



Llyr Gruffydd MS
Chair, Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

25th September 2024

Re: Introduction and Update on Nature Service Wales

Dear Llyr,

I hope this letter finds you well. Following the recent meeting of the CCEI Committee, during which Joyce Watson MS raised a question regarding Nature Service Wales (NSW), I felt it would be a good moment to introduce myself as the newly appointed Director of NSW and provide the committee with some background and an update on our current progress.

As you may know, Nature Service Wales received financial support from Welsh Government in 2022 to produce a business plan, and in July this year, we secured a further small grant to begin building our core team. We are now in the early stages of delivering Strand 1 of that plan, which focuses on establishing NSW as an entity. This includes developing clear governance structures, securing additional funding for the core team, and broadening the partnership to build a national framework with a focus on both terrestrial and marine, reflecting the holistic approach needed for environmental restoration in Wales.

Nature Service Wales envisions a country-wide movement delivering nature-based skills and knowledge through structured education, training, and volunteering, delivered via a network of local partners. This will create pathways to employment, support health and wellbeing, engage diverse communities and strengthen our collective response to the Nature and Climate Emergencies.

A broad partnership is already working to develop this approach. Through this next phase we will build on that, bringing together environmental organisations and stakeholders from across sectors to offer coordinated opportunities that educate, upskill, and inspire. This fully embodies the spirit of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, turning its principles into action with a long-term, coordinated approach to nature recovery while addressing skills gaps, fostering collaboration across sectors, and empowering individuals from all backgrounds to engage. This will help us build the capacity needed to transform Wales from one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world, to a global leader in nature recovery.



We see Welsh Government as a key partner and are committed to aligning with its environmental and climate goals, with a particular focus on increasing public engagement and addressing the urgent need for nature-based skills development. These aims would also deliver on recommendations from the Government's Biodiversity Deep Dive, which emphasise the need for capacity building, behaviour change, and skills development to achieve long-term nature recovery goals.

We have already outlined our key asks of Welsh Government, including a recommendation for a cross-departmental project board with a point of contact, so partners can engage across the relevant policy areas including education, skills, biodiversity, economy, agriculture, community, and marine. A key action for this group would be a review to identify where existing funding streams can support nature-based skills development.

We have also requested that Welsh Government become a partner investor in Strand 1 of our business plan, which focuses on establishing a national framework for delivery. While we are seeking investment from other sources, government backing will be crucial in demonstrating leadership and long-term commitment.

As we continue to build momentum, we are planning a launch event to formally introduce NSW to a broader audience and highlight opportunities for greater engagement. I would be delighted to keep you informed of our plans and would welcome any feedback or support you may offer as we move forward. We have previously met with government official Alison Kitchener and will continue to engage through this development phase.

I am keen to work closely with the Welsh Government and all relevant stakeholders to ensure NSW plays a meaningful role in advancing Wales's environmental and climate ambitions. I have copied Joyce Watson MS into this letter, and I would be happy to meet with you to discuss how NSW can best align with the Welsh Government's strategic goals.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to keeping you updated on our progress.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Lock
Director, Nature Service Wales
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Cc: Joyce Watson MS