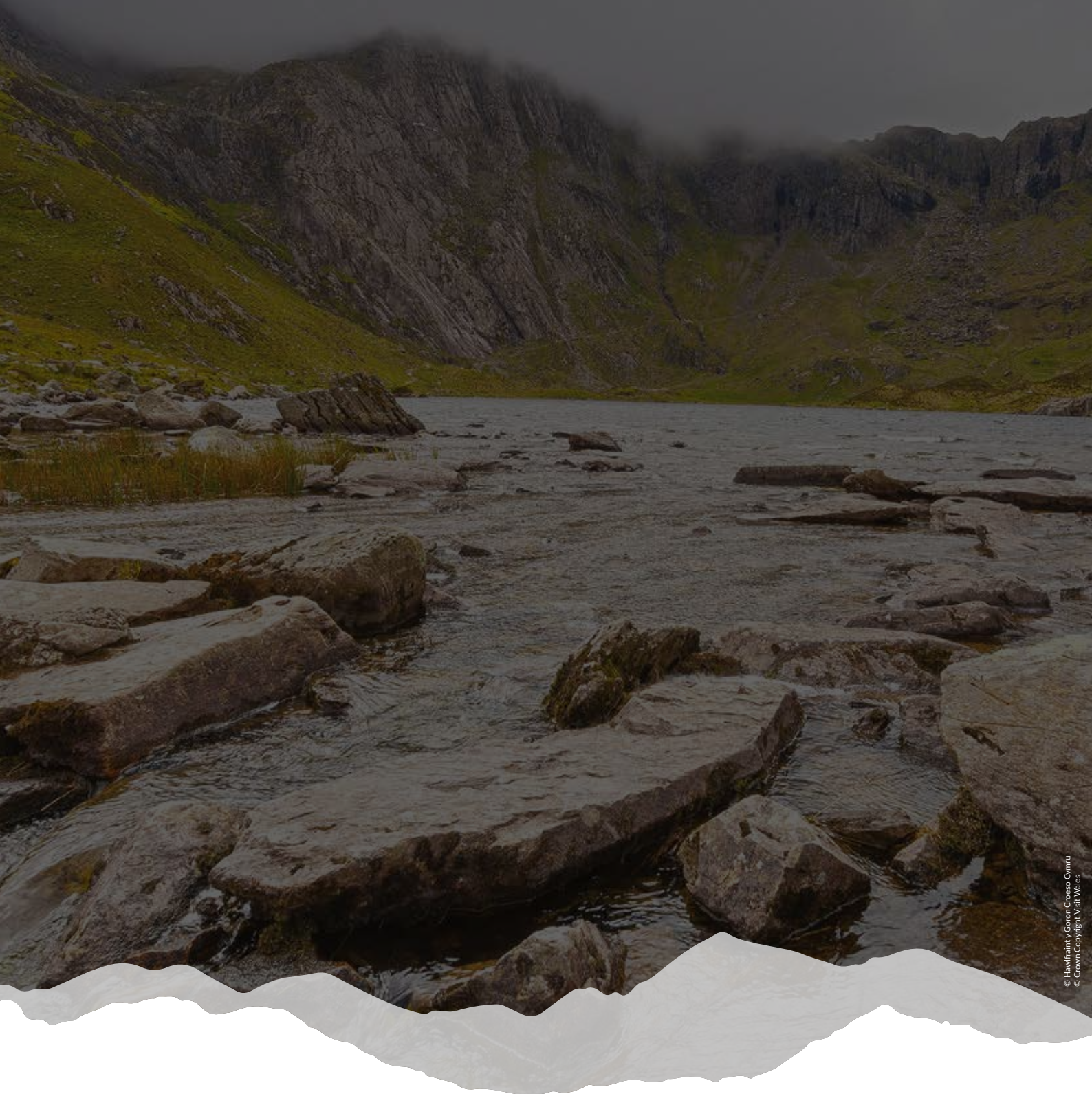




# BRIEFING NOTE ON THE VISITOR ECONOMY IN GWYNEDD AND ERYRI





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# 1. What is being discussed?

- Gwynedd Council and Snowdonia National Park Authority are reviewing their priorities and plans for the visitor economy in the area.
- A review of the Destination Management Plan began in 2018 with a series of workshops for the tourism sector and community representatives.
- COVID-19 has put tremendous pressure on communities across Gwynedd and Eryri with unprecedented numbers of visitors to the area. This period has highlighted some issues that need to be addressed to support a sustainable visitor economy in the area.
- In November 2021, Gwynedd Council and the National Park Authority signed a Memorandum of Understanding. The objective of the Memorandum of Understanding is to *collaborate effectively and efficiently in partnership to realise the Vision and Principles of the Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan 2035 to protect and promote the area's special qualities.*



## 2. What is a sustainable visitor economy?

- The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines sustainable tourism as:
- *“Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.”*
- UNWTO has three pillars that define sustainable tourism:
  1. Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development
  2. Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities
  3. Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all
- Gwynedd Council and Snowdonia National Park have considered the UNWTO definition and adapted it to this area. By developing the principles of a new sustainable visitor economy for Gwynedd and the Snowdonia National Park area, it is intended to address some of the key concerns of some of our communities and to promote a sustainable balance to the future.
- The value of tourism to the area has traditionally been measured by its value to the economy, the number of jobs in the sector and the number of companies/attractions. Although this value has shown an increase over the last decade, the impact of tourism needs to be measured in a more balanced way that takes into account its impact on communities, the environment, our language and our local culture.



### 3. Why do we need to act now?

- Cynllun Eryri (Snowdonia's Partnership Plan) identifies the need for a Sustainable Tourism Plan.
- We have a duty to protect the area's communities, environment and culture.
- The Gwynedd Council Plan prioritises a plan to ensure that Gwynedd's businesses and communities benefit from the visitors who come to the area and develops a Regeneration Plan for Gwynedd.
- The Slate Landscape of North West Wales World Heritage Site Management Plan recognises the need to develop a plan to manage visitors to the area.
- The Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty gives priority to sustainable tourism management.
- The Gwynedd Destination Management Plan review highlighted new opportunities and threats to the future that need to be addressed.
- Covid highlighted the need to respond in a sustainable way in the future in order to protect the special qualities of the area and our communities.
- There are new opportunities for collaboration and an opportunity to learn from the experiences of other areas.
- Data highlights the need for a better balance in the visitor economy and within the economy generally in the Gwynedd and Snowdonia National Park area.

## 4. What are the tourism statistics in the area\*?



Average Workforce  
in a year:

**18,244**



Number of  
Outdoor Providers:

**100**



Number of  
Attractions:

**200**



Number  
of Visitors  
2019:

**7.8m**



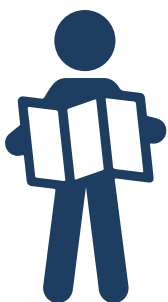
Value to the  
Economy  
2019:

**£1.35bn**



Customer  
Satisfaction:

**80%\*\***



Day stays  
2019:

**23.93m**



Overnight  
stays 2019:

**20.10m**

\*STEAM Review Figures 2019

\*\* Visit Wales Visitor Review – Gwynedd Council Beaufort Research 2019



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## 5. What are the main issues in the area?

- Pressure on rural areas and public services, e.g. car parks, bins, roads, etc.
- Covid created tensions in some areas with unprecedented visitor numbers.
- Salary levels and seasonal employment within the tourism sector.
- Lack of diversity in the rural economy and possible overdependence on tourism.
- Negative feelings within some communities and areas, but there may be opportunities if different actions are taken.
- Potential impact on the language, communities and the environment.
- Better means of measuring are needed to measure any negative and positive impacts.
- An opportunity to integrate a Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan into the development of Area Regeneration Plans across Gwynedd.

## 6. What is the response of Gwynedd Council and Snowdonia National Park?

The Council and the Park are developing the Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan 2035 with the following vision:

*A visitor economy for the benefit and well-being of the people, environment, language and culture of Gwynedd and Eryri.*

Both bodies have redefined the UNWTO definition and agreed the Gwynedd and Snowdonia National Park Visitor Economy Principles:

1. Celebrate, Respect and Protect our Communities, Language, Culture and Heritage
2. Maintain and Respect our Environment
3. Ensure that the advantages to Gwynedd and Eryri communities outweigh any disadvantages

Sub-principles have also been developed to inform future priorities:

### **Celebrate, Respect and Protect our Communities, Language, Culture and Heritage**

- A visitor economy in the ownership of our communities with an emphasis on pride in one's area
- A visitor economy that leads in Heritage, Language, Culture and the Outdoors

### **Maintain and Respect our Environment**

- A visitor economy that respects our natural and built environment and considers the implications of visitor economy developments on our environment today and in the future
- A visitor economy that leads in sustainable and low carbon developments and infrastructure

### **Ensure that the advantages for Gwynedd communities outweigh any disadvantages**

- A visitor economy that ensures that infrastructure and resources contribute towards the well-being of the community all year round
- A visitor economy that thrives for the well-being of Gwynedd residents and businesses and that offers quality employment opportunities for local people all year round
- A visitor economy that promotes local ownership and supports local supply chains and produce

## 7. What are the opinions so far?

Several workshops have taken place to discover how a Sustainable Visitor Economy would look in Gwynedd and Eryri. The main messages are summarised below:

**What are the main challenges and opportunities for achieving a sustainable visitor economy in the future?**

Resources challenge.	An opportunity to extend the season.	Language, culture, heritage - an opportunity to bring benefits to communities. The challenge of protecting them.
An opportunity to educate and develop skills among local people - create a career.	The challenge of too many visitors in some areas.	An opportunity to strike a balance if we operate sustainably. An opportunity for communities.
Climate change challenges.	A challenge and an opportunity to coordinate partners.	Opportunities for the third sector and communities.
An opportunity/ challenge to change Planning policies and ensure homes for local people.	An opportunity to disperse people from areas that are too busy.	Avoid punishing communities, e.g. through additional parking measures.
A need to educate visitors about the special qualities of the area.	An opportunity for visitor management rather than marketing the area.	An opportunity for better infrastructure, e.g. transport/ toilets/bins, etc. for all.

**What policies/activities need to be developed and prioritised?**

A policy to bring tourism benefits to communities.	Twinning communities with attractions.	Policies needed to develop sustainable transport from tourism revenue.
Promote the use of the language, culture and history of the area.	World Heritage Site.	Responsible destination marketing and visiting responsibly.
Training to develop a career in the field.	Planning policies that support local communities and regulate second homes/Airbnb.	Regulate motorhomes.
A need to tax visitors to the area.	A tourist tax to support communities and infrastructure.	A need to develop a destination management plan and establish an accountable body/partnership.
A need to put sustainability at the heart of everything - language, culture, environment, heritage and community.		



## Which partners need to hold discussions?

A strong voice for communities is needed.	Social enterprises.	Mountain/sea safety organisations, etc.
National organisations, e.g. Ramblers.	A need for schools and education to be involved in this.	It is important that this includes everyone - public, community, private.
Local companies need to have supply chain opportunities.	A need for clear leadership and a representative body.	Champions to promote the visitor economy.

## 8. What are the next steps?

<b>January and February 2022</b>	Further consultation sessions
<b>March 2022</b>	Approve the Strategic Plan
<b>April - June 2022</b>	Develop new indicators Develop a Sustainable Visitor Economy Action Plan
<b>July 2022</b>	Launch



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## 9. Further information?

[www.visitsnowdonia.info/gwynedd-and-eryri-sustainable-visitor-economy-2035](http://www.visitsnowdonia.info/gwynedd-and-eryri-sustainable-visitor-economy-2035)

## 10. What will the Plan achieve?

- By developing a Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan and Action Plan, it is hoped to create a joint response in order to secure the greatest benefit for the communities, businesses and special qualities of Gwynedd and Eryri from future visitors.
- Developing new means of measuring the impact of tourism will allow us to measure much more effectively the effect of the visitor economy on the communities and special qualities of the area and respond to this.
- The Plan will influence other policies in Gwynedd Council, Snowdonia National Park and partners in the field of planning, destination management, environmental management, training and skills, regeneration, etc.
- A Strategic Plan and prioritised Action Plan will open doors to UK and Welsh Government funding and other funding sources.