CONSULTATION REPORT

Cynllun Eryri Initial Consultation:
July 9th – September 30th 2018

Helen Pye, Snowdonia National Park Authority. December 2018
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Executive Summary
Introduction

Background

The Snowdonia National Park Management Plan (Cynllun Eryri – pronounced “cyn-llin err-uhh-ree”), is a significant document in relation to the future of Snowdonia National Park. The National Park Authority is required by law to prepare a plan to provide effective management of the National Park, involving all those concerned with the future of Snowdonia. It sets out how we will all work together to look after Snowdonia National Park for future generations.

The Plan will set out the current picture; our long-term vision for the area; high-level outcomes; short term outcomes and an action plan.

This initial consultation held between the 9th of July and 30th of September formed part of the wider process of developing a new National Park Management Plan (see Appendix 1).

Prior to this consultation we had carried out research, gathering of data and exploring of early ideas and opinions. This included workshops with key partners and stakeholders as well as our own Members and staff. It also included developing an in depth dataset called the ‘State of the Park Report’. This pulled together all of the available information and data on the National Park area. All of this data is now available and searchable on our website.

A number of overarching challenges emerged from this data gathering process. This included the threat of climate change as well as mitigation measures such as carbon storage and sequestration. It included pressures on the tranquillity and landscape of Snowdonia from tourism. The data also highlighted the ongoing decline in biodiversity. A new and emerging challenge was the impact of Brexit and the need to ensure a skilled workforce post-Brexit. More than anything it highlighted the impact all of these elements could have on the Special Qualities of the National Park. The process also highlighted where there are data gaps and where further research and understanding is required.

For the initial consultation, a document was produced which set out the current picture and our vision for the future. It set out the big issues and opportunities for the National Park in the coming years. It also provided suggestion on how we could address these issues and capitalize on the opportunities.

Through this initial consultation we aimed to gather views from anyone who has an interest in the National Park. Whether living, looking after, working or regularly visiting Snowdonia.

We wanted to carry out this early consultation, so that stakeholders had an opportunity to outline their ideas and views right at the start of the process. These views and ideas will feed into the process, along with the overarching big issues highlighted in the Consultation Document, to help us form the first draft of the new Cynllun Eryri. This input has been invaluable and provides a strong basis to develop the new Cynllun Eryri.
About the initial consultation

This initial consultation was held between the 9th of July and 30th of September and forms part of the wider process of developing a new National Park Plan (see Appendix 1). We received a total of 639 responses to the consultation, which is significantly higher than any previous public consultation we have carried out. A list of organisations that responded can be found in Appendix 2. Significantly, nearly 60% of those that responded lived within the National Park area.

What was important to people?

Some very clear messages emerged from the consultation. The huge number of responses covered a wide range of topics, all of which had been covered in the Consultation Document to a lesser or greater degree, but what the responses to the consultation will do will be to allow us to refine our understanding of the issues that are important to people.

The most frequently highlighted topics from the consultation were that Snowdonia is a special and protected area and that it needs to be protected and managed for all. In
particular in relation to this the environmental impact of visitors; improved protection and enhancement of habitats and ecosystems; the impact of Brexit on land management; the opportunities Snowdonia’s environment can provide for improving people’s well-being; developing more clear and consistent marketing/brand for Snowdonia; supporting people to adapt and evolve to meet the issues and opportunities of the rural economy including the challenges of outward migration of young people; affordable housing and quality jobs. The nature of the comments in general reflected the value the natural environment brings to the economy of Snowdonia.

There were also other issues and opportunities mentioned frequently - the above list only represents the top issues commented upon – the following report contains more details on all of the areas covered in responses.

How will we use the feedback from the consultation?

The views and ideas shared with us through this initial consultation will help us form the first draft of the new Cynllun Eryri. The key points from this report will be merged with the ‘Ways Forward’ suggested in the consultation document. Through a series of workshops we will discuss and evolve these with key partners who will be helping us deliver Cynllun Eryri.

This will all feed into the development of an action plan, which in turn will feed into the development of the first draft of Cynllun Eryri. You can see an overview diagram of this in Appendix 3. We expect to be consulting on this first draft towards the middle of next year.
**Figure 1 Respondents Connection with the National Park**

- **Gweithio i sefydliad tu mewn i'r Parc / Work for organisation within the Park** - 22 (4%)
- **Gweithio neu rhedeg busnes yn y Parc / Work or run a business in the Park** - 34 (5%)
- **Byw yn y Parc neu agos / Live in the Park or near** - 368 (59%)
- **Byw yng Ngogledd Cymru / Live in North Wales** - 76 (12%)
- **Ymewld a'r Parc / Visit the Park** - 99 (16%)
- **Arall / Other** - 29 (5%)
Summary of Engagement and Response Stats

- Total responses received: 644
- % respondents who live or work in the National Park: 64%
- Number of locations visited by the roadshow: 6
- Attendees at the three expert panel events: 115
- Consultation video views on Twitter: 44,362
- Reached on social media: 131,597
- National and local news articles: 6
What’s important to people?

The consultation questions were grouped around the three themes of Environment, Health & Well-being and Communities & Economy, which are in their turn closely interlinked with the National Parks core purposes and together reflect what makes Snowdonia a truly unique and special place.

As part of the consultation we asked people to discuss the key challenges and opportunities around these three themes. We explored this through the online consultation and we also explored these themes in detail during the three expert panel events.

The key issues emerging from discussions and responses during the consultation were as follows:

- There is grave and widespread concern about the impact increasing visitor numbers is having on the environment, landscape, solitude and tranquillity of Snowdonia.
- More emphasis needs to be placed on enhancement of the environment, habitats and ecosystems through effective management.
- That Brexit will change the nature of farming and that we need to be proactive in preparing for these changes.
- The need to expand work with partners, health services and Public Service Boards to promote and highlight Snowdonia’s natural, historic and cultural environment as a place for improving the physical and mental health and well-being of local people and the Welsh population as a whole.
- A real need to develop a clear and consistent marketing/brand (or 'not-marketing of') strategy for Snowdonia.
- More emphasis on supporting young people, families, local communities, social enterprise and businesses to adapt and evolve to meet the issues and opportunities of the rural economy.
- Respondents wanted to see us explore and support innovative solutions to the lack of affordable housing, or affordable housing to rent, with second home ownership seen as a significant factor affecting the affordability of housing.

“A key challenge will be working out some principles to determine what is sustainable in relation to visitor numbers, given transport options/networks/roads, accommodation and impact of numbers on the footpath network and sensitive habitats and species, for a given area and, if necessary how to regulate visitor pressure to maintain sustainable levels without giving visitors a negative experience.” Natural Resources Wales
• There was real concern expressed about the outward migration of young people from the area. This was closely interlinked with affordable housing and high quality jobs, and many expressed the view that the focus should be on addressing these areas.

• The nature of the comments in general reflected the value the natural environment and the areas Special Qualities bring to the economy of Snowdonia.

**What were the cross-cutting themes?**

A number of cross-cutting priority issues emerged from the consultation as part of living in, working in, managing and experiencing such a special place. This including transport issues; sustainable funding; supporting local communities; and digital connectivity.

Key ways of working were also highlighted in order to successfully implement the plan. This included improving partnership working and collaboration; Snowdonia National Park Authority building on its role as an ‘enabler’; and empowering local communities to help deliver Cynllun Eryri.

**What’s important to the young people of Snowdonia?**

As part of the consultation we visited secondary schools across Snowdonia to find out what was important to the young people of the area. In years to come they will be the people that our decisions today will impact upon, and therefore it’s vital that they are able to have a strong input and influence on the future policies within Cynllun Eryri.

The young people we engaged with were aged 11 to 17. We visited five secondary schools and 84 young people in total took part in the workshops. We visited Ysgol Bro Hyddgen in Machynlleth; Ysgol y Moelwyn in Blaenau Ffestiniog; Ysgol Eifionydd in Porthmadog; Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn and Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy in Llanrwst.

“Take a proactive approach to make the most of resources that are arising – look at strategic joined up funding through partnerships and public bodies funding and resources”. 
Young people felt that the following key issues should be prioritise in Cynllun Eryri:

Under the Environment theme:
1. Pollution of river, lakes and the sea.
2. Protecting and restoring habitats, species and ecosystems
3. Climate change

Under the Wellbeing theme:
1. The impact of hill-walking and in particular erosion, litter and crowding
2. Poor public transport
3. Parking problems

Under the Communities and Economy theme:
1. Decline in the number of welsh speakers
2. Lack of high quality jobs
3. Outward migration of young people
4. Lack of affordable housing
5. Impact of Brexit on markets for produce

“If we encourage people to visit Snowdonia, but don’t look after the area, people won’t want to come back”.

Pupil from Ysgol Eifionydd

What’s special about Snowdonia?

In the words of young people from Ysgol Bro Hyddgen, Machynlleth; Ysgol y Moelwyn, Blaenau Ffestiniog; Ysgol Eifionydd, Porthmadog; Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn and Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy, Llanrwst.
What did we miss?

The huge number of responses covered a wide range of topics, all of which had been covered in the Consultation Document to a lesser or greater degree, but what the responses to the consultation will do will be to allow us as a partnership to increase or change the emphasis on particular topic areas.

We also received some more general comments and feedback in the responses:

- Following feedback, although we do not intend to change the Special Qualities themselves, we intend to elaborate on them in the Plan through images and descriptive text, in order to paint a fuller picture. We’ll work closely with various experts on this wording so that we can create content, descriptions and key messages that can be used and adapted by all in any future marketing and interpretation work. We will also highlight that what make Snowdonia truly unique is that all these special qualities are found in a relatively small geographical area.

- Use the more modern terminology of ‘payment for public goods’ rather than ‘payment for ecosystem services’.

- It was felt that the vision statement should make specific reference to the historic environment.

- Due to increased emphasis on well-being and sustainable development, include clear statements on how this plan interfaces with Wellbeing Plans of local authorities and natural resources area statements.

- Demonstrate clearly how the Special Qualities can contribute to well-being, and ensure this filters through to outcomes.

- Include links to the State of the Park Report data to put decision making in its context.

- Demonstrate how governance and decision making will work in relation to the partnership approach i.e. Fforwm Eryri.

- Refer to the IUCN Category V Protected Areas status of National Parks, and that we are managed in accordance with this. Include a link/reference to the IUCN guidelines.

“We feel that more weight could be given to the historic environment, and that some key issues and opportunities have been missed. For example…. These include the section on invasive species, climate change and landscape protection (pp39-41). As well as affecting landscapes and biological communities, these changes and pressures could have significant adverse impact on archaeological sites and field monuments, historic buildings, and historic parks and gardens”. Cadw
How do the responses chime with the body of evidence?

Did our data reflect what people had to say? Below we explore some of the key messages emerging from the consultation and how this compare with the data we have gathered.

“There is grave and widespread concern about the impact increasing visitor numbers is having on the environment and landscape of Snowdonia”.

Looking at the latest figures for 2017, visitor numbers have increased by 17% since 2013, with a real contrast in numbers across the National Park. Snowdon received nearly 600,000 visitors to its summit in 2016 and Cader Idris receives some 60,000 visitors annually.

“More emphasis needs to be placed on protection and enhancement of the environment, habitats and ecosystems”.

98.8% of the SAC’s and SPA units in Snowdonia are in need of action. The latest available data shows that 70% of protected sites in Snowdonia are in an unfavourable condition.

“… there was widespread recognition of the impact of climate change, and the need for us to all contribute towards reducing emissions. The focus was on how we could do this at the National Park level”.

Although this was an issue that emerged, it was not as frequently mentioned as other important topic areas, particular in comparison to the huge threat to the area in relation to climate change, such as a decrease in plant nutrients; species richness and invertebrate numbers and an increases in extreme weather events, precipitation, temperatures and sea level rise.

“That Brexit will change the nature of farming beyond recognition and that we need to be proactive in preparing for these changes”.

Detailed scenario mapping of the impacts of Brexit on Wales included the following likely impacts regardless of which scenario is considered:

- a likely decline in sheep production;
- a differentiated spatial pattern of economic and environmental impact whereby the north and west of Wales is likely to suffer stronger negative impacts;
- agriculture remains a major driver of economic and community viability in the many remote areas of Wales, and the main manager of its habitats, biodiversity and landscapes. Thus, for all scenarios in which the economic fortunes of the dominant type of agriculture (grazing livestock for meat production) seem set to decline, consideration must be given to how best
to encourage, stimulate and support alternative business and land management options that can develop sustainably, to support wider Welsh Government goals.

“The need to expand work with partners, health services and Public Service Boards to promote and highlight Snowdonia’s natural and historic environment as a place for improving the physical and mental health and well-being of local people and the Welsh population as a whole”.

Despite having an older population, more people have a good level of health in Snowdonia (80.5%) compared to Wales as a whole (77.7%). 53% of adults are overweight or obese (compared to 58% throughout Wales).

There is robust and wide ranging evidence to show that having access to the natural environment reduces mortality; obesity; asthma’ stress; fatigue; anxiety and depression.

“More emphasis on supporting young people, families, local communities, social enterprise and businesses to adapt and evolve to meet the issues and opportunities of the rural economy.

Respondents wanted to see us explore and support innovative solutions to the lack of affordable housing, or affordable housing to rent, with second home ownership seen as a significant factor affecting the affordability of housing.

There was real concern expressed about the outward migration of young people from the area. This was closely interlinked with affordable housing and high quality jobs, and many expressed the view that the focus should be on addressing these areas”.

It is estimated that the population of Snowdonia will shrink by 6.6% by 2030. The biggest decline is already being seen in the ‘Under 35’ age bracket.

A declining population and a slower household formulation rate will reduce the demand for new housing, however the Eryri Local Development Plan aims to achieve accessible and affordable housing to secure the long term viability of Snowdonia National Park’s rural communities.

Dwyfor Meirionydd has the lowest annual median wage in the UK - £15,236.

The cost of homes in Conwy and Gwynedd is 6-7 times the average income.

Despite this, research shows that the National Park Designation and quality of the natural environment and landscape of National Parks does bring added economic benefits to these rural areas as shown by the ARUP report of 2013 on Wales’ three National Parks:
• Wales’ National Parks account for over half a billion pounds of Wales’ Gross Value Added, representing 1.2% of the Welsh economy.

• Nearly 30,000 people are employed within the park boundaries. Of the jobs provided within the Park, 38% are linked to the environment.

• The Parks receive 12 million visitors each year spending an estimated £1bn on goods and services.

• National Parks in Wales attract a high proportion of staying visitors, averaging 2.26 tourist days per visitor compared to 1.59 for National Parks in England and Scotland.
Next Steps

What will we do with the key points from this report?

The key points and ideas set out in the previous section - “Future Considerations: Emerging Ideas” - reflect the key messages coming from the consultation.

Along with the overarching issues highlighted in the Consultation Document, these ideas are a starting point for us to begin to develop and shape the plan. There will be much discussion and development of these with key partners, and therefore it is important to note that the key points and ideas reflect merely the initial steps in the discussion process rather than the finished article.

How this report and the key points will feed into the plan process

The key points from this report will be considered alongside the wider challenges and opportunities highlighted in the consultation document such as threats to tranquillity, the landscape, climate change and so on. Through a series of workshops, we will discuss and evolve these with key partners who will be helping us deliver Cynllun Eryri.

This will all then feed into the development of an action plan, which in turn will – alongside proofing against statutory guidelines in the development of National Park Plans - feed into the development of the first draft of Cynllun Eryri. We expect to be consulting on this first draft towards the middle of the year, when we will also seek opinions on the fundamental principles of managing a special area like Snowdonia and the action required to achieve this.
Full Report
Introduction

Aims of the consultation

This initial consultation held between the 9th of July and 30th of September formed part of the wider process of developing a new National Park Management Plan (see Appendix 1).

The Snowdonia National Park Management Plan (Cynllun Eryri – pronounced “cyn-llin err-uhh-ree”), is a significant document in relation to the future of Snowdonia National Park. The National Park Authority is required by law to prepare a plan to provide effective management of the National Park, involving all those concerned with the future of Snowdonia. It sets out how we will all work together to look after Snowdonia National Park for future generations.

In the consultation document we set out the current picture and our vision for the future. We set out what the big issues and opportunities are for the National Park in the coming years. We also provided suggestion on how we plan to address these issues and capitalize on the opportunities.

Through this initial consultation we aimed to gather views from anyone with an interest in the National Park. Whether living, looking after, working or regularly visiting Snowdonia.

We wanted to carry out this early consultation, so that stakeholders had an opportunity to feed in their ideas and views right at the start of the process. These views and ideas will help us form the first draft of the new Cynllun Eryri.

The approach we took

We utilised a number of different methods for gathering views during the consultation to ensure that we captured a wide range of opinions. This included:

- A public roadshow that visited locations in the north and south of the National Park.
- An online campaign on social media.
- A widely promoted online survey.
- Three expert panel events.
- Poster and leaflets distributed throughout the National Park.
- Talks and meeting to highlight the consultation to stakeholders.
The responses we received

The volume of responses to the consultation was significant and far exceeded our expectations. A total of 644 responses were received, both in writing and via the online questionnaire.

In particular for this consultation we wanted to capture the views of people living within and around the National Park. We were incredibly pleased with the response – with nearly 60% of respondents living in the National Park area. 22 responses were from organisations that operate within the National Park and 34 were from businesses operating in the National Park - see figure 3. Figure 2 shows the geographical spread of respondents.

A considerable number of organisations and individuals commented on the engaging nature of the consultation document and the consultation itself.

The 22 organisations that responded (see Appendix 2) had made significant efforts to gather and feed in the views of their
organisation. Many noted their enthusiasm and commitment to working together to build and implement Cynllun Eryri, and welcomed the plan to develop a clear action plan in partnership along with specific indicators and targets. A number did raise the need for a clear plan on how the actions would be funded, particularly in the current economic climate.

The only negative feedback we received was in relation to an element of the online questionnaire. Respondents were asked to rank issues in order of importance. A number of organisations and individuals did not feel comfortable ranking the key issues as they felt that no one issue was more important than another. We will take this into consideration in future consultations.

Feedback from the consultation was analysed by reading through all of the comments received and grouping comments, issues raised and opportunities highlighted into topic areas. We also kept a count of the number of times a specific issues or topic was raised. This has helped paint a detailed picture of the key areas of concern and priorities for people. Where we received only one or two comments on a particular subject we have not included these as a priority.

Due to the comments received in relation to the ranking of issues questions, we decided not to use this data in our analysis, however it is worth noting that the analysis of comments and the priorities emerging from this do match quite closely with the overall priorities emerging from the ranking process.

**Figure 3 Respondents connection to the National Park**

- Gweithio i sefydlad tu mewn i'r Parc / Work for organisation within the Park - 22 (4%)
- Gweithio neu rhedeg busnes yn y Parc / Work or run a business in the Park - 34 (5%)
- Byw yn y Parc neu agos / Live in the Park or near - 368 (59%)
- Byw yng Ngogledd Cymru / Live in North Wales - 76 (12%)
- Ymewld a’r Parc / Visit the Park - 99 (16%)
- Arall / Other - 29 (5%)
The Environment

Key Messages

1. Snowdonia is a special area and it needs to be protected and managed for all.

2. There is grave and widespread concern about the impact increasing visitor numbers is having on the environment and landscape of Snowdonia.

3. More emphasis needs to be placed on protection and enhancement of the environment, natural resources, habitats and ecosystems.

4. That Brexit will change the nature of farming beyond recognition and that we need to be proactive in preparing for these changes.

Priority Issues

The top issues mentioned by organisations (in rank order) were as follows:

1. Addressing the impact of tourism on the environment

2. Protecting, restoring and expanding habitats through land management

3. Ensuring that the future of land management is secure and that it supports Eryri’s special environment

4. Greener travel in order to reduce carbon emissions

5. Investigate the potential of visitor-payback in relation to protecting the environment

The top issues mentioned by individuals (in rank order) were as follows:

1. Impact of tourism on the environment

2. Protecting, restoring and expanding habitats through land management

3. Greener travel
4. Visitor-payback in relation to the environment

Other key issues raised by both organisations and individuals included:

- Management and protection of the historical and cultural landscape
- Actively contributing towards reducing carbon emissions and enhancing carbon storage
- A pro-active approach to addressing the challenges of invasive species
- Engaging people with the environment in order to nurture a sense of custodianship
- Addressing issues with damaging recreational activities
- Ensuring the landscape of Eryri is protected from the visual impact of communication and energy production infrastructure

The impacts of tourism on the environment

The impact of ever increasing visitor numbers on the natural environment of the area was of significant concern to people. In particular, the physical impact of tourism on paths, the proliferation of cairns, and the visual impact of parking, litter, traffic and over-crowding. There was also concern about the impacts of car and bus travel on air quality and a desire to move towards greener technologies for travel such as electric cars and buses. Fundamental to this was the concern that the economic benefits of tourism were being outweighed by the impact of tourism on the environment – in effect that the Sandford Principle\(^1\) is being compromised.

Some would like to see a re-distribution of tourism to quieter areas, but with a clear emphasis on areas of the National Park where local communities have a desire for tourism to be further developed. In particular, with a focus on high quality accommodation and

\(^1\) To help national park authorities make decisions between conservation and recreation, the National Parks Policy Review Committee made a recommendation in 1974, which is now known as the 'Sandford Principle', named after Lord Sandford who was chair of the committee: "Where irreconcilable conflicts exist between conservation and public enjoyment, then conservation interest should take priority"

This principle was updated in the 1995 Environment Act, to say; "If it appears that there is a conflict between those purposes, [the National Park Authority] shall attach greater weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area"

In other words: If there is a conflict between protecting the environment and people enjoying the environment, that can't be resolved by management, then protecting the environment is more important.
experiences and promoting cultural tourism. Others raise concerns about encouraging tourism in as-yet unspoilt areas of the National Park. It was also emphasised that we should ensure that where recreational pressure are explicitly mentioned in designated site plans, these should be included in our action plan.

Several organisations expressed a desire to work more closely to address the specific impacts of visitors on the area such as litter and erosion, but also in a more general way by developing some guiding principles to determine what is sustainable in relation to visitor management and when and how we will collectively take action. These guiding principles could define thresholds beyond which a locally focused Place Plan would be required – using best practice examples such as the Snowdon Partnership Plan.

The future of land management

The future for land management was a hot topic, particularly with Brexit being at the forefront of people’s minds, but also in relation to concerns about demographics and ageing farmers and support for young people in agriculture. Discussions revolved around the unknowns of how Brexit would change the nature of farming beyond recognition, and how this would then have a knock on effect on the landscape, the natural and historic environment and the local economy.

There was certainly a strength of opinion from both the conservation and farming sectors that Snowdonia could and should lead the way in co-ordinating a challenging and ambitious land management plan bringing benefits to land managers and nature. Many felt that the relationships and trust between the various sectors is well-established in Snowdonia and this could provide a real opportunity for Snowdonia to lead the way, taking a more locally lead approach to conservation, land and ‘public-goods’ management and diversification, in partnership with land managers and owners. It was suggested that this could also include collaboration in the development of entire area/estate plans as has been recently implemented in other National Parks.

“In the landscape of the Park, the effects of Brexit have the potential to see a rapid and significant decline in the structure of our communities”.  
NFU Cymru

“...a Land Management Plan which is well managed is needed for the SNP and should also include the areas that are not directly within the boundaries of the Park but which farming and environmental practices may have an impact upon.”  

This was felt to be particularly important in the context of the potential and uncertain impacts of Brexit and emerging proposals in relation to support for farmers post-Brexit. It was felt that the National Park Authority could facilitate the building of consensus between different stakeholder groups in
relation to land management, encourage a more localised approach to land management, and create a blueprint for this process.

“... we need to add considerations to support the livestock sector. Agriculture and environmental protection can work hand in hand for the benefit of everyone and everything. This needs to be revisited”. [FUW, Caernarfonshire Branch]

Protecting, restoring and expanding habitats

We received a huge amount of comments in relation to the protection of the environment. Clearly more detail and emphasis will be required on this area in the draft Plan. Respondents wanted to see greater action on the management, restoration and expansion of ecosystems and habitats.

Specifically, people wanted to see more emphasis on:

- defining the habitats and species in Snowdonia that require most urgent action along with solutions;
- defining the public goods Snowdonia has to offer both directly and indirectly e.g. flood alleviation outside the Park boundaries;
- improving connectivity between habitats not just through the use of corridors but through expansion and improvement of habitats particularly in the uplands;
- more focus on non-designated areas and the potential for improvement and expansion of habitats such as native woodland;
- addressing emerging damaging practices such as gold panning;
- halting biodiversity loss and improving ecosystem resilience through improved land management, as set out in the State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR);
- addressing the negative impacts of land management on the environment such as water pollution and sub optimal/inappropriate levels of grazing and identifying potential future risks and pressures;

“We also strongly support measures to help develop PES (Payment for Ecosystem Services) systems and would like to see them used to tackle not just carbon sequestration, but also water resource management and biodiversity conservation. We would like to see this extended to all suitable habitats, not just peatlands, as currently mentioned in the Plan”. North Wales Wildlife Trust
• urgent action on the percentage of protected sites in ‘unfavourable condition’ with actions clearly linked to the management requirements, attributes and limits of site plans;
• protection and improvement of landscape character through use of LANDMAP including protection and improvement of historic features and drystone walls and traditional boundaries;
• focusing resources on action rather than more research.

A number of organisations and individuals suggested that opportunities to address the issues above would be best defined through a land mapping process which, amongst other things should also map out the public goods of Snowdonia, and clearly define the role of partners in implementing any changes.

This mapping process could be the first step in relation to supporting suggestions set out under the next topic ‘the future of land management’.

“We welcome the aspirations around improvements and the reference to mapping but would encourage the partnership to set out in the plan a wider piece of work that will look to map all habitats, where they could and should be expanded and better joined up, rather than only focusing this work on woodland. Depending on the outcome of the Brexit and our land consultation, and ongoing negotiations as we leave the EU, such a mapping exercise could then help guide the delivery of public money to land managers to help achieve improvements in wildlife in the Park. [Campaign for National Parks]

Green and sustainable travel

There was a considerable amount of comments in relation to green travel – with the emphasis on providing greener travel options for people living in and visiting the National Park in order to reduce the areas net contribution to carbon emissions. In busier areas this would need to be considered alongside congestion issues.

Specifically, people mentioned expanding the number of electric vehicle charging points (particularly rapid chargers), exploring options for electric buses, as well as looking into electric bike schemes and improving the network of cycle paths in and around the area.

There was also a desire for us to better summarise the environmental implications of Snowdonia’s visitors e.g. how much carbon emissions they produce.
“We would like to see a focus on the environmental implications of how visitors in large numbers reach the National Park and travel around when they are here. This data is currently missing from the plan”. [Snowdonia Society]

Visitor-payback in relation to the environment

Respondents repeatedly mentioned the need for visitors to somehow contribute towards alleviating the environmental impact they have on the area. There were mixed feelings as to whether this should be via voluntary or some kind of non-voluntary levy. What everyone did agree on was significant finance is needed to address the huge environmental impacts of tourism on the area as well as re-investing in visitor infrastructure. And with public sector funding in decline in all areas, other options must be explored.

The main argument against some form of levy was price competitiveness compared to other areas of the UK. The arguments for were focused on the desperate need to protect the main asset that visitors come for i.e. the environment.

There are a number of factors that influence the competitiveness of an area to attract visitors aside from price. These contributing factors to success are cultural richness; world class tourism service infrastructure and excellent health and hygiene conditions. In other European countries, taxes and levies are seen as important as they provide revenue to spend on these contributing factors such as improving infrastructure. However, the majority of European levies are implemented via an occupancy tax.

Alternative options to raise funds to re-invest in the environment and on tourism infrastructure are available. Voluntary schemes have been implemented around the world with varying levels of success. Where success has been seen, it has been where opt-out methods are used i.e. a voluntary donation is added to the good or services and visitors can opt-out of this. This has some success in other areas of the UK although there have been concerns around the administrative burden and costs outweighing the financial benefits. In a pilot in the Snowdon area where various different options were trialled, opt-out (i.e. added to a hotel bill) and voluntary donations for a services (e.g. a donation to use wi-fi) appeared to be way and above the most effective options.

To be effective, the uptake of such a scheme would need to be widespread and the re-investments of funds clearly targeted towards protecting the environment and improving visitor infrastructure. Non-withstanding any technical issues in relation to consumer regulations, areas that could be considered by both the public and private sector include opt-

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out and voluntary donations on for example organised events, accommodation, toilets and attraction tickets.

**Other key issues raised**

**Protection of the historical and cultural landscape**

There was a general feeling that the culture and heritage of buildings has been neglected in the greater picture. There was also a general feeling that the links between the natural and historic environment could be significantly strengthened and promoted, and that historic features (including historic landscapes, parks and gardens, undesignated assets, traditional buildings, scheduled monument sand conservation areas) should be treated as an intrinsic part of the landscape rather than as separate from it. It was also felt that there was a need to better recognise the economic benefits of the sector.

The maintenance and repair of historic buildings and features was of particular concern to people with the main issue being a lack of funding and resources. Building local skill-sets in this area could create a new and thriving sector based on traditional skills.

**Contributing towards reducing carbon emissions and carbon storage**

As well as the specific points mentioned above in relation to green travel, there was widespread recognition of the impact of climate change, and the need for us to all contribute towards reducing emissions. The focus was on how we could do this at the National Park level.

Key suggestions included using carbon sinks and community green energy generation. It was felt that there were real opportunities to utilise and enhance natural carbon sinks within the national park, including forestry, woodland and peat. These could even attract external investment through carbon credits. With regards green energy, the focus and emphasis was specifically on community owned and managed green energy schemes that would bring benefits to everyone.

**Control of invasive species**

Respondents wanted the work on control of invasive species to continue and to expand. As well as the major threats such as Rhododendron Ponticum, there was also mention of creep of conifers onto the uplands and the impact of feral goats and other invasive species.
Effectively engaging people with their environment

Effective engagement with people about the natural environment in order increase understanding was seen as central to successfully protecting and enhancing the area for the future. The key challenges included how to successfully engage with everyone – in particular hard to reach and disadvantaged groups; how to re-dress the image of National Parks as areas for the wealthy; how to better support local engagement; and how to better educate people about the natural and historic environment.

There was a need to have a clear strategy of why and how we work to engage people with the environment, with information and interpretation having very clear concise messages, that are positive in tone, targeted at specific groups, and that celebrate the uniqueness of Snowdonia. For example, arctic alpines such as the Snowdon Lilly and Purple Saxifrage could be used to engage people. These messages could then be spread through a variety of different methods. This could include events, ambassador schemes, work with schools and youth groups, Bac programs, online and through mainstream media.

For engaging local people, hard to reach and disadvantaged groups with the environment it was suggested that there could be opportunities for initial subsidising activities in the natural environment for these people.

Addressing issues with 4x4’s

Issues with 4x4s was raised as a concern in specific areas of the National Park rather than as a widespread issue. There is a need to clearly and quickly target issues where they exist and are impacting on the National Parks Special Qualities, and work with recreational users to resolve the issue in a positive way.

Ensuring the landscape of Eryri is protected from the visual impact of communication and energy production infrastructure

A number of organisations highlighted the need to work with Distribution Network Operators as well as the National Grid to manage the visual impact of infrastructure on Snowdonia’s landscape.
Future Considerations

- In relation to visitor impact, develop *guiding principles* to determine what is sustainable in relation to visitor management and when and how we will collectively take further action and interventions in relation to visitor management. These *guiding principles* should define thresholds beyond which a locally focused Place Plan is required – using best practice examples such as the Snowdon Partnership Plan and integrating consideration from Landscape Assessments.

- Ensure that particular emphasis is put on balancing protection of the environment with enjoyment of the area, and that is done though a clear focus on managing Eryri as a destination in its own right.

- Ensure that where recreational pressure is explicitly mentioned in designated site plans this is included in Plan actions.

- Snowdonia should lead the way in co-ordinating a challenging and ambitious land management plan bringing benefits to land managers and nature.

- In order to achieve this land management plan, carry out a major land mapping process which should outline the habitats, species and historic features requiring most urgent action; potential areas for habitat expansion and improvement and increased connectivity; as well as identifying the public goods of Snowdonia. It should also clearly define the role of partners in implementing any changes and identifying the resources required.

- The National Park Authority could facilitate the building of consensus between different stakeholder groups in relation to land management.

- Work closely with Natural Resources Wales on the development of Area Statements in achieving the above points.

- Explore opportunities to provide support for getting young people into environmentally and economically sustainable agriculture.

- Explore opportunities for developing a framework for collaboration in the development of plans for areas/estates, by exploring successful implementation in other areas.

- Carefully consider opportunities for the re-distribution of tourism to areas where local communities have a desire for tourism to be further developed, with a particular emphasis on appropriate high quality accommodation and year round experiences, and promoting cultural tourism.
• Assess the environmental impacts of visitors in relation to carbon emissions and encourage a move towards greener technologies for travel such as electric cars, buses and bikes.

• Work with partners and the private sector to expand and adapt existing and new Visitor Giving/donation schemes with focus on opt-out options. Re-investments of funds to be clearly targeted towards protecting the environment and improving visitor infrastructure.

• Strengthen and promote the links between and benefits of the historic and natural environment when developing the draft Plan.

• Support the development of resource and skills for the repair and maintenance of the historic environment.

• Continue to build on opportunities to utilise and enhance natural carbon sinks within the National Park, including forestry, woodland and peat, with options to attract external investment through carbon credits.

• Continue to encourage and support appropriately located community owned green energy schemes.

• Continue and expand on the work to control and reduce the extent of invasive species.

• Explore opportunities to support activities in the natural environment for local people, hard to reach and disadvantaged groups.

• Target issues with inappropriate off-road vehicle activities where they exist and work with users to tackle the issue in a positive way and ensure that the National Parks Special Qualities are protected.

• Continue to work with Distribution Network Operators as well as the National Grid to manage the visual impact of infrastructure on Snowdonia’s landscape and improve resilience.

• Use the more modern terminology of ‘payment for public goods’ rather than ‘payment for ecosystem services’ in the Plan.
Health and Well-being

Key Messages

1. The need to expand work with partners, health services and Public Service Boards to promote and highlight Snowdonia’s natural and historic environment as a place for improving the physical and mental health and well-being of local people and the Welsh population as a whole.

2. A real need to develop a clear and consistent marketing/brand (or 'not-marketing of') strategy for Snowdonia.

Priority Issues

The top issues mentioned by organisations (in rank order) were as follows:

1. Increase awareness and understanding of the benefits of the environment to health and well-being

2. Refresh the way Snowdonia is marketed and branded

3. Improve the sustainability and availability of public transport

4. Improving information and education about the National Park

5. Improved visitor infrastructure

6. Improving digital connectivity

The top issues mentioned by individuals (in rank order) were as follows:

1. Benefits of the environment to health and well-being

2. Better visitor infrastructure

3. Better marketing and branding of Snowdonia
4. Sustainability and availability of public transport

5. Improving information and education about the National Park

6. More work to promote and develop multi user and long distance trails

Other key issues raised by both organisations and individuals included:

- Improved access opportunities for all to explore and understand Snowdonia
- Spreading visitor pressure across a wider season to protect the environment
- High quality accommodation
- Resolving traffic management issues

**Benefits of the Environment to Health and Well-being**

The most frequently mentioned topic area in this section was the need to expand work with partners, health services and Public Service Boards to promote and highlight Snowdonia’s natural and historic environment as a place for improving the physical and mental health and well-being of local people, but also the Welsh population as a whole.

Respondents wanted the emphasis to be on promoting and enabling a diverse range of activities that not only included physical activity but also cultural experiences (music/art etc.) Repeatedly noted was the need to engage with audiences in a targeted way. In other words, that schemes were tailored to the specific needs of groups rather than a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach. Information and interventions would need to be pitched at the right level for the abilities and experience of the individual. Research would also be required into the barriers (and perceived barriers) to exercise and how these can be overcome.

There was a desire to develop community buildings and information centres into ‘health hubs’, but also suggestions that in isolated communities, publically or community run

“There are significant opportunities to work together to use Snowdonia National Park as a natural resource to improve mental well-being for all ages. Evidence shows that exposure to the natural environment makes socio-economic inequality in mental well-being 40% narrower; it also reduces stress, fatigue, anxiety and depression”.

*Conwy County Borough Council. September 2018.*
buildings could (and in some cases already do) provide a wide range of services to address isolation, from health hubs and events to bank and post office services.

**Marketing and Branding**

The second clear message we received from the consultation was that there is a real need to develop a clear and consistent marketing/brand (or ‘not-marketing of’) strategy for Snowdonia. This strategy should be implemented consistently across the public and private sector, be specific to Snowdonia as a National Park and destination in its own right, and should also carefully consider a number of factors in its design including:

- A clear understanding of the target audience and emerging markets;
- Careful and informed management of Snowdonia as a destination in line with the Sandford principle;
- overcapacity at popular locations e.g. Snowdon;
- the impact of (increasing) visitor numbers on the environment;
- over promotion of specific areas;
- opportunities for promotion of locations that wish to see growth;
- emphasising eco and green credentials and ‘quite enjoyment' and NPs special qualities;
- emphasising the benefits the National Park brings to health and well-being;
- promoting cultural and language elements – that Snowdonia is a place where people live and work with thriving bilingual communities;
- promoting local food and drink.

However, in tandem with this, there should also be a clear strategy for improving of infrastructure. Where conflict in resource arises, upgrading of infrastructure should take precedence over marketing, until infrastructure in the area is up to the standard that meets and exceeds expectations.

“Creating a system in Wales that supports young families and adults to learn and understand how to use the natural environment, how to navigate through it with minimum impact to preserve the biodiversity it supports, and how to explore and have fun are very important components for developing resilient communities. The Park is an incredibly rich asset that may currently be underutilised by the communities that could benefit most from it, and tackling that could make a significant difference to the well-being of those population groups”.

_Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Local Public Health Team. September 2018._
Sustainability and Availability of Public Transport

Closely interlinked with the points raised in relation to green travel in the Environment section was the need to improve the sustainability and availability of transport. This was not only for visitors but also residence, with the suggestion that demand from visitors could help support transport for residence and address issues of parking capacity in the area.

Respondents also wanted to see better information in relation to how people get to the park and travel around. They wanted to see new technology utilised, and they wanted to see more work with businesses and social enterprise/communities. They also wanted us to ensure that public transport routes where clearly linked with promoted trails and routes.

Interlinked with this was the need to better manage parking problems particularly in popular areas of the National Park. Overcapacity of parking was placing increasing pressure on local communities and causing road safety issues.

Improving information and education about the National Park

Respondents wanted to see a clear plan of how we provide information to and educate visitors and local people/schools now and in the future in order to increase understanding of the areas Special Qualities. They wanted us to consider innovative solutions, whilst retaining a mix of traditional (face to face - TIC's/Wardens etc.) and digital options such as a Snowdonia App. They wanted us to do more work with communities, partners and businesses to provide information.

In particular, people wanted to see the emphasis of information put on respect/responsibility and educating about the countryside code. People also wanted to see more clear and accessible information on travel and transport.

Better visitor infrastructure

There was a significant response in relation to improving visitor infrastructure. There was considerable opinion and concern that visitor infrastructure does not meet the expectations of visitors and that it is impacting on the visitor experience.

In particular, what was mentioned was improving of Tourist Information Centres, toilets, bins, wi-fi availability, appearance of towns and villages - signs/grass cutting etc. There was also a real need to ensure that facilities and infrastructure are better maintained.

We know from research that the quality and cleanliness of visitor infrastructure is one of the competitive factors that influence the desirability of a destination. It is crucial therefore that getting the infrastructure offer right is addressed and prioritised prior to marketing of the destination.
**Improving digital connectivity**

There was a general feeling that connectivity in the National Park is still looking to be a barrier to communities, visitors and businesses. Working together with communities to improve digital connectivity could help tackle social isolation, support businesses/work from home, support young people to thrive in the area and improve the visitor experience.

**More work to promote and develop multi user and long distance trails**

Respondents wanted more work to be done to promote and develop long distance trails, multi user trails (particularly cycling trails and mountain bike routes), promoted routes and safe links between towns and villages. The benefits of such trails where also highlighted including bringing economic benefits as well as well-being benefits to local people and visitors alike.

**Other Key issues**

**Improved access opportunities for all**

A number of individuals and organisations wanted to see improved access opportunities for all. They wanted to see more work gaining a better understanding on the barriers faced to access. They also wanted to see better information, and specific targets for increasing 'access for all' paths.

Following the example of successful schemes in Germany and other area of Europe, its recommended that the focus should be on:

- Involving target audiences at the initial stages of surveying and planning.
- Begin with the most appealing places of interest i.e. areas of the park that have most visitor numbers and are most promoted.
- Train staff on how to interact with disabled visitors.
- Design information to be as specific as possible: what can be experienced, what infrastructure can be used and what is not accessible.
- Work with organisations/businesses that are committed to improving accessibility.

**Spreading visitor pressure across a wider season**
Individuals and organisations wanted to see more support for high quality (in keeping with ‘quiet enjoyment’) activities spread beyond seasonality to encourage visitors out of the popular months, including a focus on the night-time economy and winter tourism.

**High quality accommodation**

With regards holiday accommodation, respondents wanted to see a focus on the upgrading of holiday accommodation to a higher standard and quality (5 star). They wanted to adaptation of existing rather than building of new for high quality accommodation and wanted us to ensure that developments enhance the character and beauty of the area.

There was concern that a drive for increasing/improving accommodation in the area was not backed up by hard data and that more research needed to be done in this area. There was also concern that converting accommodation in towns and villages into holiday accommodation was increasingly affecting the ability of young people and low income households to stay in the area due to unaffordable property and rental prices.

... *There is a need to increase the availability of service accommodation - and quality hotels in particular - to support the tourism sector to increase the quality of their offer and to extend the tourist season, thereby increasing the value of the sector without a significant increase in numbers.* [Gwynedd Council Economy and Communities Department]
Future Considerations

- Expand work with partners, health services and Public Service Boards to promote and highlight Snowdonia’s natural and historic environment as a place for improving the physical and mental health and well-being of local people, but also the Welsh population as a whole.

- Promote and enable a diverse range of activities that not only included physical activity and volunteering but also cultural experiences (music/art etc.), as well as more volunteering opportunities that match the needs of disabled volunteers. Develop schemes that engage with audiences in a targeted way that are pitched at the right level for the abilities and experience of the individual.

- Research the barriers (and perceived barriers) to exercise (and adherence to exercise) and how these can be overcome, and build schemes around overcoming barriers and longevity of adherence.

- Support and adapt community buildings and information centres into ‘well-being hubs’ that also offer wider benefits and services that address isolation.

- Develop a clear and consistent marketing/brand (or 'not-marketing of') strategy for Snowdonia that is consistently implemented across the public and private sector. The strategy should carefully consider a number of factors in its design including: A clear understanding of the target audience and emerging markets; overcapacity and environmental impact at popular locations; emphasising eco and green credentials, 'quite enjoyment' and the NPs special qualities and benefits of the environment to well-being; and promotion of local culture, language, food and drink.

- Using local understanding and knowledge build a strong and clear picture of the National Parks cultural and historic identity.

- Where conflict in resource arises, identify need and prioritise improvement of visitor infrastructure over marketing of the area.

- Explore how we can improve the sustainability and availability of transport for visitors and residence. Work more with businesses, social enterprise and communities, and ensure that public transport routes are clearly linked with promoted trails and routes.

- Improve information and marketing in relation to how people get to the park and travel around. Utilise new technology to do this. Ensure that the most sustainable options are promoted and highlighted.

- Develop a shared plan of how we provide information to and educate visitors and local people/schools using traditional and modern methods. Focus messages on
respect/responsibility, the countryside code and travel and transport. Work with communities, partners and businesses to implement key messages.

- Develop a clear and concise strategy with partners of why and how we will engage people with the environment. Key messages should be positive in tone and targeted at specific groups and emphasise Snowdonia’s uniqueness. Utilize a variety of different methods include events, ambassador schemes, work with schools, youth groups, Bac schemes, online and mainstream media.

- Explore the feasibility of developing a Snowdonia App in order to improve communication, engagement and understanding with visitors.

- Work together with communities to improve digital connectivity to help tackle social isolation, support businesses/work from home, support young people to thrive in the area and improve the visitor experience.

- Create a plan and focus resources on promoting, developing and maintaining long distance trails, multi user trails (particularly cycling trails and mountain bike routes), promoted routes and safe links between towns and villages.

- Improve access opportunities for all. Work with target audiences and charities in the initial design and planning stages of new projects. Focus initially on improving accessibility at the most popular National Park sites where visually appropriate, and develop specific targets for these areas. Provide specialist training for staff at these sites. Develop detailed information for accessibility in the National Park.

- Work with partners to support high quality (in keeping with ‘quiet enjoyment’) activities spread beyond seasonality that encourage visitors out of the popular months, including a focus on the night-time and dark-skies economy and winter tourism.

- Carry out further research into the needs and demands of the market in relation to high quality holiday accommodation.

- Work with communities and landowners to address parking problems in popular areas.

- Develop clear statements on how this plan interfaces with the Wellbeing Plans of local authorities and Natural Resources Wales Area Statements.

- Demonstrate clearly how the Special Qualities and Dark-skies status can contribute to well-being, and ensure this filters through to the outcomes.
Economy and Communities

Key Messages

The highlighting of issues and trends seen on a national scale including:

1. More emphasis on supporting young people, families, local communities, social enterprise and businesses to adapt and evolve to meet the issues and opportunities of the rural economy.

2. Respondents wanted to see us explore and support innovative solutions to the lack of affordable housing, or affordable housing to rent, with second home ownership seen as a significant factor affecting the affordability of housing.

3. There was real concern expressed about the outward migration of young people from the area. This was closely interlinked with impact on the Welsh language, affordable housing and high quality jobs, and many expressed the view that the focus should be on addressing these areas.

Priority Issues

The top issues mentioned by organisations and individuals (in rank order) were as follows:

1. Supporting communities to adapt

2. Affordable housing

3. Impacts of Brexit on the rural economy

4. Outward migration of young people

5. Supporting and promoting the Welsh language

Other key issues raised by both organisations and individuals included:

- More local decision making
- Working with settlements beyond the boundary but associated with the National Park
Supporting communities to adapt

The key issues raised were around wanting more emphasis on supporting young people, families, local communities, social enterprise and businesses to adapt and evolve to meet the issues and opportunities of the rural economy. People want to see more support for the development of high quality work, and supporting the development of skills in sectors that are seeing high growth. Accelerator programs, incubators and enterprise zones were specifically mentioned.

In considering this we must keep in mind the core purposes and duty of the National Park, and therefore the above points must be considered in the context of protecting the environment and encouraging understanding and enjoyment of the area.

In this context the National Park should work with Gwynedd Council and Conwy County Borough Council and other organisations to develop more details on areas for growth. Within the consultation, the specific areas suggested were tourism; well-being/health; forestry; eco-tourism and public-goods. With a careful approach these can all be sectors that complement the National Park purposes.

“We look for a Management Plan which enables local people within boundary villages like Pentrefoelas to evolve and meet the issues and opportunities that change brings”. [Rural Solutions on behalf of the Foelas Estate].

Affordable housing

Affordable housing was a key issue said to be impacting the outward migration of young people. As the planning authority respondents wanted to see us explore and support innovative solutions to the lack of affordable housing, or affordable housing to rent. People felt that second home ownership was a significant factor affecting the affordability of housing.

The data shows a varying picture across the National Park with average house prices in areas such as Aberdyfi impacted significantly (average price of £292,879), whilst the impact on areas such as Trawsfynydd are less so (average price £86,335).

There was also a strength of feeling that the National Park Authority should work with others to influence and change national planning policy on housing that was currently a restrictive in allowing us to address some of the key issues affecting affordable housing. These issues will be largely addressed through the LDP but should also be supported by polices within Cynllun Eryri.
Impacts of Brexit on the rural economy

The knock-on effect of Brexit on farming and the rural economy were of real concern to people. Respondents wanted more recognition of the important contribution agriculture makes to the rural economy and the knock-on effect any major changes in this sector could have on the wider rural economy. The value of agricultural payment in Gwynedd in 2017 was £39 million, and it has been estimated that for every £1 invested in farming support, farming deliver £7.40 back into the local economy.

People wanted to see advice and support provided to help land managers access new land management programmes, continue to farm and produce food, and adapt to future changes (including providing mental health support).

They also wanted to see a more explicit ambition or statement for new land management programmes and payment schemes, setting out what and how we would like them to deliver for the environment and the rural economy at a regional (National Park) scale.

Outward migration of young people

There was real concern expressed about the outward migration of young people from the area. This was closely interlinked with affordable housing and high quality jobs, and many expressed the view that the focus should be on addressing these areas. They also wanted to see more work done on attracting young people back to Eryri after higher education (as opposed to ‘keeping young people here’, and encouraging and supporting appropriate new business to establish in the area.

Recently significant work has been carried out by Europarcs with young people to develop a Youth Manifesto for National parks. The Manifesto contains creative ideas to tackle the challenges faced by young people in protected landscapes. The Manifesto has been developed by young people, for young people.

Supporting and promoting the Welsh language

Respondents wanted to see us working together to promote the Welsh Language and culture of the area, by highlighting the value and benefits to businesses and visitors. They also wanted us to encourage other businesses and organisation to do more in this area. They wanted to see us explore ways to bring communities into the tourism offer through language .

“With the likely British departure from the European Union, what is proposed within new schemes will be key to the continuation of some agricultural businesses. Whether there are opportunities to expand businesses to develop new income streams or ways of providing environmental plans and services for payments within the Park boundaries, we will welcome open working”. NFU Cymru
and culture. What makes a place is the people and people felt that the Welsh language could provide a unique and welcoming experience.

There was a considerable strength of feeling on doing more to protect welsh place names and specifically make more use of ‘Eryri’ and ‘Yr Wyddfa’. There was also a real desire for much more to be done to support welsh leaners, and taking a positive approach to encouraging and supporting people moving to the area to learn Welsh.

**Other key issues**

**More local decision making**

A number of organisations wanted to see more local decision making in order to engage local communities. It was suggested that we could develop a Charter that sets out the arrangements between SNPA and Community and Town Councils, in relation to how we work together to develop activities of mutual benefit within the plan. There was also suggestion for using successful ideas from elsewhere, such as having a National Park Ambassador in each community council.

> “In terms of potentially adding value in future perhaps the development of a Charter arrangement between Snowdonia National Park and the Community & Town Councils in their area to support the development of activities of mutual benefit for the residents within the park area”. [One Voice Wales]

**Working with settlements beyond the boundary but associated with the National Park**

Finally, a number of individuals and organisations wanted to see more work done with communities affected by the National Park but that fall outside the National Park boundary. We could work more closely with these communities to achieve National Park objectives.
Future Considerations

- Work with Gwynedd Council and Conwy County Borough Council and other organisations to support the development of high quality work and upskilling in growth sectors. Identify sectors for growth that complement National Park purposes.

- Work through partners to develop innovative solutions to deliver affordable housing to meet local needs.

- Work together to influence and bring about change to legislation so that change of use of a dwelling into a holiday or second home requires planning permission.

- Consider working with others to influence and remove the barriers to purchasing or building affordable housing.

- In future work with partners to provide advice and support to help land managers access new land management programmes, continue to farm and produce food, and adapt to future changes (including mental health support).

- Consider producing an ambition statement for future land management programmes, setting out what and how we would like them to deliver for the environment and the rural economy at a local (National Park) scale.

- Focus efforts to address the outward migration of young people on affordable housing and high quality jobs.

- Attract young people back to Eryri after higher education (as opposed to ‘keeping young people here’), and encourage and support appropriate new business to establish in the area.

- Explore and implement ideas from the Europarcs Youth Manifesto.

- Work together to promote the Welsh Language and culture of the area, by highlighting the value and benefits to businesses and visitors.

- Do more to protect Welsh place names and specifically make more use of ‘Eryri’ and ‘Yr Wyddfa’.

- Support Welsh leaners, and take a positive approach to encouraging and supporting people moving to the area to learn Welsh.

- Develop a Charter that sets out the arrangements between SNPA and Community and Town Councils, in relation to how we work together to develop activities of mutual benefit within the Plan.

- Explore the idea of appointing National Park Ambassadors in each community council.
• Identified the main communities affected by the National Park but that fall outside the National Park boundary and work more closely with these communities to achieve National Park objectives.
Cross-cutting themes

Key Messages

1. A number of cross-cutting priority issues emerged from the consultation including transport; sustainable funding; supporting local communities; and digital connectivity.

2. A number of key ways of working were highlighted in order to successfully implement the plan including improving partnership working and collaboration; Snowdonia National Park Authority building on its role as an ‘enabler’; and empowering local communities to help deliver Cynllun Eryri.

From the online consultation responses and the expert panel events a number of cross-cutting themes emerged. These cross-cutting themes spanned across all three of the key theme – Environment; Well-being and Communities & Economy – that reflect the National Park Purposes.

Cross-cutting Priority Issues

Transport

Poor transport throughout the National Park was mentioned in many responses as a critical challenge with significant impacts for both local communities and visitors to the National Park, as well as the impact of fuel emissions on the environment.

Funding

Respondents recognized the need for further funding and investment to make the changes needed to bring to life the future vision for the National Park. Many comments identified income/donations from visitors as one way to increase investment.

There was a need to ensure that any actions/projects within the Plan are financially viable, and that the National Park Authority and other key stakeholders could work together more effectively to enable successful bids for large strategic funding pots to support the National Park and the region.

Supporting local communities
There was a recognition by many respondents that local communities within the National Park need support to thrive. Discussions centered on quality of life and the multiple deprivations often experienced by people living in the National Park. Numerous ideas were put forward to increase health and wellbeing for local residents with a multi stakeholder approach being advocated as the most successful way to achieve positive outcomes.

**Digital**

Digital connectivity was regularly mentioned as a challenge for both visitors, local communities and businesses. Digital solutions were highlighted in many topics, with the recognition that investment in infrastructure and local skills is needed.

**Ways of working**

**Partnerships and collaboration**

Respondents reported improved partnership working and increased collaboration as a key method to drive change within the National Park. Respondents recognised partnerships need funding and support to be successful.

**The Role of the National Park Authority itself as an enabler of change**

The role of the National Park Authority was seen by many respondents as an ‘enabler’. The National Park Authority is well placed to facilitate critical discussions and partnerships enabling collaboration at all levels. For example, the National Park Authority could lead on delivering increased funding for the National Park at a strategic level and co-ordinate a challenging and ambitious land management plan bringing benefits to land managers and nature.

**Empowering local communities**

The role of local communities to drive and lead change within the National Park recurred as a theme within many discussions. Engaging with local communities about all aspects of the National Park: the environment, landscape, history, culture, language, economy and health and well-being was seen as a priority. Participants recommended supporting local communities to lead implementation plans where feasible. For example, supporting local communities and businesses to provide information to visitors.
Future Considerations

- Further develop key points and ideas relating to transport as a priority across the topic areas.

- Further develop key points and ideas relating to income/donations from visitors.

- Ensure that any actions/projects within the Plan are financially viable, and that the National Park Authority and other key stakeholders work together more effectively to enable successful bids for large strategic funding pots to support the National Park and the region.

- Further develop key points and ideas relating to supporting local communities and well-being across the topic areas.

- Further develop key points and ideas relating to digital infrastructure and connectivity across the topic areas.

- Ensure that partnerships relating to the implementation of Cynllun Eryri are properly funded and resourced.

- Build on the National Park Authority’s role as an ‘enabler’.

- Support and empower local communities to help implement Cynllun Eryri.
What did we miss?

The huge number of responses covered a wide range of topics, all of which had been covered in the Consultation Document to a lesser or greater degree, but what the responses to the consultation will do will be to allow us as a partnership to increase or change the emphasis on particular topic areas. We explore and summarise these comments in detail in this document.

We also received some more general comments and feedback in the responses:

- Following feedback, although we do not intend to change the Special Qualities themselves, we intend to elaborate on them in the Plan through images and descriptive text, in order to paint a fuller picture. We’ll work closely with various experts on this wording so that we can create content, descriptions and key messages that can be used and adapted by all in any future marketing and interpretation work. We will also highlight that what make Snowdonia truly unique is that all these special qualities are found in a relatively small geographical area.

- Use the more modern terminology of ‘payment for public goods’ rather than ‘payment for ecosystem services’.

- It was felt that the vision statement should make specific reference to the historic environment.

- Due to increased emphasis on well-being and sustainable development, include clear statements on how this plan interfaces with Wellbeing Plans of local authorities and natural resources area statements.

- Demonstrate clearly how the Special Qualities can contribute to well-being, and ensure this filters through to outcomes.

- Include links to the State of the Park Report data to put decision making in its context.

- Demonstrate how governance and decision making will work in relation to the partnership approach and the i.e. Fforwm Eryri.

- Refer to the IUCN Category V Protected Areas status of National Parks, and that we are managed in accordance with this. Include a link/reference to the IUCN guidelines.
Future Considerations: Emerging Ideas

The following points and ideas are a summary of the ‘Future Considerations’ at the end of each theme section in this report, and reflect the key messages coming from the consultation. These key points and ideas are a starting point for us to begin to develop and shape an action plan. There will be much discussion and development of these ideas with key partners, and therefore it is important to note that they reflect merely a starting point in the discussion process rather than the finished article.

The key points from this report will be merged with the ‘Ways Forward’ suggested in the consultation document. Through a series of workshops, we will then discuss and evolve these with key partners who will be helping us deliver Cynllun Eryri.

This will all then feed into the development of an action plan, which in turn will feed into the development of the first draft of Cynllun Eryri. We expect to be consulting on this first draft in mid-late 2019.

General

1. Following feedback, although we do not intend to change the Special Qualities themselves, we intend to elaborate on them in the Plan through images and descriptive text, in order to paint a fuller picture. We’ll work closely with various experts on this wording so that we can create something that can be used and adapted by all in any future marketing and interpretation work. We will also highlight that what make Snowdonia truly unique is that all these special qualities are found in a relatively small geographical area.

2. The vision statement could be more inspirational and ambitious to match all that is captured in the consultation document, though it is worth noting that the consultation document made clear that we do not intend to amend the vision statement at this time.

3. Include links to the State of the Park Report data to put decision making in its context.

4. Demonstrate how governance and decision making will work in relation to the partnership approach and the delivery of the Plan i.e. Fforwm Eryri.

5. Refer to the IUCN Category V Protected Areas status of National Parks, and that we are managed in accordance with this. Include a link/reference to the IUCN guidelines.
6. Ensure that any actions/projects within the Plan are financially viable, and that the National Park Authority and other key stakeholders work together more effectively to enable successful bids for large strategic funding pots to support the National Park and the region.

7. Ensure that partnerships relating to the implementation of Cynllun Eryri are properly funded and resourced.

8. Build on the National Park Authorities role as an ‘enabler’. In this capacity work with partners to make the effective delivery of Cynllun Eryri possible.

9. Support and empower local communities to help implement Cynllun Eryri.

Environment Theme

1. In relation to visitor impact, develop *guiding principles* to determine what is sustainable in relation to visitor management and when and how we will collectively take further action and interventions in relation to visitor management. These *guiding principles* should define thresholds beyond which a locally focused Place Plan is required – using best practice examples such as the Snowdon Partnership Plan and integrating consideration from Landscape Assessments.

2. Ensure that where recreational pressure is explicitly mentioned in designated site plans this is included in Plan actions.

3. Snowdonia should lead the way in co-ordinating a challenging and ambitious land management plan bringing benefits to land managers and nature.

4. In order to achieve this land management plan, carry out a major data and land mapping exercise that should outline the habitats, species and historic features requiring most urgent action; potential areas for habitat expansion and improvement and increased connectivity; as well as identifying the public goods of Snowdonia. It should also clearly define the role of partners in implementing any changes and identifying the resources required.

5. The National Park Authority could facilitate the building of consensus between different stakeholder groups in relation to land management.

6. Work closely with Natural Resources Wales on the development of Area Statements in achieving the above points.

7. Explore opportunities to provide support for getting young people into environmentally and economically sustainable agriculture.
8. Explore opportunities for developing a framework for collaboration in the development of plans for areas/estates, by exploring successful implementation in other areas.

9. Carefully consider opportunities for the re-distribution of tourism to areas where local communities have a desire for tourism to be further developed, with a particular emphasis on appropriate high quality accommodation and year round experiences, and promoting cultural tourism.

10. Assess the environmental impacts of visitors in relation to carbon emissions and encourage a move towards greener technologies for travel such as electric cars, buses and bikes.

11. Work with partners and the private sector to expand and adapt existing and new Visitor Giving/donation schemes with focus on opt-out options. Re-investments of funds to be clearly targeted towards protecting the environment and improving visitor infrastructure.

12. Strengthen and promote the links between and benefits of the historic and natural environment when developing the draft Plan.

13. If feasible to amend, ensure that the vision statement should make specific reference to the historic environment.

14. Support the development of resource and skills for the repair and maintenance of historic buildings and features.

15. Continue to build on opportunities to utilise and enhance natural carbon sinks within the National Park, including forestry, woodland and peat, with options to attract external investment through carbon credits.

16. Continue to encourage and support appropriately located community owned green energy schemes.

17. Continue and expand on the work to control and reduce the extent of invasive species.

18. Explore opportunities to support activities in the natural environment for local people, hard to reach and disadvantaged groups.

19. Target issues with inappropriate off-road vehicle activities where they exist and work with users to tackle the issue in a positive way.

20. Continue to work with Distribution Network Operators as well as the National Grid to manage the visual impact of infrastructure on Snowdonia’s landscape and improve resilience.
21. Use the more modern terminology of ‘payment for public goods’ rather than ‘payment for ecosystem services’ in the Plan.

Well-being Theme

1. Expand work with partners, health services and Public Service Boards to promote and highlight Snowdonia’s natural and historic environment as a place for improving the physical and mental health and well-being of local people, but also the Welsh population as a whole.

2. Promote and enable a diverse range of activities that not only included physical activity and volunteering but also cultural experiences (music/art etc.), as well as more volunteering opportunities that match the needs of disabled volunteers. Develop schemes that engage with audiences in a targeted way that are pitched at the right level for the abilities and experience of the individual.

3. Research the barriers (and perceived barriers) to exercise (and adherence to exercise) and how these can be overcome, and build schemes around overcoming barriers and longevity of adherence.

4. Support and adapt community buildings and information centres into ‘well-being hubs’ that also offer wider benefits and services that address isolation.

5. Develop a clear and consistent marketing/brand (or ‘not-marketing of’) strategy for Snowdonia that is consistently implemented across the public and private sector. The strategy should carefully consider a number of factors in its design including: A clear understanding of the target audience and emerging markets; overcapacity and environmental impact at popular locations; emphasising eco and green credentials, 'quite enjoyment' and the NPs special qualities and benefits of the environment to well-being; and promotion of local culture, language, food and drink.

6. Using local understanding and knowledge build a strong and clear picture of the National Parks cultural and historic identity.

7. Where conflict in resource arises, identify need and prioritise improvement of visitor infrastructure over marketing of the area.

8. Explore how we can improve the sustainability and availability of transport for visitors and residence. Work more with businesses, social enterprise and communities, and ensure that public transport routes are clearly linked with promoted trails and routes.

9. Improve information and marketing in relation to how people get to the park and travel around. Utilise new technology to do this. Ensure that the most sustainable options are promoted and highlighted.
10. Develop a shared plan of how we provide information to and educate visitors and local people/schools using traditional and modern methods. Focus messages on respect/responsibility, the countryside code and travel and transport. Work with communities, partners and businesses to implement key messages.

11. Develop a clear and concise strategy with partners of why and how we will engage people with the environment. Key messages should be positive in tone and targeted at specific groups and emphasise Snowdonia’s uniqueness. Utilize a variety of different methods include events, ambassador schemes, work with schools, youth groups, Bac schemes, online and mainstream media.

12. Explore the feasibility of developing a Snowdonia App in order to improve communication, engagement and understanding with visitors.

13. Work together with communities to improve digital connectivity to help tackle social isolation, support businesses/work from home, support young people to thrive in the area and improve the visitor experience.

14. Create a plan and focus resources on promoting, developing and maintaining long distance trails, multi user trails (particularly cycling trails and mountain bike routes), promoted routes and safe links between towns and villages.

15. Improve access opportunities for all. Work with target audiences and charities in the initial design and planning stages of new projects. Focus initially on improving accessibility at the most popular National Park sites where visually appropriate, and develop specific targets for these areas. Provide specialist training for staff at these sites. Develop detailed information for accessibility in the National Park.

16. Work with partners to support high quality (in keeping with ‘quiet enjoyment’) activities spread beyond seasonality that encourage visitors out of the popular months, including a focus on the night-time and dark-skies economy and winter tourism.

17. Carry out further research into the needs and demands of the market in relation to high quality holiday accommodation.

18. Work with communities and landowners to address parking problems in popular areas.

19. Develop clear statements on how this plan interfaces with the Wellbeing Plans of local authorities and Natural Resources Wales Area Statements.

20. Demonstrate clearly how the Special Qualities and Dark-skies status can contribute to well-being, and ensure this filters through to the outcomes.
Economy and Community Theme

1. Work with Gwynedd Council and Conwy County Borough Council and other organisations to support the development of high quality work and upskilling in growth sectors. Identify sectors for growth that complement National Park purposes.

2. Work through partners to develop innovative solutions to deliver affordable housing to meet local needs.

3. Work together to influence and bring about change to legislation so that change of use of a dwelling into a holiday or second home requires planning permission.

4. Consider working with others to influence and remove the barriers to purchasing or building affordable housing.

5. In future work with partners to provide advice and support to help land managers access new land management programmes, continue to farm and produce food, and adapt to future changes (including mental health support).

6. Consider producing an ambition statement for future land management programmes, setting out what and how we would like them to deliver for the environment and the rural economy at a local (National Park) scale.

7. Focus efforts to address the outward migration of young people on affordable housing and high quality jobs.

8. Attract young people back to Eryri after higher education (as opposed to ‘keeping young people here’), and encourage and support appropriate new business to establish in the area.

9. Explore and implement ideas from the Europarcs Youth Manifesto.

10. Work together to promote the Welsh Language and culture of the area, by highlighting the value and benefits to businesses and visitors.

11. Do more to protect Welsh place names and specifically make more use of ‘Eryri’ and ‘Yr Wyddfa’.

12. Support Welsh leaners, and take a positive approach to encouraging and supporting people moving to the area to learn Welsh.

13. Develop a Charter that sets out the arrangements between SNPA and Community and Town Councils, in relation to how we work together to develop activities of mutual benefit within the Plan.

14. Explore the idea of appointing National Park Ambassadors in each community council.
15. Identified the main communities affected by the National Park but that fall outside the National Park boundary and work more closely with these communities to achieve National Park objectives.
Next Steps

What will we do with the key points from this report?

The key points and ideas set out in the previous section - “Future Considerations: Emerging Ideas” - reflect the key messages coming from the consultation.

Along with the overarching issues highlighted in the Consultation Document, these ideas are a starting point for us to begin to develop and shape the plan. There will be much discussion and development of these with key partners, and therefore it is important to note that the key points and ideas reflect merely the initial steps in the discussion process rather than the finished article.

How this report and the key points will feed into the plan process

The key points from this report will be considered alongside the wider challenges and opportunities highlighted in the consultation document such as threats to tranquility, the landscape, climate change and so on. Through a series of workshops, we will discuss and evolve these with key partners who will be helping us deliver Cynllun Eryri.

This will all then feed into the development of an action plan, which in turn will – alongside proofing against statutory guidelines in the development of National Park Plans - feed into the development of the first draft of Cynllun Eryri. We expect to be consulting on this first draft towards the middle of the year, when we will also seek opinions on the fundamental principles of managing a special area like Snowdonia and the action required to achieve this.
Appendices
Appendix 1: Plan Process

1. **Heads of service workshop**
   - December 2016
   - National Park all staff meeting workshop: November 2016

2. **Fforwm Eryri Workshop**
   - With partners delivering in the National Park: October 2016

3. **Stakeholder Register**
   - Create and maintain register of all stakeholders: Spring 2017
   - Communication Plan: Create plan for communication & events during consultation: Spring 2017

4. **Evidence Gathering Stage**
   - State of the Park Report - Researching and gathering data on key issues: Spring – Summer 2017

5. **National Park Staff & Members Drop-in session**
   - And online survey: Summer 2017

6. **Pre-consultation opinion gathering**
   - Members working group: Developing a vision for Fforwm Eryri:
   - Community council annual meeting, online survey, county shows & events: Summer 2017

7. **Visioning Workshop for Fforwm Eryri**
   - Developing a vision for Fforwm Eryri: Summer 2017

8. **Consultation Document to Authority / Members working group**
   - Present draft consultation document to committee for approval: Spring 2018

9. **Initial Public Consultation**
   - Roadshow (county show, events, talks, events)
   - Public consultation: (Stage A of SEA)/14 stakeholders, focused panels
   - Oct. July – 30th September (12 weeks)

10. **Expert Panel #1: Environment**
    - Guest speakers and focal groups to develop solutions to key issues and identify resources

11. **Expert Panel #2: Well-being**
    - Guest speakers and focal groups to develop solutions to key issues and identify resources

12. **Panel #3: Community & Economy**
    - Guest speakers and focal groups to develop solutions to key issues and identify resources

    - Prepare and publish: Autumn 2018

14. **Action Plan Workshop**
    - RACI Matrix creation with Fforwm Eryri + WP app: Autumn 2018

15. **Prepare draft Plan, SEA & HRA Assessment**

16. **Final Consultation on Draft Plan and SEA Environmental Reports**
    - Online and with stakeholders: Spring – Summer 2019 & (8 weeks)

17. **Final Plan Published**
    - 2020

**Delivery Phase 2020 - 2025**
- Including annual Monitoring – Reporting – Reviewing
Appendix 2: List of Organisations and businesses who responded

Organisations

Coedyddol
Gwynedd Council
Ffermio
Llanuwchllyn
Meithrinfa Ddydd
Young Farmers Club
NFU Cymru
Farmers Union of Wales (FUW) - Caernarfonshire Branch
Bywyd Cymru
Campaign for National Parks
CLA Cymru
Conwy County Borough Council
English Plus
Coed Cadw
Madog Dog Walks Group
MTB Snowdonia
Natural Resources Wales
Plas Gwynant Outdoor Education Centre
Save Our Rivers
Dr Barbara Jones
Un Llais Cymru
CADW
North wales Wildlife Trust
Snowdonia Society
Betsi Cadwalder University Health Board, Local Public Health Team
**Businesses**

Gwin Dylanwad Wine  
Bod Gwynedd B&B  
Cysgod y Coed Self Catering  
Eryri Consulting Limited  
Fferm Mur Goch  
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Foelas Estate  
Gwern Gof isaf camping ltd  
Hostel  
Snowdonia Mountain Skills  
Surf Snowdonia  
Tarquin Shipley Limited  
Tudor Lodge  
Tyddynmawr farmhouse b and b and self-catering cottage
Appendix 3: Structure and contents of the Plan

Snowdonia Partnership Plan: Basic Structure & Contents

- Foreword & Introduction
  - Why we need a plan.
  - Who the plan is for.
  - How it has been produced.
  - SA, SEA & Habitat Regs Assessment.
  - Relationship to other plans, strategies and legislation.

- What Snowdonia Looks Like Now
  - The current picture:
    - Where are we now.
    - Special Qualities.

- What We Want Snowdonia to Look Like in the Future
  - The long term vision:
    - Where do we want to get to?
    - How does this protect and promote the Special Qualities?

- How We’re Going to Get There
  - Detailed Actions:
    - What we need to do to achieve the long-term vision.

- How We’ll Keep Track of Progress
  - Implementation and monitoring:
    - Measuring progress and maintaining momentum towards the vision.
    - Indicators.