for example, voluntary sector and community groups, looking for opportunities to work in partnership with Welsh Water in the delivery of initiatives that will help biodiversity; and;
- Colleagues throughout Welsh Water who are keen to learn about our role in supporting biodiversity and, in particular, want to know how we can all make time for nature as we go about our daily work of delivering essential water and waste water services to our customers.

What does our revised Plan aim to deliver?

Working toward the statutory objectives of seeking to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the fulfilment of our functions as well as promoting the resilience of ecosystems in the exercise of our functions, this statutory Plan will aim to:

1. Further improve colleague and customer understanding of how our business positively interacts with nature, reflecting the commitments made in our business plan for 2020-2025 and our '2050 Vision'.
2. Continue to raise awareness to colleagues within Welsh Water, our partners and our supply chain about our nature related obligations and their role in meeting them, as well as encourage them to do the right things for nature as they go about their day job.
3. Support more sustainable outcomes as we deliver our functions, as well as look for innovative ideas to help achieve our ambitions for biodiversity.
4. Identify specific actions to deliver the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Duty, as part of our investment, between now and 2025. We will report on progress in 2022.
5. Enable Welsh Water to contribute to Wales tackling climate change and biodiversity loss, the two interconnected challenges highlighted by Natural Resources Wales in its State of the Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR).

We will also consider whilst continuing to deliver this Plan:

- The impact of the coronavirus pandemic, how we can help people reconnect with nature, the delays we may experience delivering our Plan and any forthcoming challenges.
- Brexit will occur during this reporting period (2019-2022). We will consider any challenges this may bring with regards to delivering our core function and the impact on our statutory duty.
- Our current AMP 7 Ofwat determination was the most challenging to date. We will ensure our environmental responsibility and statutory duty is met during this challenging period.
- Lastly, we will start to forward plan for AMP 8 making it clear how we hope to further improve biodiversity through the fulfilment of our functions during this period, to ensure adequate funding can be made available for this purpose.

As we continue to progress with our work in enhancing and maintaining our biodiversity, we know we cannot do this alone. We continue to welcome partnership working so that we can help deliver our shared goal of a sustainable natural environment. We all live and work in the community we serve. Together we can make a big impact for current and future generations to come.

When will it be delivered?

All our 30 commitments within this plan have a deadline for delivery. Some of these are short term which will be delivered by the next report in 2022. Others are medium to long term commitments which will aim to influence longer term positive changes to the end of the current investment cycle (2025) and beyond.

In 2022, we will publish a report to share the progress of the commitments we have made within this plan. At that time, we must review our Plan, although we can revise it at any time as seen with this document. In our next Plan we will take the opportunity to undertake a thorough review of the actions contained within this document, our success in delivering them, their effectiveness and potential areas where we might make new commitments to take future action.

How will we know it's working?

We will continue to track progress throughout the reporting period and share this in our next published report in 2022.

During this reporting period we will explore new ways of measuring how we maintain and enhance biodiversity. This will likely be through a mixture of qualitative and quantitative measures. We will also work closely with our Capital Alliance partners to achieve consistency in our reporting across the business.

Key concepts



What is biodiversity?

'Biodiversity' is shorthand for **biological diversity**. The 2016 Act defines "biodiversity" as meaning "the diversity of living organisms, whether at the genetic, species or ecosystem level". We have specifically considered the variability of habitats when interpreting this duty. People also gain great pleasure and a strong sense of well-being when interacting with nature – including its diverse ecosystems – something we consider when delivering our duty.



What is Ecosystem resilience?

Resilience is the capacity to adapt to, or recover from, adverse circumstances. In a world of change and constant human pressures on the environment, the preservation of biodiversity and healthy ecosystems is likely to be dependent on the resilience of species populations, habitats and ecosystems to such change.

The 2016 Act has identified five inter-related aspects of ecosystem resilience as follows:

Diversity between and within ecosystems

A simple measure of this would be the number of native species within a given area, such as a Welsh Water site, or Wales as a whole.

The connections between and within ecosystems

This acknowledges the interdependence between different species and different habitats, such as the impact that landscape and land use may make on riverine species within a catchment.

The scale of ecosystems

Extent of habitats and species distributions.

The condition of ecosystems (including their structure and functioning)

A simple measure of a water body's condition would be whether it is classified by Natural Resources Wales as of Good or High Ecological Status under the EU's Water Framework Directive, as that classification encompasses various elements relevant to the biological health of different types of water bodies.

The adaptability of ecosystems

Is similar to 'resilience', and therefore a result of the other four attributes.

Many of the actions included in this plan will continue to promote aspects of ecosystems resilience. These include, for example:

- Working through the Water Framework Directive, helping to ensure that conditions in our water environment can support fish, invertebrates and other species, including their movement within rivers, thus increasing connectivity between ecosystems, and their ability to breed.
- Designating areas to grow pollinator species at our operational and energy sites to encourage and support ecological connectivity. Our ongoing work to control and eradicate Invasive non-native species (INNS) will also help towards this.

What are 'priority' species and habitats?

All native species and habitats are important, in terms of their contribution to biodiversity, ecosystem function and their inherent right to exist. However, for the purposes of targeted biodiversity conservation, experts have prioritised those species and habitats that are considered to be rare or suffering from marked decline in number, extent and/or distribution; namely, those that are under threat and therefore require us to act now. These are species and habitats of principal importance for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, and they are listed under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (for Wales) and Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (for England). Some species and habitats are also legally protected under separate Acts and Regulations.



What is a climate and biodiversity emergency?

Since our first report was published in 2017, many governments and councils have declared that we are facing two large interconnected challenges – a climate and biodiversity emergency. Put simply, this means nature as we know it cannot continue to live in its current conditions, which will then have an impact as the ecosystems will either adapt, move or decline.

We cannot address the climate and biodiversity emergency on our own. We will use this plan to shape the efforts we make within Welsh Water to address forthcoming challenges, but also work with external stakeholders and community groups to deliver multiple benefit outcomes. This emergency was also confirmed by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2019 and referred to in the interim State of the Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR).

In preparation of our plan we have considered a number of publications which we will continue to follow closely when delivering our outputs. These include:

- The list of species published by the Welsh Ministers (under section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016).
- The State of Natural Resources Report published by Natural Resources Wales (SoNaRR) (under section 8 of that Act).
- The Area Statements (section 11 of the Act refers).
- Welsh Government's Nature Recovery Plan. In our original 'Making time for nature' plan we cross referenced most of our commitments to outcomes and actions listed in Part 2 of the Welsh Government's Plan.

Our Revised Biodiversity Action Plan — 30 Commitments



What are we doing for biodiversity?

Within this section we will explore our revised 30 commitments set in our original 2017 'Making time for nature' plan. We will summarise our progress to date and what we plan to do going forward. For full details of progress to date please see our 'Doing the right thing for nature' report published in 2019.

If you can see an opportunity to join in our journey in maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and addressing the biodiversity and climate emergency, please get in touch. We are always looking for opportunities to collaborate and work in partnership – no matter how big or small your organisation is. We also welcome community groups to join us in this journey.

We have grouped our commitments into six categories – however our revised approach to the Plan is to break down silos across the company and work together – including all business areas, including support functions, to work towards addressing our biodiversity action plan.

Our core services: Drinking water supplies

As a statutory water and sewerage undertaker, our core activities are driven by two overarching aims: safeguarding public health and environmental protection. Our relationship with the natural environment is a vital part of our business, so ensuring we act in a responsible and sustainable way is an essential part of how we work.

Drinking water supplies

- Our public drinking water supplies – a key ecosystem service – are sourced from 120 predominantly rural catchments covering almost 11,000km², most of which are not in our ownership. These are sourced from surface waters – rivers and reservoirs – and in some areas' groundwater.
- Our most important responsibility is supplying over 800 million litres of high-quality drinking water to our customers every day.
- We work closely with our environmental regulators, Natural Resources Wales and the Environment Agency, as they set licences that allow us to take water from these watercourses, taking account of the impact of these on flora and fauna.
- Some of our licences allow us to take water from rivers and lakes that are Special Areas of Conservation, a designation made under the EU Habitats Directive. These areas form part of a pan-European ecological network of "Natura 2000" sites to protect specific priority species and habitats.

Commitment 1

Following the publication of the Water Resources Management Plan in 2019, we will continue to explicitly take account of our biodiversity and ecosystems resilience duty when we undertake our next full review of our Water Resources Management Plan for 2024.

How we are working to achieve this

We will continue to deliver our most recent Water Resources Management Plan (2019).

We are also developing our Water Resources Management Plan for publication in 2024. This will look to identify and address any long-term risks to our supply-demand position while continuing linking into our statutory biodiversity duty.

We will continue to raise awareness of invasive non-native species (INNS) by the transfer of water from one area to another for storage.

Commitment 2

We will continue to work with our regulators to improve our understanding of the potential for our practices to spread invasive non-native species (INNS) and the potential cost implications.

How we are working to achieve this

- We continue to work collaboratively with stakeholders in order address INNS issues.
- Internally, we continue to raise awareness of INNS through internal communication campaigns.
- We continue to support the 'Check, Clean, Dry' campaign at all relevant sites.

Welsh Water is increasingly using catchment management as the first line of defence for the protection of our drinking water supplies. This is primarily being delivered through our programme of work within our 23 Safeguard Zones and our Brecon Beacons Mega Catchment partnership work. These translate into several targeted practical actions and stakeholder engagements in the catchments from which we abstract our raw water. Among these is our flagship PestSmart initiative, which builds on our award-winning Weed Wiper Scheme.

PestSmart is a collaborative initiative encouraging people across Wales and the adjoining areas of England we serve, to consider 'smarter' ways of weed, pest and disease control that do not impact on people, water or wildlife. We are working collaboratively with pesticide users and stakeholders representing the supply chain to reduce levels of pesticides in water and wider environment. Such an approach should enable us to use fewer chemicals and less energy to treat drinking water, which is good news for our customers as well as for the environment and its flora and fauna.

Case study

Pest Smart

The quality of public drinking water supplies is tightly regulated. Our monitoring of the catchments from which we source our supplies shows that levels of pesticides are increasing, which hampers our ability to meet the stringent legal standards that apply to public drinking water supplies.

We know pesticides form an essential and everyday role in the management of weeds, pest and disease control. However, if stored, used or disposed of incorrectly, they can have a devastating impact on people, water and wildlife. Welsh Water launched an initiative – PestSmart – to encourage farmers, growers, land managers and gardeners across the areas we serve to consider 'smarter' ways of working to safeguard water and the wider environment.

Since 2015, we have successfully worked with the farming industry to tackle the emerging pesticide issue in targeted catchments. These trials illustrated the scale of the risk, and the opportunity to take a proactive and collaborative approach. Funding awarded from Welsh Government from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) has allowed us to expand and extend across the country.



Commitment 3

Following our WaterSource approach, we will continue to collaborate and engage with our stakeholders in the third sector. This will be as part of our programme of work for our 23 Safeguard Zones, so that we can work together toward a common agenda, to reduce levels of contaminants such as levels of pesticides and ammonia in the environment, to protect our water supplies and to benefit wildlife.

How we are working to achieve this

Continue to use 'WaterSource' approach to catchment management. This includes:

- Working with partners and stakeholders.
- Developing actions plans for our 23 Safeguard zones.
- Continue with our award winning Weed Wiper trial and our pesticide disposal scheme.
- Brecon Beacons Mega Catchment £20m investment to improve water quality entering our reservoirs and rivers from which we abstract water.

In its State of Natural Resources Report, Natural Resources Wales refers to the multiple benefits that increased woodland cover offers to maintaining and enhancing the resilience of ecosystems.

We recognise that access to nature can enhance a sense of well-being and supports the wider well-being agenda led by the Welsh Government. This has become even more important as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic where customers and colleagues have used nature as a way to promote health and wellbeing. While always giving top priority to the health and safety of our staff and the public, we encourage visitors to enjoy our assets, such as our series of reservoirs in the Brecon Beacons.

Case Study

Brecon Beacons Mega-Catchment

The Brecon Beacons Mega-Catchment (BBMC) programme was established to identify and trial new ways of working throughout the Brecon Beacons to understand, reduce or prevent water quality issues impacting the catchments. However, we understand that many of the actions needed to improve water quality are complementary to the actions needed to achieve other benefits such as more sustainable agriculture or nature recovery. We also understand that the Brecon Beacons are a mega-catchment for all, not just for water quality, and we cannot achieve these multiple benefits alone.

The newly appointed BBMC programme team are working with a wide range of stakeholders to explore opportunities for increased engagement and developing collaborative on-the-ground trials throughout the Beacons. We believe we can achieve more by coordinating our resources, than we could by working alone.

One early example has been the successful funding application to develop a community liaison project based at the Pontsticill catchment to target improvements to private water and septic tank systems, as well as working with the community to undertake a number of activities to improve the local environment for the benefit of nature and people. Lessons learned from Pontsticill and other collaborative projects to be developed under the BBMC will be rolled out through other water catchments across the Beacons and Wales over the coming years.

Commitment 4

We will continue to collaborate with our stakeholders to ensure that forest and woodland design and management will secure land from erosion and landslip as well as deliver multi-benefits. In selecting the species to plant, we will consider how to maximise biodiversity gain.

How we are working to achieve this

We have delivered a number of tree planting schemes in our strategically important drinking water catchments. These include Talybont and Cantref. Going forward we will continue to work with our stakeholders to deliver more schemes.

Among our land holdings are our four flagship visitor centres on our reservoirs sites at Elan; Llys-y-Fran; Llyn Brenig; and Llandegfedd Reservoir. All these sites are significant habitats in their own right. Apart from Llys-y-Fran, they are all Sites of Special Scientific Interest in recognition of their conservation importance. We try to manage the sites in a way that is sympathetic to nature so, for example, we close part of Llandegfedd for a few months each year to protect over-wintering wildfowl.

We encourage members of the public who come to our visitor centres to learn about the natural environment, so these sites host a range of activities for all ages and abilities such as pond dipping, bird watching and guided nature walks.

Commitment 5

We will look for new opportunities at our visitor centres to support nature and to engage the public with the natural environment.

How we are working to achieve this

We continue to look for new opportunities at our visitor centres to support nature and engage the public with the natural environment. Ongoing projects at site to enhance and maintain biodiversity at Llandegfedd, Llyn Brenig and Elan Valley will continue.

New developments within this reporting period will include Llys y Fran, and the Lisvane and Llanishen project.

Case Study

We continue to learn lessons – Llanishen and Lisvane Reservoirs Tree Cutting 2020

This summer we removed a number of trees from around Llanishen and Lisvane Reservoirs. We did not communicate this work with our customers quickly enough which resulted in a number of complaints. We apologise for any distress caused and we will learn from this going forward. The work was undertaken during nesting season under the supervision of an ecologist, with every effort made to cause as little disruption as possible. We make every attempt to preserve biodiversity and ecology on site, however we must also ensure the safety of our employees and customers as well as the continuing function of our core business.

Our core services: Treatment of waste water and management of surface water

Our wastewater services

- A large part of our work involves the treatment of wastewater and management of surface water before returning it back into inland and coastal waters. This is not just to keep people safe from contaminated water and flooding, but also to protect wildlife and help it thrive in its natural environment.
- We will continue to strive to meet the permits our regulators have set governing our discharges.
- We will also work toward the elimination of pollution incidents caused by our activities. If we do make a mistake, we will look for ways to restore the damage and/or find other constructive outcomes for the environment.
- Many of the rivers and seas around the areas we serve are highly protected. For example, some 70% of Wales' inshore waters are designated in recognition of their conservation importance.

In recent decades, Welsh Water have invested our customers' money in many schemes to reduce the impact of our discharges on the receiving waters—inland, estuarine and coastal; we estimate that we have spent over £1 billion on coastal waters alone.

The main measure of the aquatic environment is the classification system introduced under the EU Water Framework Directive, which provides a comprehensive measure of quality, including of

ecological health: a water body classified as High or Good Ecological Status should support healthy ecosystems. In 2015 the classification results published by Natural Resources Wales showed that 39% of Wales' surface waterbodies were classified as Good Ecological Status. The latest results are due to be published shortly which will give us an indication of where our next efforts are to be focused.

Welsh Water still contributes to some of the failures of water bodies to achieve Good Ecological Status. For example, the level of phosphorus or ammonia in some of the water we release into inland waters can contribute to receiving water bodies not reaching required standards for wildlife. In the light of findings of investigations we carried out together with Natural Resources Wales during 2010-2015, our previous five year investment programme which came to an end this year (2015-2020) included a £60m programme of improvements which has brought benefit to around 130 kilometres of rivers.

Commitment 6

We will complete our current 2015-2020 programme of £60 million investment agreed with Natural Resources Wales to improve our discharges at 13 waste water treatment works by, for example, reducing levels of phosphorus to benefit the ecology in the receiving waters (by Dec 2020).

How we are working to achieve this

The majority of this work has been completed. Improvements at the remaining sites have been delayed by the impact of covid-19. However, an extension of the programme has been agreed with our environmental regulator NRW to March 2021.

We are now working to deliver our AMP 7 programme, which includes £200m of investment to further reduce levels of Phosphate in selected WWTWs discharges.

Commitment 7

We will continue to research into the effectiveness of some new treatment processes to reduce phosphorus in our discharges.

How we are working to achieve this

We will continue to explore alternatives to dosing chemicals at our operational sites such as constructed wetlands for removing phosphorus, as these can positively benefit biodiversity.

We continue to undertake further investigations to understand our impact on the water environment. In AMP6 (2015-20) our investigations enabled the development of new, bespoke computer models, describing how coastal waters move under the influence of tides, wind and river flow and how pollution is dispersed and diluted in the marine environment. The models have allowed Welsh Water to target future investment where it can achieve greatest benefit in terms of water quality at bathing and shellfish waters. We also have made the models and data available to regulators, providing the means to assess the impact of other sectors as well as our own, and to investigate other challenges such as climate change, coastal development and population growth.

Commitment 8

We will complete our current programme of investigations into our impact at 76 inland water bodies. Where we are confirmed as the main reason why a water body is not achieving Good Ecological Status we will (by 2019) agree a programme of improvements we should make during 2020-2025. Further to this completion we will continue this work through other investigations.

How we are working to achieve this

This element of work has been completed. We will continue to maintain, or where possible, improve the ecological status of water bodies through a number of investigations in this reporting period. This work will include sustainable management of natural resources, pilot studies and invasive non-native species programmes of work. We will also explore nature-based solutions using wetlands for removing phosphorus.

Commitment 9

We will continue to look for opportunities to educate our customers about the damage that sewer misuse can cause, including to marine wildlife.

How we are working to achieve this

- We will continue to promote our 'Stop the block' campaign which has been running since 2013 and is aimed at reducing sewer blockages that can cause flooding and pollution incidents leading to damage to the environment.
- Our newest campaign, launched in November 2020 intended to influence Welsh Assembly Government legislation to include wet wipes containing plastic in their list of proposed items to be banned.

Commitment 10

We will continue to work with Natural Resources Wales and Environment Agency to encourage concerted action to be taken to address all pressures affecting particular water bodies, including our impacts.

How we are working to achieve this

- We continue to support Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales on this agenda including attendance at Water Framework Directive related meetings and the Wales Water Forum, catchment efforts on both the clean and wastewater sides of the business, proposing sustainable management of natural resources trials during 2020 -2025 and responses to consultation papers, such as those on 'Brexit and our land'.
- We will also support the green recovery from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic where possible.

The Welsh Government wants us to adopt nature-based solutions to the treatment of wastewater and surface water drainage, such as reed beds and sustainable drainage. These sorts of options undoubtedly offer wider benefits for the environment including, for example, by providing new habitats, often in an urban setting. We are very receptive to such ideas. However, these technologies are intrinsically less predictable than conventional, hard engineered treatment processes and networks. We would like Natural Resources Wales to recognise these limitations when it sets and enforces the standards with which we must comply.

Often such investments need to be made well in advance of when they are required, in some cases more than a single five year investment period ahead of more conventional solutions, if they are to be given a real chance to succeed, which again requires our regulator to adopt a flexible approach and share regulatory risk.

Our flagship "RainScape" initiative has made us one of the sector leaders in sustainable drainage. This supports the delivery of one of the key priorities identified in the State of Natural Resources Report published by Natural Resources Wales last year to support ecosystem resilience. We will also embrace the SMNR principles to deliver multiple benefit outcomes.

We continue to work with the Welsh Government and other stakeholders to look for ways to overcome legal and other obstacles inhibiting the more widespread use of sustainable drainage options, particularly uncertainties surrounding long term maintenance.

Commitment 11

We will continue to work with the Welsh Government, including Welsh Local Government Association, Ofwat and Natural Resources Wales to look for ways to overcome regulatory obstacles that may inhibit our adopting more nature-based approaches to some treatment processes and surface water management.

How we are working to achieve this

We will work with the Welsh Government and a range of other stakeholders to promote the improved management of surface water in our urban areas. Through this engagement we will pilot joint investigations and the co-delivery of surface water management projects, aimed at providing multiple biodiversity benefits through the use of sustainable drainage solutions.

Case study

RainScape

At Welsh Water, we have taken the lead in developing and using new, innovative solutions to manage the amount of surface water entering our combined sewers in some locations. We have called this approach RainScape. It helps to reduce the risk of sewer flooding and pollution, while also helping increase capacity in our sewer network and its resilience to climate change. We continue to invest in RainScape solutions, some of which should create new habitats for nature, including in urban environments. Examples include Llanelli; and the partnership "Greener Grangetown" project led by Cardiff City Council.





Case study

Virtual classrooms

In April 2020, we had to adapt the way in which we delivered our educational programme due to the coronavirus pandemic. We have successfully delivered learning through a virtual on-line program as well as publishing additional learning material available to all via our website. We will continue to do this throughout the pandemic and until it is safe to return to our education centres again.

Future Generations — Education

We believe in educating future generations about the importance of protecting the environment. We also want to raise awareness of the climate and biodiversity emergency in a reassuring way which does not cause alarm or anxiety. We want to encourage future generations to make a difference without feeling overwhelmed by the challenges ahead.

We have developed a programme of activities for children, through our education strategy called "Living and Learning with Water". These activities, designed by educational experts, are linked to the National Curriculum and give primary school-age children the chance to understand the water cycle and the vital role that water plays in our everyday lives.

Since launching our education strategy, many thousands of children have visited our four Discovery Centres (Cog Moors and Cilfynydd in South Wales, Alwen in North Wales and the Elan Valley in Mid Wales) or have benefited from our outreach work administered by our peripatetic teacher. Provided by full-time, seconded teachers or environmental rangers, children are given the opportunity, free of charge, to learn about the importance of water and to take part in practical activities relating to, for example, the water cycle, water efficiency, pond-dipping and river studies.

Commitment 12

We will continue our role in educating future generations about the importance of the water environment, including its flora and fauna.

How we are working to achieve this

Through our Community Fund, we have supported local community projects to enhance biodiversity in our operational areas and will continue to do so going forward.

Virtual online classes will continue throughout the pandemic until it is safe to return to our educational centres.

We will continue to make education resources available via our website and use our social media platforms to communicate this free resource.

Through our partnership with the Wales Young Farmers Club we are educating future farmers on the Watersource approach and the role that they can play in helping us to protect our drinking water supplies which benefits the environment and wildlife. This is through actions such as work experience placements and visits to our Water Treatment Works.

Climate Change

In the years ahead, nature will continue to be impacted by climate change. Our commitment to reduce our carbon footprint is an important contribution to mitigating the risks and impacts arising from climate change.

Welsh Water is continuing to work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the generation of renewable energy at our sites. We have significantly increased the amount of energy we have generated at our sites in recent years. We will also use our energy sites to increase biodiversity by planting native wildflowers to create meadows.

Commitment 13

We will continue to look for opportunities to increase our renewable energy generation capacity and improve the energy efficiency of our existing operations.

How we are working to achieve this

A total of 24% of our energy consumption in 2019/2020 was met by our own renewable generation. The increase compared to last year is due to increased green gas production at our Five Fords Energy Park, making the company fully self-sufficient in gas.

The remaining electricity to meet the company energy demand, is sourced from Ørsted, who supply us with 100% REGO (Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origin) backed, renewable power.

At the end of financial year 2019-20, in total £37.2 million of investment has been delivered across the AMP 6 period (2015-2020), further reducing grid energy use of 54.8 GWh per annum.

To achieve our 35% self-sufficiency target by 2025, the company plans to invest a further £21 million in energy efficiency and renewable energy generation projects, in the next five years (AMP7).

In 2016, we undertook some research to understand better the impact of climate change on the environment in which we operate. This completed research has identified some critical ecosystems which we need to research further to understand their resilience and the impact on our future operations. We will continue to focus our efforts around the climate and biodiversity emergency to understand and forward plan. The establishment of our new Re:Think Climate Change and Sustainability group will also help with this agenda.

Commitment 14

We will research the impact that climate change is likely to have on the environment and ecosystems by 2050 and set out our research ambitions for 2020–25 in our next business plan.

How we are working to achieve this

Understanding and responding to climate change, including its impact on biodiversity, is one of the main themes of 'Welsh Water 2050'. This has been fed into strategic responses and journey maps across the company.

The impact of climate change will for the first time be accounted for in our wastewater designs through the ongoing development of Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans due to be published in December 2022.

A new Re:Think Climate Change and Sustainability group has also been established within Welsh Water from 10 individuals across the business who share a common interest and passion in addressing the climate emergency. This group has developed a number of short, medium and long term goals for the company to progress in order to achieve the Welsh Water 2050 vision as well as challenge ideas and current ways of thinking.

Case Study

Re:Think Climate Change

Formed in late 2020, Welsh Water's Re:Think Climate Change and Sustainability group consists of 10 members from all backgrounds and areas of the business. This group will challenge our direction and forward planning to address the climate change and the biodiversity emergency thinking of new approaches, priorities as well as educating and raising awareness. Within the short time since it was established, the group has identified nine areas for the company to focus attention. We will report on its progress in our next biodiversity report in 2022.

Looking after protected sites

Some of our operational sites and landholdings are within Sites of Special Scientific Interest, so they are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 because they contain wildlife or geological or land features that are of special importance.

It is for our regulator, Natural Resources Wales, to determine the condition of such sites. To help organisations such as ourselves identify the significant issues that should be addressed, as they would otherwise cause site features to be in unfavourable condition, Natural Resources Wales maintains a web-based "Actions Database". Welsh Water regularly monitors the database to ensure we address any issues that Natural Resources Wales has identified at our sites.

Commitment 15

Closed - We will continue to use Natural Resources Wales' "Actions Database" to identify and address issues in the Sites of Special Scientific Interest that we own.

How we are working to achieve this

This commitment has been replaced by commitment 16 as NRW's Actions database is currently offline whilst the regulator is working on a replacement tool.

Commitment 16

Continuing to work with Natural Resources Wales, we will initiate investigations into the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest that we own and develop an enhancement programme, so far as consistent with the exercise of our functions.

How we are working to achieve this

A commissioned research project is still ongoing with phase 1 now complete.

Phase 2 of the project is ongoing which will allow us, using the prioritisation tool, to improve our understanding of four of our SSSI sites.

Our aim is now to implement, and action plan based on the recommendations of our SSSI research.



Working in partnership

The enhancement of biodiversity in Wales will require concerted action by many organisations. Welsh Water therefore wants to continue to foster good relationships with other organisations and to work in partnership where there are worthwhile opportunities to do so and where it fits in with our functions as a water and wastewater undertaker.

We play an active role in various groups that have an important role in supporting the natural environment. For example, we are members of the Wales Biodiversity Group; we are represented on, and give financial support towards, the Welsh groups that encourage collaboration among the relevant authorities established under the Habitats Regulations that have a direct interest in Marine Protected Areas; and we have established an Independent Environmental Advisory Panel to provide us with advice and to act as a 'critical friend'.

Case study

Independent Environmental Advisory Panel (IEAP)

Established in 2012, the purpose of the IEAP is to support the Dŵr Cymru to (i) maximise the value of its investment programme for customers and the environment, and (ii) to secure a safe and sustainable future for our environment; one able to support the economy and quality of life for generations to come.

To do this, as well as environmental considerations, the IEAP takes into account the social and economic consequences of any advice or proposal, including the impact they may have on 'affordability' (i.e. on customers' bills).

Its members are drawn from key stakeholders including environmental non-governmental bodies; representatives of forestry and farming sectors; academia; local government; the Welsh Government and its regulators.

We are also able to give limited financial support towards some not-for-profit projects, if there is a link with our activities. This is either through our Environment fund or through our Community Fund for smaller projects. More information and application forms can be found via Dŵr Cymru website.

Commitment 17

We will continue to invite applications from non-profit organisations for grant funding for projects that will deliver positive outcomes under the Water Framework Directive where water bodies not achieving Good Ecological Status will benefit and where there is a substantive link to Dŵr Cymru's operations and interests.

How we are working to achieve this

We encourage applications for funding of projects through AMP 7 (2020-25) that will contribute to the delivery of our Water Framework Directive objectives. Funding is also available for any work that links to our biodiversity activities as well as the Community Fund for smaller projects.

There are a number of groups who would like to work with us to help us maintain local sites, e.g. through litter picking. We welcome the involvement of local communities in this way, although we are mindful of the health and safety of staff and volunteers alike, as well as the need to ensure that the operational capability of our assets is not compromised in any way. We are also mindful that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, we need to consider any additional health and safety measures.

We are actively looking into the possibility of establishing "Friends Of" groups at particular sites, including their potential role, e.g. maintaining facilities for nature such as bird boxes, as well as arrangements for their supervision. We are in discussion with some existing community groups and organisations who have expressed an interest in working with us to enrich the biodiversity potential of some of our smaller sites by, for example, planting pollinator friendly flowers.

Commitment 18

Continue to explore the role of "Friends Of" and other community groups who might adopt and help us to manage some of our sites.

How we are working to achieve this

To enable a greater sense of community ownership and involvement across a number of our sites we are developing a 'Friends Of' campaign. The development of volunteering infrastructure is ongoing. A number of 'Friends Of' groups have been launched across our sites including Lisvane & Llanishen with Llys Y Fran and Llyn Alaw in development.

Non-native species are foreign animals and plants that have been introduced into Britain by people and have colonised our natural environment. There are many non-native species in the UK: most are fairly harmless, but around 10-15% cause environmental, economic and social challenges which need to be addressed. These are Invasive Non-native Species (INNS) and they are a major threat to biodiversity as they flourish at the expense of our native species. It has also been suggested that climate change will amplify this issue with greater spread of INNS. Some threaten our operational activities: for example, non-native zebra mussels which fix to solid surfaces, and can block pipes, filters, and other water supply structures and impede flow of water, have been found at Llandegfedd Reservoir and Court Farm Water Treatment Works.

Welsh Water has provided funds to support community and voluntary groups who propose projects to curb the growth and spread of INNS which pose a threat to indigenous plants and animals. However, we firmly believe that all actions need to be coordinated at a catchment level to reduce recolonisation and we welcome opportunities to work collaboratively on this.

Commitment 19

We will continue to invite applications from not for profit organisations for funding toward projects that will help to prevent, reduce, eradicate or manage the risk of non-native species (INNS) and where there is some link to Dŵr Cymru's operations.

How we are working to achieve this

INNS is a challenge not only for Welsh Water. By working together, we can make every best effort to control and eradicate INNS within our catchment areas and operational sites. We encourage applications by the voluntary sector that aim to address issues of concern related to INNS in our operational areas. Projects funded by the scheme will help to optimise the benefits of Welsh Water's own efforts in tackling INNS and contribute toward wider efforts to address the threat to biodiversity from INNS.



Our people



Our people

As a company, our greatest asset is our team of colleagues whose dedication and enthusiasm are key to the delivery of our vision, to “Earn the trust of our customers every day”.

We need to ensure that our people and contractors are aware of the biodiversity and nature conservation duties that we have, as well as the challenges we face with emerging risks and the climate and biodiversity emergency.

In response to our strengthened biodiversity duty, Welsh Water has arranged for all staff to be given the opportunity to receive training through an in-house e-learning course which was rolled out in 2018. We will continue to look for other ways to raise awareness with employees at all levels, such as through environmental team-building exercises, our Biodiversity Champions and Re:Think groups.

Commitment 20

We will continue to give all colleagues the opportunity to learn about the legal conservation obligations that Dŵr Cymru has.

How we are working to achieve this

- An e-learning module is available to all employees explaining our conservation duties. This will be updated regularly.
- We continue to provide tailored training to our Alliance partners and capital teams which also extends to all other business areas as required.
- We will continue to work closely with our estates team to promote and raise awareness of our legal conservation obligations across the business.

Commitment 21

We will continue to look for opportunities (e.g. through internal communications and competitions) to harness the enthusiasm of our colleagues to help nature as they go about their day jobs of supplying water and wastewater services.

How we are working to achieve this

Working closely with our internal communications teams, we have progressed a number of internal initiatives. We are also in the process of creating an annual milestone planner to ensure key messages are communicated throughout the year as appropriate. This communication is also promoted through the work of our Biodiversity Champions. Some of our campaigns include:

- Good news stories and sharing best practice through articles on our internal communication channels. We hope to share this externally in the near future.
- Reminders of external stakeholder events to get involved in such as the RSPB's annual bird watch event.
- Various 'how to' guidance and information booklets.

Through our supply chain we can influence others to put greater emphasis on efforts to safeguard biodiversity. We have become a member of the Sustainable Supply Chain School, which aims to improve knowledge and performance of supply chains on environmental and sustainability matters.

Commitment 22

We continue to raise the awareness of our contractors of our biodiversity duties through our contract arrangements and procurement process and will encourage our contractors to play their part in supporting the delivery of our duty while they are working on our behalf.

How we are working to achieve this

We continue to provide tailored training to our Alliance partners and capital teams. To enhance this our Biodiversity Plan is shared and readily available.

Our plan is also shared with contractors as part of our standard tender documentation.

Colleagues across the business need to be aware of INNS and know what to do about them, so a company-wide Biosecurity Position Statement and Framework to support colleagues was produced. We realised colleagues may need an easy-to-use guide to help them identify invasive species at our sites. Our in-house booklet called 'Invasive Non-Native Species Identification' is available to help our colleagues identify these species while carrying out their roles and give them guidance on how they can report them. Information from this booklet is communicated via our INNS of the Month internal communication campaign and our Biodiversity Champions continue to spread the word and provide support across their operational sites.

Commitment 23

We will continue to communicate an "Invasive Non-Native Species Identification Guide" to our colleagues which will include seasonal updates.

How we are working to achieve this

- Our "Invasive Non-Native Species Identification Guide" is readily available for employee and contractors to use and is regularly updated.
- Using a number of media platforms, communications around INNS and other ecological milestones, for example, bird nesting season, will be communicated internally.

- Our Biodiversity Champions will continue to liaise with operational colleagues to provide advice, circulate material and promote best practice.

Many of our operational sites – which range from large works covering several acres (such as Five Fords near Wrexham) to very small sites (such as local pumping stations) – offer opportunities for us to introduce small-scale but worthwhile measures to support nature. While we must ensure that our sites are safe – so, for example, ensure our people have safe and easy access to manholes etc. – we believe these sites may offer opportunities, such as by planting pollinator-friendly flowers, or the siting of bird boxes, or other nature-friendly measures. We continue with this work and are expanding into our water operational sites as well as our energy sites. We will also look to our colleagues in support functions to examine how we can help promote biodiversity within their green spaces.

During the ongoing pandemic we have reached out to colleagues to how we can promote biodiversity within our own homes through bug hotels, bird boxes and plants which not only offers great rewards for nature but support the wellbeing of our people.

Commitment 24

Expand our Biodiversity Champions to across the entire business. Encourage champions to continue with great work as well as look for new opportunities to support nature.

How we are working to achieve this

Our Biodiversity Champions continues to be a great success delivering on a range of projects as well as raising awareness of biodiversity in their operational area and with colleagues. Project outputs have been limited in 2020 due to COVID-19. However, where possible our Biodiversity Champions who have continued their hard work at their operational sites, and encouraged a companywide campaign to increase biodiversity in our own homes.

Due to the great outputs already delivered from our Wastewater Biodiversity Champions we will be recruiting Biodiversity Champions from across the entire business to help continue this important work internally.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 we have been unable to organise a workshop similar to one held back in 2017 to discuss potential revisions for this paper. Instead, we have worked 'virtually' to collect updates, discuss new ideas and raise awareness future of our strengthened biodiversity duty. When we are able, and safe to do so, we will arrange a workshop to forward plan for the 2022 report and biodiversity action plan which will see us into the next financial period (AMP 8).

Commitment 25

We will review all the substantive ideas that emerged from the biodiversity workshop to assess their practicality; potential value; and priority.

How we are working to achieve this

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to arrange a workshop with internal stakeholders across the business as normal to discuss ideas and progress. This will be arranged when it is safe to do so. In the meantime, ideas, progress and engagement have been undertaken through virtual meetings.

Further to the workshop in 2017, some shorter-term ideas were created and progressed as follows:

Commitment 26

In procuring our next grounds maintenance contracts, we will encourage those submitting tenders to consider biodiversity benefits and encourage best practise to maintain and enhance biodiversity at our sites.

How we are working to achieve this

All ground maintenance contractors are fully aware of our strengthened biodiversity duty. We will continue to raise awareness, encourage innovation and challenge ways of working.

During the pandemic, a number of our larger operational sites have been turned into pollinator meadows enhancing biodiversity at the sites. This will be encouraged at other sites where safe to do so.

Commitment 27

We will continue to review our procedures (in-house and with our Alliance partners) to formalise how potential biodiversity gains (including combatting climate change) should be considered when capital schemes are being designed and, if relevant, their on-going maintenance.

How we are working to achieve this

We continue to work closely with our Alliance partners in a number of ways to maintain and enhance biodiversity at our capital work sites. This includes:

1. Strengthening the biodiversity commitment in the enabling checklist which ensures capital delivery projects consider biodiversity throughout project delivery in line with Welsh Waters vision.
2. Handover process developed to specifically cover environmental and planning obligations. Supports Welsh Water in ensuring any ongoing commitments are delivered.
3. Continue regular training sessions so all staff in our Alliance partners are aware of our biodiversity duties and ecological mitigation.
4. Continue to explore and introduce measures to catalogue biodiversity gain with our Alliance Partners.
5. Our Alliance partners are also developing a strategy to reduce carbon.

Commitment 28

Further to our biodiversity trial at a number of our operational sites to showcase how nature can be supported while not undermining the operational purpose of sites or the health and safety of our colleagues we will develop site specific Biodiversity Management Plans.

How we are working to achieve this

This has now been completed and expanded to other sites across the wastewater business. The plans are still ongoing at the original sites which included the biodiversity trial at Cardiff Wastewater Treatment works.

Site-specific Biodiversity Management Plans (BMPs) have been developed for some sites with progress ongoing. These efforts of delivery have been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and limited access to our operational sites.

Commitment 29

We will continue to collate the ecological information, such as surveys, that we already hold to help inform our future plans to maintain and enhance biodiversity at our sites. As part of this we will look for evidence of the presence of the species or habitats in Biodiversity Lists published under section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

How we are working to achieve this

We are continuing to build this internal database which will be available to use company-wide including our capital teams and Alliance partners who will also feed into this database.

Commitment 30

Further to working with our regulators, we have included biodiversity and nature based solutions in the scheme options that were considered when we develop our 2020–2025 investment programme. As part of this, we identified potential opportunities for biodiversity -driven projects linked to the exercise of our functions, and will review the investment case in time for the finalisation of our 2020–2025 business plan.

How we are working to achieve this

Two programmes of work totalling £40m which will help to maintain and enhance biodiversity within our catchment areas include Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) and Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans (DWMP).

These programmes of work will deliver multiple benefits which will also contribute to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and ecological resilience.

We will be incorporating Natural Capital Accounting into our investment decisions going forward with the exact processes still being developed.

Case study

Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR)

This multiple benefit programme of work will commence in 2021 with its outcomes helping to maintain and enhance biodiversity and resilient ecosystems within its pilot study areas. SMNR is created from 9 core principles with 2 of these heavily focused on biodiversity and ecosystems.

There will be 4 pilot studies throughout this AMP period (2020-25) with the first pilot study launching in the Clwyd Catchment, North East Wales in 2021 with investment targeting sustainable improvements to water quality that will also enhance biodiversity.



Measuring and reporting on our commitments

Below is a summary of our 30 commitments with new deadlines, many of which are ongoing.

The detail which sits behind these commitments will have specific deadlines to meet with progress reported on in 2022. We successfully completed 8 of our 2017 commitments. However, on review we have decided we can do more to enhance the environment beyond our original commitments and have included this in our latest update.

All commitments consider links to external documents such as the Area Statements and newly-published Nature Recovery Plan. They are not referenced in this table, as was done previously, to allow flexibility within our plan. We may also wish to include other documentation as we progress within this reporting period.

No. Revised commitments (2020 plan)	Delivery deadline update
Our core services – drinking water supplies	
1 Following the publication of the Water Resources Management Plan in 2019, we will continue to explicitly take account of our biodiversity and ecosystems resilience duty when we undertake our next full review of our Water Resources Management Plan for 2024.	2024
2 We will continue to work with our regulators to improve our understanding of the potential for our practices to spread invasive non-native species and the potential cost implications.	Ongoing
3 Following our WaterSource Approach we will continue to collaborate and engage with our stakeholders in the third sector. This will be as part of our programme of work for our 23 Safeguard Zones, so that we can work together toward a common agenda, to reduce levels of contaminants such as levels of pesticides and ammonia in the environment, to protect our water supplies and to benefit wildlife.	Ongoing
4 We will continue to collaborate with our stakeholders to ensure that forest and woodland design and management will secure land from erosion and landslip as well as deliver multi-benefits. In selecting the species to plant, we will consider how to maximise biodiversity gain.	Ongoing
5 We will look for new opportunities at our Visitor Centres to support nature and to engage the public with the natural environment.	On target
Our core services: treatment of wastewater and management of surface water	
6 We will complete our current 2015–2020 programme of £60 million investment agreed with Natural Resources Wales to improve our discharges at 13 waste water treatment works by, for example, reducing levels of phosphorus to benefit the ecology in the receiving waters.	March 2021 - on target

7	We will continue to research into the effectiveness of some new treatment processes to reduce phosphorus in our discharges.	Ongoing
8	We will complete our current programme of investigations into our impact at 76 inland water bodies. Where we are confirmed as the main reason why a water body is not achieving Good Ecological Status we will (by 2019) agree a programme of improvements we should make during 2020-2025. Further to this completion we will continue this work through other investigations.	Complete
9	We will continue to look for opportunities to educate our customers about the damage that sewer misuse can cause, including to marine wildlife.	Ongoing
10	We will continue to work with Natural Resources Wales and Environment Agency to encourage concerted action to be taken to address all pressures affecting particular water bodies, including our impacts.	Ongoing
11	We will continue to work with the Welsh Government, including Welsh Local Government Association, Ofwat and Natural Resources Wales to look for ways to overcome regulatory obstacles that may inhibit our adopting more nature-based approaches to some treatment processes and surface water management.	Ongoing
Education		
12	We will continue our role in educating future generations about the importance of the water environment, including its flora and fauna.	Ongoing
Climate Change		
13	We will continue to look for opportunities to increase our renewable energy generation capacity and improve the energy efficiency of our existing operations.	Ongoing
14	We will research the impact that climate change is likely to have on the environment and ecosystems by 2050 and set out our research ambitions for 2020–25 in our next business plan.	Ongoing
Looking after protected sites		
15	We will continue to use Natural Resources Wales' "Actions Database" to identify and address issues in the Sites of Special Scientific Interest that we own.	On hold
16	Continuing to work with Natural Resources Wales, we will initiate investigations into the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest that we own and develop an enhancement programme, so far as consistent with the exercise of our functions.	Ongoing
Working in partnership		
17	We will continue to invite applications from non-profit organisations for funding for projects that will deliver positive outcomes under the Water Framework Directive where water bodies not achieving Good Ecological Status will benefit and where there is a substantive link to Dŵr Cymru's operations and interests.	Ongoing
18	Continue to explore the role of "Friends of" and other community groups who might adopt and help us to manage some of our sites.	Ongoing
19	We will continue to invite applications from not for profit organisations for funding toward projects that will help to prevent, reduce, eradicate or manage the risk of non-native species where there is some link to Dŵr Cymru's operations.	Ongoing

Our People		
20	We will continue to give all colleagues the opportunity to learn about the legal conservation obligations that Dŵr Cymru has.	Completed
21	We will continue to look for opportunities (e.g. through internal communications and competitions) to harness the enthusiasm of our colleagues to help nature as they go about their day jobs of supplying water and sewerage services.	Ongoing
22	We continue to raise the awareness of our contractors of our biodiversity duties through our contract arrangements and procurement process and will encourage our contractors to play their part in supporting the delivery of our duty while they are working on our behalf.	Ongoing
23	We will continue to communicate an "Invasive Non-Native Species Identification Guide" to our colleagues which will include seasonal updates.	Complete
24	Expand our Biodiversity Champions to across the entire business. Encourage champions to continue with great work as well as look for new opportunities to support nature.	Ongoing
25	We will review all the substantive ideas that emerged from the biodiversity workshop to assess their practicality; potential value; and priority.	Ongoing
26	In procuring our next grounds maintenance contracts, we will encourage those submitting tenders to consider biodiversity benefits and encourage best practise to maintain and enhance biodiversity at our sites.	Ongoing
27	We will continue to review our procedures (in-house and with our Alliance Partners) to formalise how potential biodiversity gains (including combatting climate change) should be considered when capital schemes are being designed and, if relevant, their on-going maintenance.	Ongoing
28	Further to our biodiversity trial at a number of our operational sites to showcase how nature can be supported while not undermining the operational purpose of sites or the health and safety of our colleagues we will develop site specific Biodiversity Management Plans.	Ongoing
29	We will continue to collate the ecological information, such as surveys, that we already hold to help inform our future plans to maintain and enhance biodiversity at our sites. As part of this we will look for evidence of the presence of the species or habitats in Biodiversity Lists published under section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.	Ongoing
30	Further to working with our regulators, we have included biodiversity and nature based solutions in the scheme options that were considered when we develop our 2020–2025 investment programme. As part of this, we identified potential opportunities for biodiversity-driven projects linked to the exercise of our functions, and will review the investment case in time for the finalisation of our 2020–2025 business plan.	Ongoing

Reflection from our Director of Environment

As per our 2050 Vision, Dŵr Cymru wants to create an environment we are proud to hand on to future generations, one which is managed sustainably, with co delivery of solutions which protect and enhance nature at the heart of that activity. Readers of this Plan will see that Dŵr Cymru is seeking to remain a leading organisation that supports biodiversity, as we go about our functions of supplying drinking water and dealing with waste water for our customers.

As we set out in our first Biodiversity Plan, many of the changes that will be needed to reverse the overall decline in biodiversity reported by Natural Resources Wales in its State of Natural Resources Report will require multi-stakeholder involvement. With the advent of Area Statements under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, we can see a clear way forward now on how other public authorities can view the inter-dependency of all our Plans. We are also pleased to see our regulators recognise the need to share some of the associated regulatory risks associated with adopting nature based alternatives to some processes. We hope other public authorities and environmental groups will use this Plan to inform their own ideas and to look for opportunities to continue to work in partnership with us. Dŵr Cymru will play our part but everyone, government policy makers, regulators, environment groups, local communities, must also all play theirs if our actions are to deliver for the next generation.

In 2022 we will report our progress and set out our aspirations for further investment to enhance biodiversity for our 2024 business plan. In the meantime, we would welcome any comments you might have on this Plan, and in particular suggestions on how it might be improved.



Tony Harrington
Director of Environment

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More information available at <https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/area-statements/>

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DCWW Community funding

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Available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/introduction>

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Available at <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-10/nature-recovery-action-plan-wales-2020-2021.pdf>

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More information available at <https://corporate.dwrcymru.com/en/community/environment/our-projects/watersource/pestsmart>

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“RainScope” Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water

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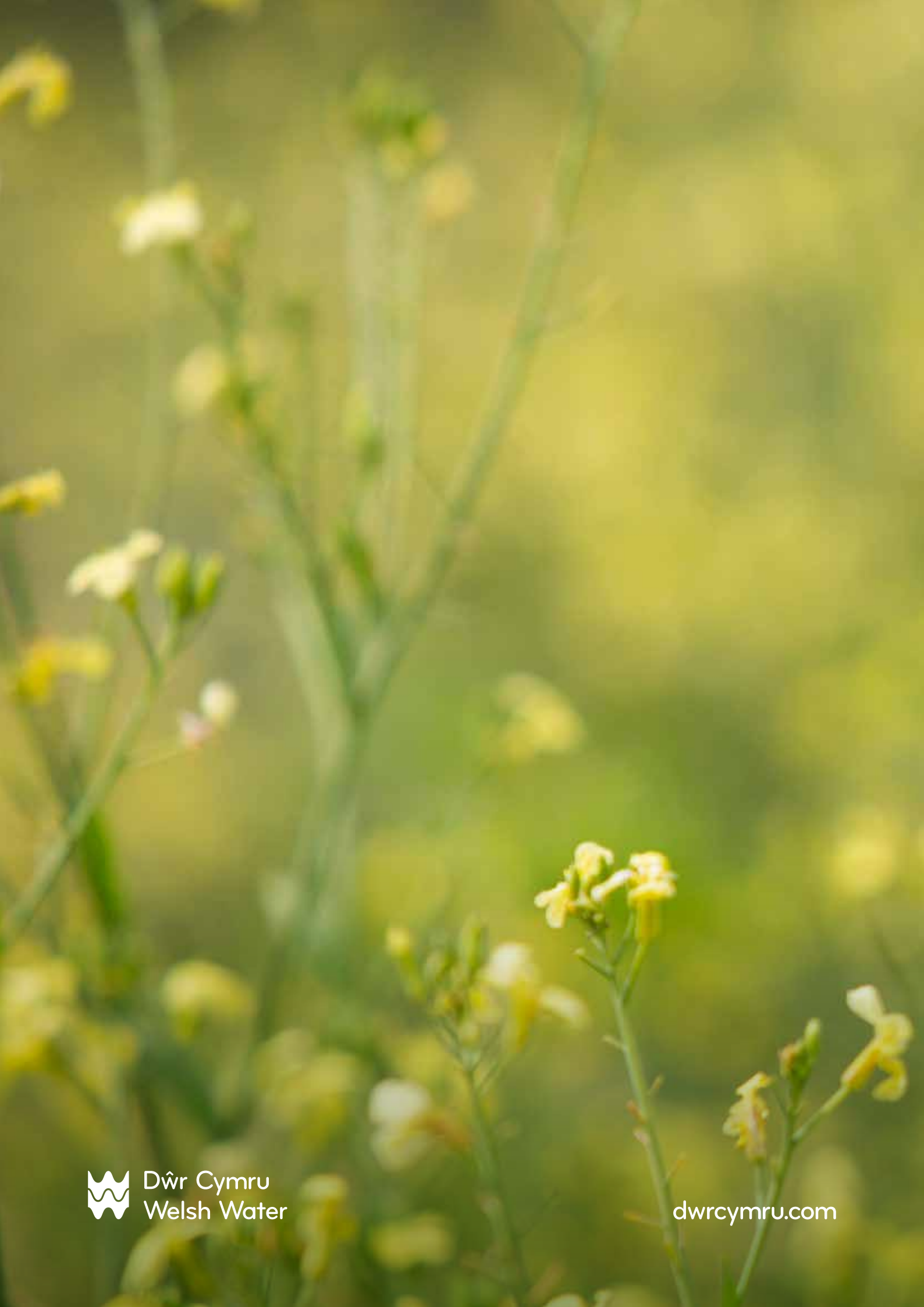
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More information available at <https://corporate.dwrcymru.com/en/about-us/our-plans/water-2050>

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