

Eryri National Park Authority Annual Governance Statement 2025-26



This statement meets the requirement to produce a Statement of Internal Control pursuant to Regulation 5(4) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg / This document is available in Welsh

1. Introduction

Eryri National Park Authority is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

Eryri National Park Authority is subject to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Act places a duty on the Authority to set Well-being Objectives that directly contribute to achieving the 7 Well-being Goals as set out in the Act, namely:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

Furthermore, Eryri National Park Authority must meet its duties in accordance with a 'statutory sustainability principle', which means that the Authority must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In discharging this overall responsibility, Eryri National Park Authority is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk and adequate and effective financial management.

Eryri National Park Authority has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/Solace Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government. This statement on internal control explains how the Authority has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of regulation 5(2) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 in relation to conducting a review of the effectiveness of the Authority's governance arrangements.

The Code of Corporate Governance was reviewed and updated, as part of a larger review of the Authority's governance arrangements in 2021/22. The new Code of Corporate Governance was formally adopted by the Authority in April 2022.

2. The Purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Eryri National Park Authority's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

3. The Governance Framework

The Governance Framework comprises the seven principles of good governance:

- **Principle 1:** Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
- **Principle 2:** Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- **Principle 3:** Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits
- **Principle 4:** Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
- **Principle 5:** Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
- **Principle 6:** Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
- **Principle 7:** Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

Eryri National Park Authority develops and implements its strategic corporate planning through the adoption of:

- Cynllun Eryri (The National Park Management Plan);
- Eryri Local Development Plan;
- Well-being Statement and Well-being Objectives; and
- Corporate Work Programme.

These 4 documents represent the cornerstone for the Authority's work in fulfilling its primary purposes as defined in the Environment Act 1995 and in implementing its vision.

Governance Structure

The Authority's governance structure comprises of 4 main committees:

- Eryri National Park Authority has 18 appointed Members and during 2025/26 had 6 scheduled meetings.
- The Performance and Resources Committee was held 4 times during 2025/26. As part of its remit it undertakes audit committee functions in accordance with CIPFA requirements.
- The Planning and Access Committee was held 9 times during 2025/26. This committee is responsible for carrying out the Authority's statutory planning functions.
- The Authority's Standards Committee was held 3 times during 2025/26. Membership of the committee, whose remit it is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members, comprises of 3 Authority Members and 3 independent members.

The Authority's Standing Orders (published on the website) gives a detailed account of the arrangements for each committee. For every committee, the agenda, minutes and associated reports and background papers are all published on the Authority's website.

Leadership Team

The Authority's leadership structure includes the Chief Executive (who is also the 'National Park Officer' and the Head of Paid Service) and 3 Directors. The Authority's Leadership Team meet fortnightly, with the Head of Finance and the Head of Human Resources in attendance.

Standards

The Authority has an established Code of Conduct for Members, which includes a section that specifically refers to interests and a Members' Register of Interest. The Code of Conduct for staff is the national standard code of conduct for public authority employees.

The Authority has adopted the following policies and procedures for maintaining high standards of conduct for both staff and Members, and to ensure accountability to the public:

- Complaints Procedure – based on the best practice model complaints procedure produced by the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales;

- Whistle Blowing Policy – to enable staff to raise serious concerns with the confidence in knowing that they will be thoroughly and fairly investigated, without fear of reprisals;
- Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy – contains measures designed to frustrate any attempted fraudulent or corrupt act, and the steps to be taken if such an act occurs; and a
- Scheme of Delegation – outlines how the full Authority’s functions are carried out through delegation to its committees and sub-committees.

Risk Management

A Risk Management Policy and Strategy is in place. The risk identification process is co-ordinated by the Head of Administration and Customer Care, with input from the Leadership Team and Heads of Service. The Risk Register and mitigation measures is reviewed and updated quarterly.

Internal Audit

The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and governance arrangements is informed by the work of the Internal Auditors, undertaken by Cyngor Gwynedd. The Internal Audit service is provided in accordance with CIPFA’s Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the UK. The Internal Audit Manager prepares an annual report that summarises the results of internal audit work during the year.

External Audit

Audit Wales act as the Authority’s external auditor, and accordingly report on the Authority’s financial management and performance. In addition, Audit Wales gives an opinion on the adequacy of internal audit work.

Monitoring Officer

The Director of Corporate Services has been nominated as the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer has the specific duty to ensure that the Authority’s Officers and appointed Members maintain the highest standard of conduct in all they do. The Monitoring Officer advises on constitutional procedure and the legality of the Authority’s actions.

Financial Management

The Authority’s financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirement of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2016). The Chief Finance Officer (who is Cyngor Gwynedd’s Chief Finance Officer) is the officer responsible for the administration of financial affairs as required under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.

4. Significant Governance Issues and Actions Undertaken During the Year

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets a core duty on the Authority to set well-being objectives that maximise its contribution to achieving the 7 well-being goals set out in the Act. The Authority's well-being objectives should be objectives for change over the long term.

The Authority's Well-being Statement for 2021-26 sets out Well-being Objectives which describes how they will help the Authority achieve the seven wellbeing goals for Wales.

The Well-being Objectives concentrate on three key areas of work - Resilient Environments, Resilient Communities and Resilient Ways of Working - and have been aligned with five sub themes to provide focus, as set out below.

Resilient Environments

1. Improving recreation management and any negative effects of recreation.
2. Responding to the challenges of Climate Change.
3. Improving the management and understanding of Cultural Heritage.
4. Addressing the challenges and opportunities of post Brexit land management scenarios.
5. Addressing the decline in nature.

Resilient Communities

1. Maintaining and increasing the quality of life of residents.
2. Supporting young people.
3. Promoting sustainable tourism to add value to local communities.
4. Promoting and actively supporting the Welsh language.
5. Developing a local economy which supports both the designation and the management of Eryri as a National Park.

Resilient Ways of Working

1. Developing a skilled workforce.
2. Developing and promoting best practice.
3. Effective partnership working.
4. Modernising governance arrangements.
5. Maintaining and improve the understanding and support of local communities to the work of the National Park.

Any actions that the Authority takes in achieving the well-being objectives will need to be made in a sustainable way. Sustainable development involves five key requirements namely:

1. Long Term – the importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs, especially where things done to meet short term needs may have detrimental long term effects.
2. Integration – how our well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, how the well-being objectives may impact upon each other or upon other public bodies' well-being objectives, in particular where steps

taken by us may contribute to meeting one objective but may be detrimental to meeting another.

3. Involvement – the importance of involving other persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and of ensuring those persons reflect the diversity of the population of Wales or the geographical area of the Authority.
4. Collaboration – acting in collaboration with any person (or how different parts of the Authority acting together) could assist the Authority to meet its well-being objectives, or assist another body to meet its objectives.
5. Prevention – to take account of how deploying resources to prevent problems occurring, or getting worse may contribute to meeting the Authority's well-being objectives, or another body's objectives.

The Corporate Work Programme for 2025/26 was presented for approval as a working document by the Members at the Performance and Resources Committee on the 19th of March 2025. The Programme sets out the projects, initiatives and specific actions that will fulfil the Authority's Well-being Objectives and Service Priorities.

Progress against the Programme has been reported to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 26th of November 2025 and on the 11th of March 2026.

5. Effectiveness of the Governance Framework

Eryri National Park Authority has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the senior leaders within the Authority, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates. The review is based on the seven principles from the Code of Corporate Governance.

Principle 1: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

<p>Code of Corporate Governance</p>	<p>Governance was scrutinised in depth during 2021/22 by a Task and Finish Group of Officers and Members which was established especially for this purpose.</p> <p>The Code of Corporate Governance was reviewed in depth and redrafted by the Group, to ensure that it remains a cornerstone of effective governance for the future.</p> <p>The revised Code of Governance was formally adopted by the Authority in its meeting on the 27th of April 2022.</p>
<p>Standards Committee</p>	<p>The Standards Committee met twice during the year.</p> <p>The first meeting held on the 11th of April 2025, considered and agreed the statutory annual report for 2024/25 to be presented to the Authority AGM, on how the committee's functions have been discharged, which included an overview of conduct matters generally within the Authority.</p> <p>The agenda also included a report from the Monitoring Officer regarding the monitoring that had taken place on the operation of the code of conduct and specifically Declarations of Members' Interests.</p> <p>The second meeting of the Standards Committee which was held on the 19th of September 2025, considered the Committee's usual business, which included the nomination of Members for the Single Status Grading Appeals Panel, Grant of Dispensations and the consideration of the Authority's Annual Complaints Monitoring Report as well as the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales Annual Report.</p> <p>The third meeting was held on the 27th of March 2026, which considered and agreed the statutory annual report for 2025/26 to be presented to the Authority AGM, on how the committee's functions have been discharged, which included an overview of conduct matters generally within the Authority.</p> <p>At the same meeting, the Head of Administration and Customer Care reported that a review of both the current Confidential Reporting Policy (Whistleblowing) and the Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy had been undertaken. The new draft policies presented were updated to ensure they complied with current legislation and had incorporated current</p>

	<p>good practice. In addition, examples were now included within the policies to aid understanding.</p> <p>The draft policies were considered and approved for presentation to the Authority for formal adoption.</p> <p>On the 30th of April 2025 it was reported to the Authority that an interview panel to recruit a new independent Member for the Standards Committee had been held. A recommendation for an appointment was put forward which was approved by the Authority.</p> <p>During the year a second independent Member vacancy arose on the Standards Committee. However, efforts so far to recruit for the position have been unsuccessful.</p>
Confidential Reporting (Whistle Blowing) Policy	<p>During 2025/26, no reports or concerns were raised in relation to any Member or Officer of the Authority under the Whistle Blowing Policy.</p> <p>Following a formal review of this policy which was considered by the Standards Committee, the new draft policy was presented to the Authority on the 29th of April 2026 whereby it was formally adopted.</p>
Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy	<p>During 2025/26, no complaints of alleged fraud or corruption were made regarding any Member or Officer of the Authority, and Internal Auditors did not identify any areas of concern through their auditing work.</p> <p>Following a formal review of this policy which was considered by the Standards Committee, the new draft policy was presented to the Authority on the 29th of April 2026 whereby it was formally adopted.</p>
Model Code of Conduct	<p>During 2025/26, no amendments or revisions were made to the Model Code of Conduct.</p>
Complaints – Officers	<p>During 2025/26, the Authority received a total of 16 formal complaints.</p> <p>None of these complaints were later referred to the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales for investigation.</p>

	<p>The Authority was therefore not subject to a formal investigation of alleged maladministration by the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales during 2025/26.</p>
Complaints - Members	<p>During 2025/26, the Authority's Monitoring Officer did not receive any formal complaints relating to the Members, and no complaints were submitted directly to the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales.</p>
Standing Orders	<p>The Authority's Standing Orders were reviewed as part of the remit of the Reviewing Governance Task and Finish Group during 2021/22.</p> <p>The review concluded that the Authority continues with its current committee structure but that the Authority should in future consider an amendment giving the Performance and Resources committee the right to make final decisions on financial and other reports (unless Authority approval is specifically required).</p>
Standing Orders relating to Contracts	<p>A new revised version of the Standing Orders relating to Contracts came into effect on the 1st of April 2025.</p> <p>The revision incorporates slight changes to threshold limits which now incorporates VAT, and ensures compliance with the Procurement Act 2023.</p> <p>Side by side with the revision to the Standing Orders, the Authority registered on the new Central Digital Platform (CDP). The CDP is where all UK authorities are required to publish information relating to procurement, which in Wales is undertaken through publishing information on the Sell2Wales platform which is directly linked.</p>
Scheme of Delegation	<p>The Scheme of Delegation was reviewed as part of the remit of the Reviewing Governance Task and Finish Group during 2021/22.</p> <p>The Group concluded that the current Officer Scheme of Delegation continued to be fit for purpose, and therefore no recommendation for changes were given.</p>

<p>Members' Register of Interests</p>	<p>The Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 places a requirement on the Authority to publish the current Members' Register of Interests on the Authority's website.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of each Authority Member to keep their record of personal interests up to date and to report on any changes in a timely manner. Nonetheless, the Democratic Services Officer sends each Member a copy of their current record after each AGM of the Authority, and requests that they be reviewed and updated if required.</p>
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Principle 2: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

<p>Strategic Equality Plan</p>	<p>The Annual Report on the Strategic Equality Plan was presented to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 26th of November 2025.</p> <p>This was the first progress report on the action plan within the Authority's Strategic Equality Plan for 2024 – 28. Progress was reported on the work undertaken and how this contributed towards reaching the Equality Objectives, along with the Equality Impact Assessments undertaken during the year, equal pay monitoring data and staff equality data.</p>
<p>Direct Consultation</p>	<p>During 2025/26 the Authority continued to engage with local communities and stakeholders through a range of means, from traditional written consultations and online questionnaires to webinars, online meetings as well as face-to-face meetings, workshops and consultation surgeries.</p> <p>Consultation is inbuilt into the wide range of workflows and projects we undertake as an Authority, be that through a formal statutory process, informally with communities and stakeholders or jointly with other public bodies. As a small Authority, it is important that we involve communities and stakeholders and consider their views from the outset, if we are to be successful with our projects.</p> <p>A series of symposiums and workshops were held during the year as part of the comprehensive engagement and consultation process with both the communities of Eryri and stakeholders, on the development of the new Cynllun Eryri (National Park Management Plan) and the Authority's Well-being Objectives. The valuable inputs captured by all these</p>

	<p>events will now feed into and inform the further development work by Officers and Members over the coming year.</p> <p>In addition, consultation work continues at each pivotal developmental stage of the Eryri Local Development Plan, both by direct consultation and through the Community Forum.</p> <p>The development plans for Plas Tan y Bwlch continues at pace. During this time, drop-in sessions, emails and updates through our social media channels have been given and the Director of Land Management has attended meetings of the 6 Community and Town Councils within closest proximity to Plas Tan y Bwlch (Maentwrog, Ffestiniog, Porthmadog, Penrhyndeudraeth, Talsarnau and Llanfrothen).</p> <p>Towards the end of the financial year, reportable progress including the National Lottery Heritage Fund grant applications process and the presentation of architectural plans were reported to staff. In addition, a Member Development Day was given to go through the detailed plans on site. This will be followed by a Community Event on the 12th of May 2026.</p> <p>To give formal direction and guidance into the Authority's future engagement and consultation work, the Authority formally adopted a Community Engagement Strategy in its meeting on the 29th of April 2026, which was developed over the preceding 2025/26 financial year. This strategy will give clear focus and guidance to all staff on future engagement work and is intended as a live document which will evolve over time.</p>
<p>Communication and Engagement Strategy</p>	<p>Communication and engagement is an essential element in everything the Authority does. It is also something that can always be improved upon, and the Authority's Strategy reflects this.</p> <p>Fast paced technological advancements and the continuing growth in social media platforms and participation levels, means that the Authority needs to be fully focused on engaging effectively through the correct channels at the correct time with a wide range of audiences.</p> <p>The annual report which included performance indicator results was presented to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 9th of July 2025.</p>

	<p>It was reported that the substance in published content has increased and that followers across digital platforms had increased by 5% during the year. The Digital Content Officer continued to develop new innovative ways to engage successfully with a wide audience.</p>
<p>The Social Partnership Duty</p>	<p>The aim of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 is to place social partnership on a statutory footing in Wales.</p> <p>Social Partnership working in this context means that when the Authority develops Well-being Objectives and makes strategic decisions, it must ensure that consensus or compromise is sought with trade unions regarding the reasonable steps intended to take to deliver those objectives.</p> <p>An Annual Report outlining how the Authority has complied with the Duty was presented to the Authority on the 11th of June 2024, before being submitted to the Social Partnership Council.</p>
<p>Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations Requests</p>	<p>The Authority has adopted the Information Commissioner's Model Publication Scheme and has published a guide to information, both of which are available on the website.</p> <p>During 2025, 50 requests were received of which 32 received all the information requested (64%). Of the other 18 requests, 10 were refused or partially refused as the information requested did not exist or the authority did not hold the information, 5 requests contained third party personal data (of which 2 of these were also exempt as the information would identify members of the public who report possible breaches of planning control), 1 request was for information that was not yet available as plans had yet to be finalised, 1 request was refused as the cost of compliance exceeded the appropriate limit, and 1 request was refused as it was information already reasonably accessible by other means.</p> <p>Of the 50 requests, all were answered within the 20 working day time limit.</p> <p>No complaints were submitted during the year to the Information Commissioner with regard to any information request.</p>

<p>Committee Agendas and Associated Reports</p>	<p>The Authority’s Committee agendas and associated reports are published on the website at least 3 clear working days before each meeting, to satisfy the statutory time limit.</p> <p>An archive of past Committee meetings agendas and associated papers is also available on the website for the last 3 years, and older agendas are available on request. Minute Books are also published annually on the website.</p>
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Principle 3: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

<p>Cynllun Yr Wyddfa Partnership Plan</p>	<p>The implementation of the Yr Wyddfa Plan has continued since the revised plan was launched on the 15th of July. Since then, a wide range of work has been carried out across the seven themes of the revised plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant improvements have been made to the Three Summit Partnership website; • Further communication campaigns regarding sustainable travel have been carried out before the busy season; • Mentra'n Gall training events were held at Plas Tan y Bwlch and Barmouth, in conjunction with Cyngor Gwynedd; • Arrangements have been put in place between Yr Wyddfa volunteers and the mountain rescue teams, to support their rescue efforts where appropriate; • A new interpretation exhibition was opened in Pen y Pas; • An environmentally sensitive barrier was added on the path between Crib Goch and Garnedd Ugain to encourage walkers to follow the safest route; and also fencing projects to support delayed grazing on the Yr Wyddfa Railway land, for the benefit of the Rainbow Beetle; and • Yr Wyddfa user survey has been added to the Park website for continuous monitoring; the Eryri and Yr Wyddfa climbing heritage module was commissioned for the Eryri Ambassador program - to be launched at the end of June 2026; and the Eryri Trails app will be rebranded to match the brand of the new scheme.
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<p>Cynllun Eryri (Eryri National Park Partnership Plan)</p>	<p>Cynllun Eryri was adopted by the National Park Authority as its statutory (Partnership) Management Plan in October 2020 and officially launched in November 2020. It contained a 5-year action plan which came to an end in 2025. A final report on the current action plan has been produced and has been published on the Authority’s website.</p> <p>Since 2025 the Authority has been reviewing its policies, objectives and actions. A series of Symposia have been held between June 2025 and January 2026 to further discuss and scrutinise the identified priorities, and begin the process of creating an Action Plan for Cynllun Eryri 2026-2031.</p> <p>A draft action plan is now being co-produced with Partners and the input of staff and Authority members. This will be consulted upon, with the aim for it to be adopted by the Authority in 2026.</p> <p>As a statutory part of the Management Plan review – a State of the Park Report has been produced and published in the form of a micro-site. This process has identified 5 priorities for the National Park Authority to focus on for the new Cynllun Eryri.</p>
<p>Eryri Local Development Plan 2016-2031</p>	<p>The revised Eryri Local Development Plan 2016-2031 (LDP) was adopted on the 6th of February 2019.</p> <p>The Annual Monitoring Report for 2024-25 was approved by the Planning and Access Committee on the 15th of October 2025, and subsequently presented to the Welsh Government.</p> <p>Some of the main findings of the report include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been no significant developments permitted which undermine the statutory purposes of the National Park; • The Eryri LDP policies have been effective in determining land use planning applications and in defending appeals; • Housing permissions and completions have been below the average annual housing requirement target for several years in a row. Although an increase was seen in the number receiving planning permission (45 units) during the 5th monitoring year, there was a decrease to 17 units during 2024/25. • The Housing Trajectory shows an annual shortfall against the Annual Anticipated Housing Requirement (AAR) during 2024/25 with the years’ completions of 34 units being below what was anticipated. There is a shortfall of -41% for

	<p>cumulative required build rate from the start of the plan period;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 2024 and 2025, 5 applications were approved to improve community facilities. • 4,537 m2 new employment floor space (including adaptations/conversions) has been permitted during 2024/2025 within the National Park.
<p>Strategic Plan for a Sustainable Visitor Economy</p>	<p>Since the adoption of the Strategic Plan for a Sustainable Visitor Economy in Gwynedd and Eryri (2035) by the National Park Authority in 2023, officers from the NPA and Cyngor Gwynedd have been formalising operating structures. Conwy Council also committed to taking the Memorandum of Understanding through their democratic processes and rural Conwy became official members of the Plan in May 2025.</p> <p>Two annual action plans have now been completed, and the process of drafting a third is underway.</p> <p>With the consultation period on a potential Tourism Levy live, the Partnership (which comprises of the Tourism Sector and local communities) has been instrumental in gathering feedback and understanding more about the hopes and concerns of the area. The Partnership is evolving constantly and is currently being streamlined as regards the number of meetings in response to feedback from members. The Partnership is the first of its kind in Wales and along with an agreed annual action plan, forms a strong basis for prioritising spending should a tourism levy be adopted in this area.</p> <p>There is furthermore a Strategic Board which meets twice a year and a Partnership Delivery Group as well as Task and Finish groups which lead on specific projects.</p>
<p>Corporate Work Programme</p>	<p>As the Authority now has an adopted Well-being Statement which includes its Well-being Objectives for a five-year period from 2021-26; there will therefore be no need for an annual review.</p> <p>The agreed actions in the Corporate Work Programme will now be sufficient to enable the Authority to assess its progress in attaining the Well-being Objectives and there will accordingly be no need for a separate report on Performance Indicators. The final report on the Corporate Work Programme for 2024/25 was considered by the Performance and Resources Committee on the 9th of July 2025.</p>

	<p>The Corporate work Programme for 2025/26 was formally adopted by the Performance and Resources Committee on the 19th of March 2025.</p> <p>Members were provided with updates on the progress made in meeting the Well-being Objectives, outlined in the Corporate Work Programme for 2025/26.</p> <p>Progress on the first two quarters of the financial year was reported to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 26th of November 2025. The third and (where available) fourth quarter progress report was reported to the same committee on the 11th of March 2026. A final report is expected to be presented to the Performance and Resources Committee in its meeting in July 2026.</p>
<p>Eryri Low Carbon Strategy 2024-29</p>	<p>The Authority have drafted a Climate Change Risk Assessment for Eryri as a landscape, in partnership with Bangor University, evaluating risk and modelling climate scenarios through the lens of the Park's Special Qualities. This assessment will underpin the Authority's Adaptation Strategy and provide an evidence base for the Climate Change chapter in the revised Cynllun Eryri.</p> <p>Using grant funding, the Authority have also embarked on a Decarbonisation project, aligning with the objectives set by Small World Consulting (2023). The 'sustainable tourism app' rewards visitors and residents alike for engaging in green action, whether volunteering on nature recovery projects, travelling sustainably or monitoring biodiversity.</p> <p>An internal focus group has met to agree on the next steps in the Authority's push to reduce organisational emissions. A delivery plan will be published to confirm the next priorities for decarbonising Authority owned assets and supply chain.</p>
<p>Trees and Woodland Strategy</p>	<p>On the 30th of April 2025 the Authority adopted a Trees and Woodland Strategy, which aims to provide guidance to stakeholders and the public on the management and establishment of trees and woodlands in the landscape.</p> <p>Whilst the strategy is led by the Authority it relies on a partnership and collaboration approach from a number of partners, communities and individuals.</p>

	<p>The formal strategy is an important addition to guide specific work and projects within the Corporate Work Programme which contribute to the Authority's Resilient Environment Well-being Objective.</p>
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Principle 4: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

<p>Budget Strategy 2025-26</p>	<p>The Revenue and Capital Outturn Report for 2024/25 was reported to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 9th of July 2025, which noted the final position of Directorates and Services with regard to budgetary control.</p> <p>The Authority's revenue and capital budget for 2025/26 was confirmed in the Chief Finance Officer's report to the Authority on the 5th of February 2025. The report also confirmed the levy on constituent authorities.</p> <p>An update on the Budget was presented to the Authority on the 10th of September 2025 and the 10th of December 2025 as well as to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 11th of March 2026.</p> <p>The March report outlined that in February 2026, the Welsh Government had allocated an additional £1,003,300 in capital funding across 29 projects, and an additional £30,600 received in revenue funding to support capacity pressures, as well as additional funding of £635k also allocated at the beginning of March in order to meet the shortfall within the year.</p> <p>It was also confirmed that the Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places (SLSP) grant has been extended for a further 2 years for 2025/26 – 2026/27 and is worth £500,000 for 2025/26, as well as £330,000 general capital budget.</p> <p>The report also outlined significant virements over £30k already approved and requested a further virement of £103K for Traditional Boundaries be approved.</p>
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<p>Base Revenue Budget for 2026-27</p>	<p>The Base Revenue Budget for 2026/27 which was presented to the Authority at the 10th of December 2025 meeting, confirmed that a provision had been made in the budget for a salary inflation of 3% in 2026/27, a 2% increase to the Welsh Government grant settlement for 2026/27 had been forecasted, and that the recent revaluation of the local government pension fund would be very beneficial for the Authority in the 2026/27 year.</p> <p>However, the report outlining the Authority’s Budget and Levy on Constituent Authorities for 2026/27 by the Chief Finance Officer at the 4th of February 2026 Authority meeting, confirmed that the situation was much better than predicted but a baseline deficit would remain.</p> <p>The draft settlement received in January 2026 confirms an increase of approximately 4% to the Authority’s core funding. This equates to an uplift of £173,000, which in turn increases the levies on constituent authorities by £58,000. While this improved position is welcomed and places the Authority on a firmer financial footing than anticipated, a baseline deficit of £139,000 remains.</p> <p>Following the favourable draft settlement for 2026/27, approval was given to reinstate baseline budget funding for Plas Tan y Bwlch, replacing the current reliance on reserves, for the duration of the bridging period as grant applications are progressed with the Heritage Lottery Fund.</p>
<p>Mid Term Financial Plan 2025/26 – 2028/29</p>	<p>The Chief Executive presented an overview of the Authority’s financial challenges for the next 2 financial years at the Authority meeting on the 10th of September 2025.</p> <p>It was noted that there was no indication that the core National Park Grant settlement would increase over the next 3 years. A ‘flat’ settlement would pose significant challenges to the Authority, and plans are already underway to address the unavoidable deficit that the Authority faces.</p> <p>The plan outlined the following measures and confirmed that they were actively being pursued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase car parking fees; ➤ Increase income generation in Tourist Information Centres, specifically in Betws y Coed; and to ➤ Consider cuts to certain budget lines in order to create savings.

	<p>The report confirmed that due to a potential change in government in May 2026, Welsh Government hadn't provided any information which could be interpreted to estimate the settlement figure.</p> <p>It was agreed to adopt the MTFP as a working document, and to review and update it as relevant information becomes available. In addition, it was agreed to work closely with Welsh Government Ministers and Officials to develop a commitment on indicative future budgets and to try and ensure provision towards inflationary costs, to ensure that the Authority achieves its statutory duties.</p> <p>In the Members Working Group in October 2025 a further report was submitted for consideration with plans on how to respond to the shortfall. Following detailed consideration the following was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The principle of increasing car parking tariffs and enforcing non-payment to bring in an additional £500,000 a year (with a further £100,000 in reserve); ➤ Set a target of an additional £40K per year from retail income; ➤ Agree to keep budgeted planning fees at current levels and monitor this situation over the next 12 months; ➤ Explore other potential sources of commercial income, including recruiting a Commercial Manager; and to ➤ Identify the savings in the base budget of £130K due to the healthy state of the current pension fund.
<p>Performance Management</p>	<p>The mechanism for reviewing performance in relation to the Authority's Well-being Statement and the Corporate Work Programme was set out formally in 2021/22.</p> <p>The Performance and Resources Committee will scrutinise performance on the actions contained in the Corporate Work Programme which gives an insight into progress on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>The Annual Report for 2024/25 which was approved for adoption and publication by the Authority in its meeting on the 10th of September 2025, reported on Year 4 progress in achieving the Authority's Well-being Objectives.</p> <p>Whilst it was originally planned to review the Authority's Well-being Objectives in 2025 with a view to adopting them by April 2026, approval was given by the Authority on the</p>

	<p>11th of June 2025 to extend the existing objectives by a year to 2027. This would allow the ongoing review of Cynllun Eryri to precede reviewing the Well-being Objectives, with a view to providing a much stronger and more inclusive foundation upon which to commence a review of the Well-being Objectives in 2026-27.</p> <p>In addition, Welsh Government introduced new targets and a reporting mechanism as part of the process of issuing the annual Strategic Grant Letter this year.</p> <p>The process was reported to Members at the Authority meeting on the 10th of September 2025. The new framework would be presented each year with 6 monthly updates required. The initial 6 month results were reported to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 26th of November 2025.</p>
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Principle 5: Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

<p>Members’ Role Descriptions</p>	<p>Revised role descriptions for Members and for the Chair and Vice Chair were adopted by the Authority on the 27th of April 2022.</p> <p>Changes were made to strengthen the emphasis of the role of members in setting a strategic direction and ambition for the Authority, providing an overarching introduction including the purpose of National Parks and the role of the Authority in delivering on these purposes, and strengthening the section on personal and role development.</p>
<p>Members’ Attendance</p>	<p>From the 1st of October 2024, all the Authority’s committees and meetings have been held at the Head Office in Penrhyndeudraeth, taking full advantage of the new technological investment for conducting hybrid meetings which has embedded well.</p> <p>Members of the public can observe the committees in person or can view a live webcast, with the current exception of the Performance and Resources Committee. Recordings of committees can also be accessed at a later date through the Authority’s YouTube channel.</p>

	<p>Members' attendance at meetings during 2025/26 was 85%, which is consistent with the 85% attendance in the two preceding years of 2024/25 and 2023/24.</p>
Member Training	<p>In 2025/26, member attendance at training events was 67.6% (48% in 2024/25).</p> <p>In addition to the Authority's Member training programme, this year The Welsh National Parks Members Seminar on the theme of Nature Restoration, was hosted by the Authority in Eryri, and was well supported by the Authority's Members.</p>
Staff Performance Appraisals and Training	<p>Learning and development needs are identified in annual performance appraisal reviews, which outlines training priorities for the year ahead.</p> <p>Staff appraisal rates remain low, with only 45% of staff having received appraisals during 2025/26.</p> <p>A review of the whole appraisal process is currently underway which will refresh and refocus the procedure, bringing it up to date with good practice. In conjunction with this, work will be undertaken with Heads of Service to secure ownership over the process and to help them identify its value.</p>
Human Resources Strategy	<p>A comprehensive update on Human Resources activity for the twelve-month period from November 2024 to October 2025 was presented to the Joint Local Working Group on the 28th of November 2025, as part of the ongoing commitment to transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement in workforce management.</p> <p>The report outlines key developments in HR policy, staff wellbeing initiatives, recruitment and retention data, training and development activity, and industrial relations. It reflects the Authority's strategic priorities in fostering an inclusive, supportive, and high-performing workplace culture, aligned with our organisational values and statutory responsibilities.</p>
Leadership Team Capacity	<p>The Authority took the decision in the previous financial year to revise the Leadership Team structure and increase its numbers to address the increasing organisational resilience risk posed.</p>

	<p>During 2025/26, the restructure was completed and successful recruitment to vacant posts undertaken. The new structure is as follows: Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services (incorporating the role of Monitoring Officer), Director of Planning and Partnerships and Director of Land management.</p> <p>Accordingly, this risk has now been removed from the Authority's Risk Register.</p>

Principle 6: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

<p>Financial Statements</p>	<p>The Final Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 were formally presented and approved, along with the ISA 260 Report at the Authority meeting on the 30th of April 2025.</p> <p>Audit Wales confirmed that a number of amendments were required, and due to this more time was required by Audit Wales to audit the accounts which would result in an increased fee to the Authority. However, an unqualified opinion was given on the final accounts once corrections had been made.</p> <p>The Chair and Chief Finance Officer were authorised to sign the Final Letter of Representation by the Appointed Auditor from Audit Wales in accordance with The Accounts and Audit (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.</p> <p>At the Authority's meeting on 10th December 2025, Audit Wales presented its Audit Plan which sets out the plan for the 2023/24 accounts audit and the 2025/26 performance audit work programme.</p> <p>The Plan stated the intention to set a timetable of eighteen months for auditing the 2024/25 and 2025/26 accounts, in an attempt to catch up on previous delays.</p> <p>The Final Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 were formally presented and approved, along with the ISA 260 Report at the Authority meeting on the 29th of April 2026.</p>
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	<p>The Chair and Chief Finance Officer were authorised to sign the Final Letter of Representation by the Appointed Auditor from Audit Wales in accordance with The Accounts and Audit (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.</p> <p>It was reported that due to delays in previous years Statement of Accounts, it was proving very challenging to catch up despite additional assistance from an external company. In answer to concerns, a motion was approved to receive a report to the September 2026 Authority meeting with an update on the work to complete the Statement o Accounts for 2024/25 and 2025/26.</p>
<p>Risk Management</p>	<p>Changes to how the Risk Register is reviewed and updated have taken place during the year. Reviewing and updating now happens bi-monthly by the Heads of Service and the Leadership Team.</p> <p>Identified risks as noted in the Risk Register are now allocated as a responsibility to Directors to enhance oversight and accountability. The Risk Register continues to be reviewed by Members at each Performance and Resources Committee and any removal of risks from the Register is ratified annually at an Authority meeting.</p>
<p>External Audit</p>	<p>The final report on Promoting Access was received by Audit Wales in July 2025, which was later presented to Members for discussion at the Performance and Resources Committee on the 26th of November 2025, along with the organisational response to the 4 recommendations.</p> <p>At the same meeting, Audit Wales also presented their final report (received in September 2025) on their assessment of the extent to which the Authority had applied the sustainable development principle when setting the well-being objectives. Audit Wales was generally satisfied that the Authority had applied the sustainable development principle but made 2 recommendations on how this could be improved in the future. The organisational response was also presented to the meeting.</p>

	<p>At the Authority meeting on the 10th of December 2025, the Chief Executive reported on the recommendations made by Audit Wales as a result of their Assurance and Risk Assessment conducted between January and May 2025.</p> <p>The first main significant issue identified was the lack of formal arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children who staff may interact with. As a result of which the Authority adopted a Safeguarding Policy at the same meeting.</p> <p>The second issue was the need to establish arrangements to regularly review corporate policies and governance documents to ensure that they are kept up to date and comply with legislation. It was confirmed that formal arrangements had now been put in place which satisfies the recommendation.</p> <p>Full details of the findings and recommendations are set out under Section 6 (Significant Governance Issues) in this Statement.</p>
<p>Internal Audit</p>	<p>The Internal Audit Manager reports on the previous financial year’s work to the Performance and Resources Committee. However, the annual report for 2023/24 was not presented at any time during 2024/25. As a result, the report presented to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 9th of July 2025 reported on both 2023/24 and 2024/25 Internal Audit work.</p> <p>It was reported that 3 audits had been undertaken, namely Planning Service Communication Arrangements, Support for Members, and Volunteers.</p> <p>Both audits on Planning Service Communication Arrangements and Volunteers were given a “Satisfactory” rating – there are controls in place to achieve the objectives but there are aspects where the arrangements can be tightened to further mitigate the risks.</p> <p>The audit on Support for Members was rated as “High” - assurance of propriety can be expressed as the internal controls in place can be relied upon to achieve objectives.</p>

	<p>Members expressed dissatisfaction with awarding a "High" assurance level to Member Support as only 4 responses to the questionnaire were received out of 18. In addition, although the work plan for 2025/26 claims to be based on an analysis of risks, there was no mention in the report of any use of consultants, and it was suggested that some of the high risks of the Authority's Risk Profile could be woven into this report. Accordingly, no motion to approve the report was presented to the Committee to enable the work plan to be looked at again.</p> <p>At the Performance and Resources committee meeting on the 26th of November 2025 the Internal Audit Plan for 2025/26 was re-submitted for consideration. It was reported that following discussions with the Leadership Team, two risk areas were identified and proposed to be integrated into the Internal Audit work, namely: Poor and Ineffective Management of Projects by the Authority and Financial and Reputational risks regarding the future of Plas Tan y Bwlch. The revised Audit Plan was accepted.</p>
<p>Health and Safety</p>	<p>The Health and Safety Officer presented an Annual Report to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 26th of November 2025.</p> <p>During 2024/25, 131 staff attended training courses relating to health and safety with a further 426 health and safety related courses undertaken by staff on-line during the same period.</p> <p>Within the same reporting period, 26 incidents were reported which include near misses, none of which were reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).</p> <p>During 2024, Stress, Anxiety and Depression was the main reason for workplace absences, accounting for 47% of all days lost. Of these, workplace stress accounted for 15% of the absences. Although the increase was partly attributable to better recording, it was confirmed that mitigation measures were already in place.</p>

<p>Information Centres</p>	<p>The Authority has 3 Information Centres in Betws y Coed, Beddgelert and Aberdyfi, which are managed by the Sustainable Tourism Manager, whose main objective is to ensure that the Centres are commercially viable / self-financing. In addition a new retail space had now been opened at Pen y Pass.</p> <p>The Information Centres Annual Report was presented to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 26th of November 2025. The report provided an overview of the 2025/26 year to date.</p> <p>The main issues of note was that overall the season had seen an increase of 5% in visitor enquiries but a 3% reduction in turnover; that projections looked promising for the Pen y Pass Hwb expansion, however budgetary obligations for the 2026/27 season could not be finalised at the present time.</p>
<p>Borrowing and Investment Strategies / Treasury Management</p>	<p>The Annual Report providing the actual Treasury Management (borrowing and investment) of the Authority during 2024/25, was presented to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 9th of July 2025.</p> <p>It was reported that during 2024/25 the Authority's activity remained within the limitations originally set, no borrowing had occurred, and no banks that the Authority had used for investment defaulted.</p> <p>In 2024/25, the total interest received on investments was £386,792, against a budget of £120,000.</p> <p>The Authority started the financial year without debt, and revenue and capital expenditure during 2024/25 was financed with grant income and revenue funds.</p> <p>Therefore, from a Treasury Management perspective, the Authority remains debt free.</p> <p>The Chief Finance Officer presented the Capital Strategy for 2026/27 at the Authority meeting on the 4th of February 2026.</p>

	<p>The report gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of National Park services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.</p> <p>The report confirms that the Authority commences 2026/27 debt free. Capital expenditure planned for the year amounts to £2.926M of which £2.3M is financed by external sources and £626K is financed by the Authority's own resources. There is no expectation that the Authority will need to finance any capital works through borrowing.</p> <p>Members approved no change in the authorised borrowing limit and the operational boundary, and approved both the Capital Borrowing Strategy and Investment Strategy for 2026/27, and noted the content with regard to the Prudential Code.</p>
<p>Plas Tan y Bwlch Study Centre</p>	<p>Following a report to the Authority on the 30th of April 2025 whereby Members formally approved Officers to pursue the retention of Plas Tan Y Bwlch subject to securing a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant, with a view to relocating offices from Penrhyndeudraeth to Plas, including a wider mix of uses for the property, work got underway.</p> <p>An update report was presented to the Authority on the 10th of September 2025, in which it was reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Architects Donald Insall Associates had been commissioned to assist the Authority; ➤ Cadw were very supportive and referred to their grant application process for match funding possibilities; ➤ Submission of development phase application of £325K in February 2026; ➤ Submission of the major application (delivery phase application) for £9M in 2027 subject to being successful for development phase application; and ➤ Feedback from local community had been positive. <p>Due to an opportunity to collaborate with Museum Wales and the historian Peter Lord to establish a gallery at Plas Tan y Bwlch, the intention to submit the delivery application in 2027 has now increased in value to £15m. A new expression of interest was submitted to the</p>

	<p>Heritage Lottery Fund with the revised figure, which has been approved.</p> <p>The Authority's Risk Register continues to be reviewed and updated throughout this process, to reflect the most up to date situation with regard to mitigation of risks.</p>
Yr Ysgwrn	<p>Yr Ysgwrn's Annual Report for 2024/25 was presented to the Authority on the 10th of September 2025.</p> <p>The report noted that in June 2024, the Geiriau Diflanedig/Vanishing Words collaboration project came to an end. A new exhibition 'Yr Ysgwrn yn Ysbrydoli' was opened in July 2024, which includes a number of artworks by leading Welsh artists.</p> <p>A total of 15 activities attracting 250 attendees were held during the year. Grants were received for some of the activities from the Gwynedd Federation of Museums and Galleries and the Welsh Government.</p> <p>In addition, three grants were received for long-term work. The first was a grant from the Welsh Federation of Museums and Galleries to complete marketing commissions, including Google ads and a Yr Ysgwrn promotional film, and these were completed in the spring of 2025. A further grant was received from Artfund for The Herds project, an artistic climate justice project. Finally, a grant was received from the Ulrike Michal Foundation for the Arts (UMFFTA) for a visual art project, based on The Black Chair and a second poetic chair by Eugene Van Fleteren commissioned for the 1918 National Eisteddfod</p> <p>An application to renew the accreditation status of the Yr Ysgwrn museum will be submitted in January 2026.</p>

Principle 7: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

Pay Policy Statement	<p>Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 places a requirement on Local Authorities to prepare pay policy statements. Whilst National Park Authorities are exempt from this requirement, it has been considered good practice to adopt such a statement, and accordingly this is done annually by the Head of Human Resources.</p>
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	<p>The Authority's Pay Policy Annual Report for 2024/25 and Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26 was presented to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 9th of July 2025 but was withdrawn at the meeting due to incorrect figures being presented. It was re-submitted at the Performance and Resources Committee on the 26th of November 2026 with the correct figures whereby it was approved.</p>
<p>Annual Report 2024/25</p>	<p>The Annual Report for 2024/25 was presented to the Authority meeting on the 10th of September 2025, before being published on the website and distributed to the Authority's main centres, public libraries etc., within the National Park.</p> <p>It contains the Chairman's Annual Report for the year, which sets out what was achieved, not achieved and any problems that were encountered.</p> <p>It also contains details of the Authority's Service Priorities and the Authority's Objectives set on an annual basis that feed into and show how it is intended to take the National Park forward in order to attain the Authority's vision; a summary evaluation of progress made in attaining the Authority's Objectives, and performance management.</p>
<p>Hybrid Committees and Broadcasting</p>	<p>From the 1st of October 2024, all official Authority meetings are now held at the Head Office at Penrhyndeudraeth, taking full advantage of the investment in hybrid meeting technology installed in the conference rooms.</p> <p>The Authority meetings and the Planning and Access Committee are also webcast live on to the Authority's YouTube channel, as well as a recording of the meeting being able to be viewed at any time. Members of the public therefore can either attend the Committee meetings in-person or can access remotely.</p> <p>This not only improves access for Members and Officers but also access, transparency and reporting of the Authority's business for members of the public.</p>
<p>Grant Funding</p>	<p>Most project based work in the Authority is funded through external grant funding.</p>

	<p>Grant Funding updates, including any reprofiling and amendments to end dates where relevant, are given to Members through the Performance and Resources Committee. Detailed information is given on capital funded projects as well as live projects.</p> <p>The Authority reviews its priorities annually, ensuring consideration is given to the timescales involved with some grant obligations, and as a result confirms the priority areas for future bids.</p> <p>Members have previously confirmed that their approval is required for projects under the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any multi-year projects. • Any proposal that does not fit within agreed strategic priorities. • Any proposal referred to members by the Chair or CEO. • Any in-year proposal above an agreed financial limit (agreed at £150,000). <p>An update was given to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 9th of July 2025 on various live grant schemes. In addition, a report outlining the Authority's achievements utilising Welsh Government's Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places grant funding from 2022-25 was given to the Performance and Resources Committee on the 26th of November 2026.</p> <p>On the 4th of April 2026, the Head of Conservation, Trees and Agriculture provided an overview report on two projects that had received grants under the INRS Grant Scheme, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The right tree in the right place; and ➤ Regenerative farming. <p>The purposes, implications and risks of the two schemes were discussed and considered. Approval was given to accept the grant funding but to be conscious of the risks.</p>
<p>Welsh Language Standards</p>	<p>On the 30th of September 2015, the Welsh Language Commissioner issued the Authority with a Compliance Notice in accordance with section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, which confirmed the Welsh Language Standards that the Authority is subject to.</p> <p>As is required by the Standards, the Authority produced an Annual Report for the year 2024/25 outlining in detail</p>

	<p>how the Authority complied with all the Standards during the year.</p> <p>The Authority duly approved the Annual Report at its Annual General Meeting on the 11th of June 2025, and authorised for the report to be published on the Authority's website and for publicity to be given to it on social media channels.</p>

6. Significant Governance Issues and Actions Proposed for 2025/26

Audit Wales: Promoting Access

In July 2025, Audit Wales published their report on how the authority promotes access in Eryri. The objective of the audit was:

- To provide assurance that the Authority has proper arrangements to secure value for money in its use of resources to promote access to the National Park.
- To explain the importance of people from all walks of life exploring and visiting national landscapes and outline Welsh Ministers' priorities for National Park Authorities.
- To assure people that the Authority encourages a wide range of diverse visitors, is collaborating effectively with key partners, and to determine how well it is delivering statutory responsibilities.

The report identified that:

- The Authority generally understands who visits the Park.
- The Authority understands potential barriers to access faced by some visitors. Its Recreation Strategy sets out some physical access barriers and includes actions to address them.
- The Authority does not centrally analyse the wider factors that might prevent or make it difficult for underrepresented groups to access the Park.
- The Authority has set an ambition to promote access in its strategic plans. However, the Authority does not clearly link its long-term strategic objectives to the outcomes it is seeking to achieve around improving access.
- The Authority has strategically resourced some projects to promote access. The Authority has set out priorities for spending grant funding and reviews these priorities annually. The Authority has also identified and taken steps to mitigate some of the risks from short term funding.
- The Authority does not monitor and evaluate the impact of its activity to promote access.

Proposals for Improvement

The table below sets out the proposals for improvement for this Authority, identified by Audit Wales whilst undertaking the review and the Authority's response.

Recommendation	
R1	<p>We found weaknesses in the Authority's arrangements to collect and analyse visitor data. To make the most of the data the Authority collects from visitors, groups and communities, the Authority should set up a more consistent arrangement to collate and analyse demographic information, activity data and feedback.</p>
Eryri NPA Response	
	<p>The Authority is currently developing an Engagement Strategy which will provide the foundation of how we engage with our communities and groups going forward. Once adopted, the Authority will look to develop a system to centrally collate equality data from engagement activity, to analyse if we are reaching all sections of our society.</p> <p>In the meantime, a microsite is available from the Authority's website reporting on the State of The Park 2025, which consists of comprehensive data and analysis on all aspects of life in Eryri. This is a central and public resource available to all.</p> <p>Working in partnership with Cyngor Gwynedd, data will now be available to the Authority to review and analyse from the annual survey of residents in Gwynedd. It is hoped this data will provide comparable indicators over time for the Strategic Partnership Plan for a Sustainable Visitor Economy. The Authority will also look at developing regular smaller scale in-house data collection on visitors through our main contact points, which will give us comparable data over time, so as to analyse trends. A balance needs to be struck between the resources required to collect this data, the practicalities of its collection and the end use of the data.</p> <p>The Authority will also look at developing regular smaller scale in-house data collection on visitors through our main contact points, which will give us comparable data over time, so as to analyse trends. A balance needs to be struck between the resources required to collect this data, the practicalities of its collection and the end use of the data.</p>

Recommendation	
R2	<p>The Authority has not mapped out all potential partners that it could work with to improve access to the Park. To address this the Authority should map out all potential partners that it could work with to identify if there are opportunities to improve value for money.</p>

Eryri NPA Response	
	<p>An EDI Symposium will be held in January 2026, whereby the Authority will work in collaboration with The Outdoor Partnership to discuss Belonging, Access and Inclusion in Eryri, which will incorporate the work of Stakeholder Mapping and identifying other potential partners to take this work forward.</p> <p>This work will feed into policy development for Cynllun Eryri, the National Park Management Plan.</p>

Recommendation	
R3	To help ensure that its vision for promoting access secures value for money, including over the longer term the Authority should clarify and then cost its proposed actions to deliver its vision.
Eryri NPA Response	
	<p>Access priorities identified under both the Authority's Wellbeing Objectives and Cynllun Eryri span over 5 years.</p> <p>The Authority can look to further develop and refine the process of pre-planning and costing both capital and one-off projects which are ready to submit when funding opportunities arise.</p> <p>Over the next review period in 2026, estimated core funding to be used to complete specific identified projects will be included in the action plans.</p>

Recommendation	
R4	<p>The Authority does not have arrangements for regular monitoring or evaluation of its work to promote access to the Park. To address this the Authority should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Set out how it will assess and monitor the value for money of individual projects and its overall strategic approach to promote access. ➤ Provide Members with regular reports on the progress and value for money of its work to promote access to the Park.
Eryri NPA Response	
	<p>Hold a Working Group between Officers and Members to agree:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Definition of 'value for money'; ii) What data needs to be collected to assess the above defined 'value for money'; iii) Identifying barriers to data collection i.e. resources and practicalities; and iv) Agree what and how often is reported to address 4 recommendation. <p>Thereafter, the procedure will be agreed.</p>

Audit Wales: Setting of Well-being Objectives

In September 2025 Audit Wales published their audit findings on the question 'To what extent has Eryri National Park Authority acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when reviewing its well-being objectives'.

The report found that the Authority has applied the sustainable development principle in reviewing its well-being objectives but can improve the evidence basis it uses for this and how it monitors its progress in delivering them. Accordingly, two recommendations were made.

Recommendation	
R1	The Authority should strengthen its arrangements for assessing its performance against its well-being objectives. This includes setting out strategic performance measure to accompany its well-being objectives that capture the short and long-term impact it is aiming for.
Eryri NPA Response	
	Measures will be considered as part of the review of wellbeing objectives in 2026. In developing these objectives an emphasis will be placed on outcomes (rather than activities) for both the short and long term. The Authority is also considering integrating its Management Plan (Cynllun Eryri) with the wellbeing objectives. This will strengthen capacity for monitoring performance – Management Plans have extensive guidance on assessing baseline data/evidence and ongoing monitoring requirements. This should therefore help the overall monitoring process.

Recommendation	
R2	<p>When reviewing its well-being objectives in future, the Authority should ensure that it draws on a broad range of information to help determine if the objectives remain appropriate. Such sources could relate to changes in its internal and external environment. Examples could include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ New legislation and policy, including changes to the wellbeing goals.➤ Trend information including for example the Welsh Government's Future Trends report.➤ Advice published by the Future Generations Commissioners, including the Future Generations Report.➤ State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) for Wales – Natural Resources Wales' Area Based Assessments.➤ Any relevant engagement activity undertaken by others that might be helpful or relevant.➤ The well-being objectives of other public sector bodies.

Eryri NPA Response	
	<p>A session was arranged early October 2025 with the Sustainable Development Adviser of the Office of the Commissioner for Future Generations. The initial session was a refresher for the Leadership Team on the obligations of the Act. It is probable that a further training session will take place with Heads of Service and Members of the Authority in early in 2026.</p> <p>In order to formalise the current annual process of reviewing the well-being objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Before the start of each financial year, the Leadership Team will assess whether it is necessary to review the well-being objectives, taking into account relevant documents (as listed by AW.) ➤ The CEO will report to Authority Members listing the documents etc. that have been considered as part of an annual review and include any recommendations for reviewing the well-being objectives. <p>Integrating the production of Cynllun Eryri with the Wellbeing Objectives will also secure further mechanisms to ensure a broad range of information is used – ensuring the objectives remain appropriate. Officers will ensure an appropriate framework is in place to allow a comprehensive and continuous assessment of information and evidence.</p> <p>The CEO will report and discuss with Members during a meeting of a Working Group and receive a formal decision either during a meeting of full Authority or Performance & Resources Committee.</p>

Audit Wales: Assurance and Risk Assessment

Audit Wales confirmed the findings of its risk assessment in May 2025, which identified two significant issues:

1. Lack of arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children who it may interact with, and
2. No training for officers or Members in their safeguarding responsibilities.

The lack of a consistent, scheduled approach to reviewing its corporate policies and governance documents was also identified as an issue during the assessment.

Recommendation	
R1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce a safeguarding policy to ensure that it complies with statutory guidance. 2. Ensure that the policy is shared among officers and volunteers. 3. Provide training to officers, volunteers and Authority Members to promote the roll out of its safeguarding policy.
Eryri NPA Response	
	<p>Following the above recommendations, the Director of Corporate Services has led on the production of a new Safeguarding Policy with</p>

	<p>significant input from the Authority’s Young People’s Officer. External legal advice was also received on the content of the document. This document is now complete and received approval from the Authority on the 10th of December 2025.</p> <p>The policy was shared among users and, to aid its rollout, further guidance on its practical application will subsequently be produced, along with training sessions to officers, Members and volunteers to follow this. This further guidance will be produced early in the New Year, and it is aimed to complete the initial training sessions by Spring 2026. Training will of course be ongoing in this area.</p> <p>In order to manage the risk associated with the absence of this policy, it should be noted that the Authority have ceased working with vulnerable adults and children until these measures have been fully implemented.</p>
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Recommendation	
R2	Establish arrangements to regularly review corporate policies and governance documents to ensure they are up to date and comply with legislation.
Eryri NPA Response	
	Measures have now been put in place for ensuring all policy and guidance are kept up to date, and this is considered to be complete.

The Authority’s Risk Profile

As reported formally in March 2026, the Authority had only 1 risk that was rated high as follows:

Risk	Result	Action Identified / Progress to date
Senedd Elections in May 2026.	Change of political leadership may lead to change of attitude / approach to National Parks.	A Manifesto has been prepared jointly between the National Parks of Wales and shared with the main parties (including the proposal for a meeting to discuss). In addition to this, once the new Government has been established, officers will contact the relevant Members of Parliament and Cabinet Members in order to have the opportunity to discuss our work programs and our priorities. This will be an opportunity to sell the significant benefit that the NP designation has on the environment, the economy and our communities.

7. Opinion

We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the matters referred to in part 6 to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.



**JONATHAN CAWLEY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
SNOWDONIA NATIONAL
PARK AUTHORITY**

**CLLR. IFOR GLYN LLOYD
CHAIR
SNOWDONIA NATIONAL
PARK AUTHORITY**

DATE: 10.06.2025

DATE : 10.06.2025