



**Title: Greater Gwent Nature Recovery Action Plan (GGNRAP) – Briefing Note on why it should be implemented via the PSB**

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### **Introduction and Background**

The Greater Gwent Nature Recovery Action Plan was produced as part of The Resilient Greater Gwent project<sup>1</sup>. This project was funded by Welsh Government's Enabling of Natural Resources and Well-being Grant. The programme came to an end in summer 2022, and demonstrated a landscape-wide approach and connectivity across South East Wales; to create and enhance resilient ecological networks, providing sustainably managed natural resources and principles for communities to value their landscapes and wildlife.

Ecosystem restoration and nature recovery work hand-in-hand. Nature recovery requires more than tinkering around the edges of the human environment. It requires the cessation of exploiting natural resources for unequal human gain, the reconnection of people with nature, and the restoration of ecosystems and ecosystem function to provide ecosystem resilience. It requires us all to work better together in a more integrated and involved way, to take collaborative preventative action to tackle the main drivers of biodiversity loss and build ecosystem resilience for well-being benefits long term.

To enhance the resilience of our ecosystems, a report entitled 'The Greater Gwent State of Nature'<sup>2</sup> was produced which looked at the data surrounding 100 species and species groups across Gwent. Following the report, the **Greater Gwent Nature Recovery Action Plan (Appendix 1)** has been produced.

### **Summary**

The NRAP for Wales was launched in 2015 by the Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board. It sets out how Wales will deliver the commitments of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the associated Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The NRAP for Wales was reviewed in 2019 to refocus the document in light of rapidly changing policy and environmental change, including the declaration of a climate emergency<sup>3</sup> by the Welsh Government in April 2019. Two main articles of legislation influence the NRAP for Wales, the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015<sup>4</sup>, and the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/resident/countryside/resilient-greater-gwent/>

<sup>2</sup> [Greater-Gwent-State-of-Nature-4-002.pdf \(monlife.co.uk\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Welsh Government makes climate emergency declaration | GOV.WALES](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015: the essentials \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

Environment (Wales) Act 2016<sup>5</sup>. Since the review of the Wales NRAP<sup>6</sup>, the Welsh Government also declared a nature emergency in Wales, in June 2021.

The Greater Gwent Nature Recovery Action Plan is a strategic document, set in the context of national and regional legislation and policy drivers, aiming to halt and reverse negative biodiversity trends identified in both the State of Natural Resources Report and the Greater Gwent State of Nature Report. It provides guidance for public bodies and organisations, as well as helping guide the Local Nature Recovery Action Plans which focus more on local action to promote biodiversity in each Local Nature Partnership area found within Gwent:

- Blaenau Gwent & Torfaen,
- Caerphilly; and
- Monmouthshire and Newport

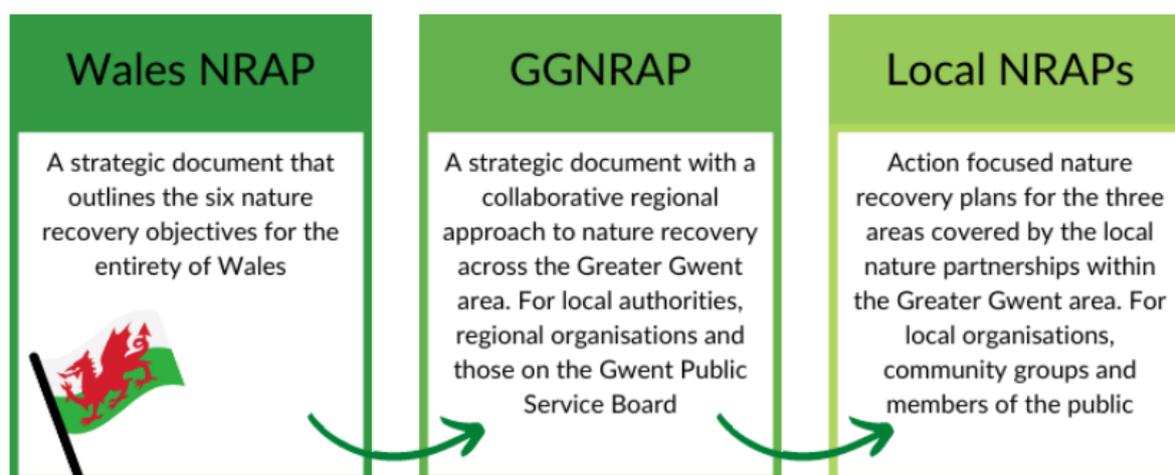


Figure 1. Hierarchy of nature recovery action plans in the Greater Gwent area

The GGNRAP is a strategic framework, aiming to align national policy and legislation, such as the Well-being of Future Generations (WoFG) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, informed by evidence including the Greater Gwent State of Nature Report 2020, the South East Wales Area Statement and Gwent Well-being Assessments. It is intended to be used by all organisations which operate at a regional level across the Greater Gwent area, including those on the Gwent Public Service Board (PSB), to support better involvement that drives positive change and collaborative action together long term.

<sup>5</sup> [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

<sup>6</sup> [Nature recovery action plan | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales)

### Mechanism for driving actions

To reduce the loss of biodiversity and create a nature recovery will require action on a local level and a regional level through a collaborative approach across Greater Gwent.

The GGNRAP has five primary aims and is a strategic ten-year document that is subject to reviews and amendments over its ten-year timeframe. GGNRAP will respond to future evidence, pressures, and policy changes, with reviews and updates as necessary.

The five aims of the GGNRAP are aligned with the strategic themes laid out in the South East Wales Area Statement and compliment the seven well-being goals established in the WoFG Act 2015.

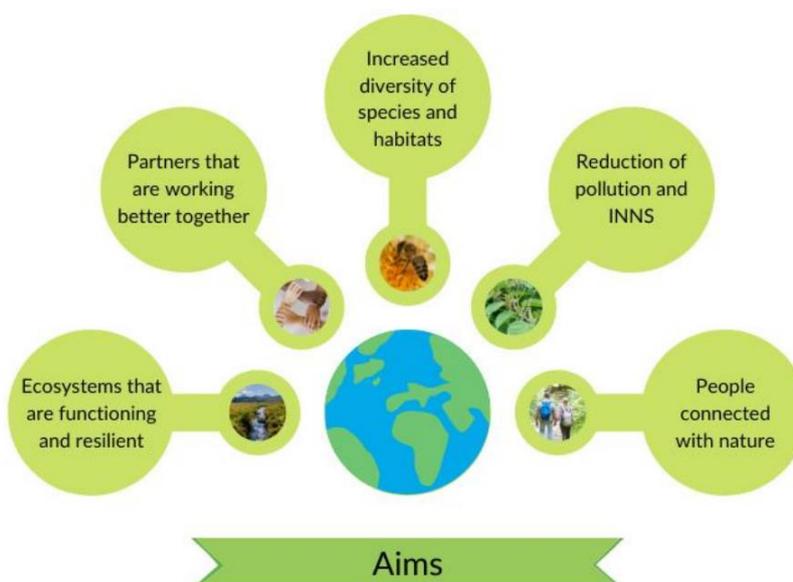


Figure 2. The five aims of the Greater Gwent Nature Recovery Action Plan

The priorities and outcomes of the GGNRAP actions are closely aligned with the outcomes of the South East Wales Area Statement<sup>7</sup>, supporting joined-up integrated nature recovery action that contributes to the statement’s vision, Wellbeing Goals and Natural Resources Policy priorities.

The NRAP for Wales was refreshed and now included five overarching themes for action.<sup>8</sup>

The themes are as follows:

<sup>7</sup> [Natural Resources Wales / South East Wales Area Statement](#)

<sup>8</sup> [The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales 2020 to 2021 \(gov.wales\)](#)



- Maintaining and Enhancing Resilient Ecological Networks
- Increasing Knowledge and Knowledge Transfer
- Realising new Investment and Funding
- Upskilling and Capacity for Delivery
- Governance, Mainstreaming and Reporting our Progress

The five newly agreed themes meet multiple NRAP objectives. There are six objectives in total:

**5 THEMES FOR ACTION**

**1 OBJECTIVE**

Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels

**2 OBJECTIVE**

Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management

**3 OBJECTIVE**

Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degrading habitats and habitat creation

**4 OBJECTIVE**

Tackle key pressures on species and habitats

**5 OBJECTIVE**

Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring

**6 OBJECTIVE**

Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery

**Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery (Objective 6)**



The GGNRAP is a ten-year document which at the time of writing does not have a pre-established review cycle or a specific governing body. This objective looks to establish the appropriate governance and a subsequent review cycle, so that the GGNRAP can be monitored, reviewed and managed adaptively in accordance with changing policy drivers. It is important to note that the Local NRAPs will be aligned to the same governance and review cycles, ensuring an integrated and joined-up approach from the local to landscape, and regional to national scales.

The Gwent Green Grid Partnership (GGGP)<sup>9</sup> is a sister project to RGG and will continue its legacy, to work on a regional scale to deliver a landscape approach to create healthy resources that are resilient to pressures and threats. The GGGP will be critical in delivering the GGNRAP and will potentially become the governance behind future reviews of the GGNRAP.

As a result, it is suggested that the GGGP (subject to additional external funding) and Gwent Public Service Board are the delivery mechanisms for this, as it provides an opportunity to work collectively to ensure we have a natural environment that is protected and enhanced. Providing direct links to Objective 3 within the consultation draft Well-being Plan<sup>10</sup> which highlights areas of concern regarding unsustainable approaches that are putting pressure on our natural resources.

### Appendix 1: Greater Gwent Nature Recovery Action Plan

<https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/media/xdndjdtto/greater-gwent-nature-recovery-action-plan.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> [Gwent Green Grid Partnership - Monlife](#)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gwentpsb.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Consultation-draft-Well-being-Plan-for-Gwent-Sept-2023-draft-on-website-4-Oct-English.pdf>