
Constructing for Future Generations

The Extinction Rebellion, Greta Thunberg, David Attenborough, UK government carbon targets and the legal imperative of the Well-being of Future Generations Act together send a powerful message.

The construction industry, its clients and supply chain, must change if it is to deliver a built environment fit for future generations. Failure to adapt is not an option. Constructing Excellence Wales, together with the industry, is leading the campaign to bring about real change alongside the office of the Future Generations Commissioner.

**ADEILADU
ARBENIGRWYDD**
YNG NGHYMRU



**CONSTRUCTING
EXCELLENCE**
IN WALES



Comisiynydd
**Cenedlaethau'r
Dyfodol**
Cymru

**Future
Generations**
Commissioner
for Wales

Introduction

Welsh construction and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFG Act) are intrinsically linked.

The Act is all about providing a built environment fit for future generations – and who better to deliver it than the Welsh construction industry? Yet many in our sector do not appreciate that the new legislative climate requires us to change and adapt.

Everyone involved in construction needs to understand how everything they do is connected to the WFG Act and achievement of the seven well-being goals outlined in the legislation. Through the building of homes, schools, hospitals and infrastructure, the industry has a huge impact on every aspect of people's lives. That means construction has no choice but to align itself with the objectives of the Act. If we are to play our part in making Wales a world-class economy with a sustainable built environment, it's our legal, moral and ethical duty to do it.

This document is a statement of intent. Published in association with the office of the Future Generations Commissioner (OFG), it's a first step. A line in the sand. CE Wales is the only organisation able to pull all elements of Welsh construction together to embrace and deliver the government's goals as defined by the Act. Following a series of workshops and a conference in January 2019, we have begun our journey towards Construction for Future Generations. We'll update you via our website and a series of specific CE Wales Future Generations publications and conferences.

What can you do? Read this document. Share it. Commit to nurturing our planet and ensuring that our people and communities can flourish. Then, if you want to help shape the vision for our industry and create a Wales fit for future generations, join us. Visit www.cewales.org.uk and check out futuregenerations.wales

Foreword

The ambition at the heart of the WFG Act is to make the world a better place for everyone. How we conduct our lives has created major issues that the Act seeks to address: climate change, inequality, poverty. Construction might not have an obvious role to play in tackling all the factors outlined in the seven well-being goals, but there is still a great deal the industry can do to help.

We can make a significant contribution by responding to the issues and showing leadership. We can ensure that everything we build supports communities to thrive. That our projects serve the needs of Welsh people today without compromising the well-being of future generations. This requires a shift in attitudes and behaviours. There are two driving forces that should inform all our activities:

1. To positively respond to the impact that humanity is having on earth, ocean and atmospheric processes and the planet's ability to sustain resources and species for future generations
2. To maximise societal, community and individual economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being.

Construction is no longer defined by the simple fact that we build. It is now a question of why we build. It's about how we build, operate, maintain, reuse, repurpose and ultimately recycle the built environment. It's about adopting the principles of the circular economy.

In the UK, construction, demolition and excavation account for 60% of both materials use and waste generation. That puts us in a prime position to respond to the Welsh government's well-being goals and deliver enhanced value by changing the way we plan, procure, deliver and maintain construction schemes. We need to be part of the global and national movement towards beneficial change, as set out in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

In Wales, the WFG Act provides a legal imperative to change and improve that affects not just the public bodies named within the Act but, indirectly, every entity requiring planning consent. The new revised version of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (edition 10, December 2018) aligns planning policy with the objectives of the Act. In her foreword, Lesley Griffiths AM, Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs, comments that the revised PPW "embeds the spirit of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, through moving us towards a low carbon, resilient society, of providing secure and well-paid jobs, and of building well-connected environments for everyone in Wales that improves our lives and health and enhances our well-being". As the industry responsible for building these environments, we must act as if we were a named body under the Act.

CE Wales, in conjunction with the OFG, will lead the campaign to champion the industry's role in creating this brave new world. Every part of the construction supply chain needs to get involved. What needs to change? How can we move from short-term thinking to long-term planning? How can we empower our people to make it happen? The journey has begun – be part of the driving force behind Construction for Future Generations.

Paul C Maliphant CGeol FICE
Mott MacDonald Ltd

Summary

Welsh construction and the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFG Act) are intrinsically linked. Our industry is a key enabling force, essential to delivering the government's vision of a built environment fit for the future. However, in order to achieve this the sector needs to change its attitudes and behaviours.

CE Wales is collaborating with the office of the Future Generations Commissioner (OFG) to connect the industry's day-to-day work with the principles of the Act. In effect, CE Wales is working to embed a new construction strategy within the government's well-being goals and objectives, as if the industry were a named body within the Act.

CE Wales will build on the work we have already done to promote best practice principles and the benefits of a circular economy. We have already begun the task of changing hearts and minds, organising a conference and workshops to engage with the industry's stakeholders and discuss the issues raised by the Act. We will continue to educate and inform through an active communication campaign that will also embrace public sector clients and representative groups, as well as private sector organisations.

Our first key target is to establish a construction industry benchmark by mapping the seven well-being goals outlined in the Act against each of the nine stages in the RIBA plan of work. This will provide a picture of how far construction projects are currently aligned with the goals – and what needs to change. The benchmark will apply to both the public and private sectors, but the process will begin with 21st Century Schools projects.

We urge all parts of the industry to commit to the government's well-being aspirations as expressed in the WFG Act. Follow the example set by CECA Wales, which is committed to look at how civil engineering projects can adhere to the WFG Act goals. New and existing CE Wales members are invited to volunteer to assist with research, communication, events, seminars and conferences to help us spread the message.

Why and What

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFG Act) requires public bodies in Wales to consider the long-term impact of their decisions, work better with people, communities and each other, and tackle persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

The WFG Act provides the ambition, permission and legal obligation to improve our social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being. It applies to any organisation whose activities impact on our communities. We all have a responsibility to aim higher, build sustainably, and think and behave better. The Act is unique to Wales and is attracting interest from countries across the world, as it offers a huge opportunity to bring about long-lasting, positive change that benefits current and future generations. And every part of the built environment sector, from builders, designers and engineers to clients, owners, facilities managers and occupiers, needs to embrace it. How we design, plan and build has the potential to limit the impact that humanity is having on the planet and its ability to sustain resources and species for future generations. The way we deliver our projects can help to maximise societal, community and individual economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being.

These ambitions are not new. Many are enshrined in the best practice principles defined by the Egan and Latham reports, championed by CE Wales and celebrated in the CEW Awards. What's changed is the fresh guidance provided by the Act – notably the seven well-being goals. Construction has the potential to impact on all of them:

- 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.

The Act also defines five ways of working for public bodies which overlap with the values of Rethinking Construction and the principles of Constructing Excellence:

- 1. Long term – balancing short-term needs with the requirement to safeguard future well-being**
- 2. Integration – considering how a public body's well-being objectives impact on each of the well-being goals, their own objectives and the objectives of other public bodies**
- 3. Involvement – encouraging people to play a part in achieving well-being goals and ensuring participation reflects the diversity of the local area**
- 4. Collaboration – acting in collaboration with any other person or department to help the public body meet its well-being objectives**
- 5. Prevention – acting to prevent problems that get in the way of meeting well-being objectives.**

The framework for achieving these goals and modifying behaviour already exists. CE Wales' mission is to clarify how construction can meet the Act's specific obligations, and develop practical tools, methodology and guidance to support the change process.

This document is essentially 'live'. The PDF document – we aim not to print if possible – is a record of intent. Our website will be the live feed that reports progress, updates, adjustments and shifts in focus as we gauge feedback from industry and government.

Changing Hearts and Minds

Towards the end of January 2019, CE Wales held a major event in partnership with the Future Generations Wales team. We asked: *what does the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) mean for the construction sector?*

The conference, along with events involving stakeholders and professionals across Wales, allowed CE Wales to engage with almost 300 stakeholders and reach out to a further 130 organisations. Delegates assessed the implications of the legislation for our industry and how we can deliver “well-connected environments for everyone in Wales that improves our lives and health and enhances our well-being”, in the words of Lesley Griffiths AM, Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs.

One clear message emerged: the industry already has the tools to align procurement and delivery with the principles of the WFG Act. What is needed now is action.

During the workshops, participants developed ideas for construction well-being objectives that support the seven well-being goals. There were proposals to improve sustainability by capping the CO2 footprint of materials and processes, make greater use of local resources, and incorporate sustainable transport in schemes to reduce car use. Local government planning policy should incentivise sustainable development, encouraging green connectivity and infrastructure.

Designs should be more people-centric, promoting physical and psychological well-being, and serving the broader social needs of the community where possible. Procurement teams should be encouraged to focus on value and whole-life societal cost rather than short-term cost.

Delegates felt the industry could do more to provide employment, training and upskilling opportunities, equipping Welsh people with the skills they need to thrive in a changing world. Employers could improve inclusivity and fairness in their workforces by, for example, taking action to close the gender gap.

Many of these proposals chime with existing targets for CE Wales. Best practice is promoted in procurement processes to improve project delivery and shift the focus to value; there is a strong push for sustainable practice, such as better waste management; and commitment to social value and community benefits is becoming the norm.

What are We Going to Do Next?

CE Wales' primary task is to connect the goals, objectives and ways of working laid out by the WFG Act with the day-to-day life of the Welsh construction industry.

In short, we will make it real. That means talking the language of the built environment. The first step is to benchmark the projects currently under way to find out how far we are meeting the needs of the Act. Then we can start to address the changes we need to make as an industry.

The RIBA plan of work (www.ribaplanofwork.com) is an excellent starting point for creating our benchmark. It is already well understood by the industry and breaks down into eight simple processes, with an extra stage added for decommissioning:

- Strategic definition
- Preparation and brief
- Concept design
- Developed design
- Technical design
- Construction
- Handover and close out
- In use
- End of life – decommission

We will map the seven WFG Act well-being goals against each stage. This will create an accurate picture of what exactly is occurring on construction projects, from concept to decommission. We will be able to see where our processes need to be changed or improved to align with the intent of the Act. This applies to all schemes, both private and public, but we will start with projects within the 21st Century Schools programme.

In parallel with this work, we will continue to educate and inform everyone involved in construction on what needs to be done. This will involve research and events as well as initiatives to connect with government and like-minded industry bodies such as ICE Wales Cymru, IStructE, CECA, BESA, SEC, CITB, CIOB, RSAW, RICS, CIWEM, CIWM, CIHT, ACE and UKGBC. We will also reach out to client groups such as CLAW, NHS Wales, Network Rail, Transport for Wales and others.

Actions and Recommendations

It is within the industry's capabilities to make the world a better place for everyone, just as the WFG Act intends. CE Wales will:

- Embark on a communications campaign to educate and inform everyone involved in construction and the property sector in Wales. This will include the supply chain, public sector clients and representative groups, as well as private sector organisations.
- Establish a construction industry benchmark by mapping the seven WFG Act well-being goals against each of the nine stages in the RIBA plan of work.
- Test the seven WFG Act well-being objectives against the UKGBC's advice on circular economy principles.
- Reinvigorate the best practice principles championed by CE Wales and defined by the Egan and Latham reports, and align them with the principles of a circular economy and the aims of the WFG Act.
- Embed a dedicated built environment strategy within the work of the office of the Future Generations Commissioner, as if construction were a named body under the Act.

We strongly recommend that all parts of the industry commit to the principles of the WFG Act. We are currently seeking new and existing CE Wales members to volunteer to assist with research, our communication campaigns, events, seminars and conferences to drive the necessary change.

We recommend further research and reading as follows:

www.cewales.org.uk

futuregenerations.wales

www.ribaplanofwork.com

www.ukgbc.org



Constructing Excellence in Wales is the united voice of Welsh construction, representing every part of the supply chain. We are an independent, self-funding body campaigning to highlight the industry's role in underpinning key Welsh Government strategies and creating a built environment fit for the future.

The work of CE Wales is supporting the goals and objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. We continue to champion the construction improvement process in Wales – advocating a change in behaviours and an emphasis on long-term value. This shift in behaviours and culture is vital if the Welsh construction industry, its clients and supply chain, is to deliver a built environment fit for future generations. Failure to adapt is not an option.

Constructing Excellence Wales, together with the industry, is leading the campaign to bring about the required, tangible change alongside the office of the Future Generations Commissioner.