

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

[Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith](#) | [Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee](#)

[Bil yr Amgylchedd \(Ansawdd Aer a Seinweddau\) \(Cymru\)](#) | [The Environment \(Air Quality and Soundscapes\) \(Wales\) Bill](#)

Ymateb gan Cymdeithas Lleihau Sŵn | Evidence from Noise Abatement Society

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## General principles

What are your views on the general principles of the Bill, and is there a need for legislation to deliver the stated policy intention?

The Noise Abatement Society welcomes this Bill. Specifically, the Society supports the Welsh Government's continued focus on the crucial alignment of noise and soundscape with air quality policy. Taking the further step of giving this alignment a legislative foothold will contribute to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in line with the aims of the Future Generations Act 2015 (WFGA). The Society recognises and commends Wales' leadership in this area and anticipates that this Bill, should it hopefully become an Act, will be an exemplar to other parts of the UK.

What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to sections below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

National air quality targets (sections 1 to 7)

Promoting awareness about air pollution (section 8)

National air quality strategy (sections 9 to 11)

Air quality regulations (section 12)

Local air quality management (sections 13 to 15)

Smoke control (sections 16 to 18)

Vehicle emissions (sections 19 to 21)

National soundscapes strategy (sections 22 and 23)

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The Noise Abatement Society has been a voluntary advisor to the Welsh Government on aspects of its work on soundscape and a commissioned consultant on the drafting of the "Technical Advice

Note (TAN) 11: Air Quality, Noise and Soundscape" (currently in draft form and not policy; having undergone consultation, the responses to which are currently being reviewed). Understandably, the Society now strongly supports the further strengthening of soundscape within Welsh Government policy and legislation. As stated, the Society views this Bill becoming an Act as crucial to ensure Wales' soundscape strategy can have a firm legislative footing from which to contribute to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in line with the aims of the Future Generations Act 2015 (WFGA).

Strategic noise map and noise action plans (sections 24)

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### General provisions (sections 25 to 28);

What are the potential barriers to the implementation of the Bill's provisions and how does the Bill take account of them?

How appropriate are the powers in the Bill for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation (as set out in Chapter 5 of Part 1 of the Explanatory Memorandum)?

Are any unintended consequences likely to arise from the Bill?

What are your views on the Welsh Government's assessment of the financial implications of the Bill as set out in Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum?

Are there any other issues that you would like to raise about the Bill and the accompanying Explanatory Memorandum or any related matters?

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Concerning the Explanatory Memorandum and regarding "The review and publication of a Noise and Soundscape Plan for Wales", the Noise Abatement Society supports "Option two – Change the legislation on noise action plans to mirror the Clean Air Plan duty" (section 7.219). The Society views this option as crucial to support the delivery of the aims of the Future Generations Act 2015 (WFGA), namely contributing to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. This is because soundscape is a transdisciplinary field that encompasses all aspects of health and well-being. In order to fully realise and maximise the potential of soundscape design, planning and management [as set out in Planning Policy Wales; the Noise and Soundscape Action Plan; and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 11: Air Quality, Noise and Soundscape" (to which the Society contributed and which is currently in draft form and not policy; having undergone consultation, the responses to which are currently being reviewed)] it is important to bring the legislation on noise action plans in line with the Clean Air Plan duty. This will serve to modernise the current legislation taking account of the growing evidence base on noise, health and soundscapes and thereby support the continued health and well-being goals of Wales and the duty to do so required by the WFGA.