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Ymateb gan: Benjamin Hitchings | Evidence from: Benjamin Hitchings

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Note to the Equality and Social Justice Committee:

Attached below is a copy of my dissertation titled 'To what extent can the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 be considered a success?' completed as part of a MSc (Econ) Politics and Public Policy at Cardiff University.

I hope this piece of work assessing the success of the Act can be useful to the committee's post legislative scrutiny on it. This work was completed over the Summer of 2024 so does not account for data after that.

I would like to note that the views represented here are those of myself and not of my current employer, who I was not employed by at the time of writing this.

Please do let me know if there is anything else I can help with.

Thanks

Ben Hitchings

# TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015 BE CONSIDERED A SUCCESS?

By

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## **Abstract**

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is a law that seeks to improve the quality of life for current and future generations in Wales, through requiring public bodies to do things in pursuit of economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being. This is a significant, world leading piece of legislation whose success must be evaluated to discover whether this is an effective approach to deal with major societal issues. This has yet to be duly addressed by academia and faces a major barrier in the lack of an acceptable framework for measuring its success.

Therefore, this dissertation assesses the extent to which the WFGA has been a success, and whether the success of such a policy can be measured. It does this through highlighting different aspects that are considered to constitute success and assessing whether these aspects have achieved their intentions; how impactful the Act was on achieving these; how effective each is as a means of measuring success; and therefore, the extent to which this demonstrates success of the WFGA. Finding that an effective framework for measuring the success of the WFGA and other 'future generations policies' includes:

- Has the policy influenced the adoption of a similar policy elsewhere?
- Has the policy allowed national government and public bodies to be held to account on their actions?
- Has well-being improved?
- Has behaviour changed? – Of the national government, public bodies, and the public.

Ultimately, due to interest from other countries, and Wales's ambitions to be world leaders on this policy, the success of the WFGA must be assessed. The dissertation finds that its success can be

measured, and that success of multiple aspects can constitute overall success. Currently however, success in different aspects is largely overshadowed by many issues. Although, with more time and recommendations being acted upon, it is possible that, despite unavoidable issues, the WFGA can be considered a success.

## **Introduction**

Since its introduction, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFGA) or (the Act), has required public bodies to do things in the pursuit of the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales (Welsh Assembly Government, 2015a), to provide current and future generations with a good quality of life (Welsh Government 2024a). The WFGA is significant because it is a world leading piece of legislation, that places a legal obligation on public bodies to act today for a better tomorrow. It makes Wales the first country in the world to place the UN'S Sustainable Development Goals into statute through an act created to look after the interests of future generations (Howe 2022).

Due to interest in the Act from other countries; Wales' ambitions to be world leaders on this policy; to conclude that this is an effective way of improving well-being and that Wales is now being governed differently (Davidson, 2020, p.107), there is a need to effectively evaluate the extent to which it has been a success. Additionally, policy evaluation is important to provide a retrospective assessment of the merit, worth and value of the output and outcome of government interventions (Vedung,1997, p.3). However, this has yet to be duly addressed by academia and there are issues in evaluating whether the WFGA has been a success. The Act itself fails to set out an effective criteria for its success, beyond its national well-being goals, indicators, and milestones, which all possess issues. There is difficulty in measuring a complex concept such as well-being, as it has objective and subjective elements (Happy City Measurement and Policy Team 2016). There is also ambiguity of

how much actions or changes can be attributed to the influence of the Act. Additionally, assessing policy success is rarely considered beyond success as meeting policy objectives or producing better policy (Marsh and McConnell, 2010, p.565) and is often treated as a binary success or failure (McConnell, 2010, p.346). This sort of evaluation is focused on far smaller policies, and there is a large degree of difficulty in applying this approach to a policy as multidimensional, overarching, and long-term as the WFGA. The lack of an acceptable framework or methodology for measuring the success of a policy such as this poses a major challenge in evaluating the Act's success.

Ultimately, these factors, amongst others, have led to uncertainty on whether the WFGA has been successful. Therefore, this dissertation assesses the extent to which it has been a success, and whether the success of a policy such as this can be measured. It does this through exploring different aspects which are considered to constitute success of the WFGA, assessing if they have achieved their intentions; if the Act impacted this; how effective each are in measuring success; and therefore, the extent to which this demonstrates success of the Act. Ultimately creating a framework for measuring the success of this policy, which after recommendations can be directly applied to other future generations policies and in-part to long-term policies generally.

The dissertation begins with a literature review, firstly exploring traditional literature on policy success, then focusing on the success of long-term policies and the WFGA. Before exploring the topics of policy learning; well-being; and behaviour change, which are all important elements of the framework for measuring the Act's success. Then progressing on to the main body of the paper which will be divided into four chapters. The first will look at the WFGA: its background, contents, intentions, implementation and a discussion of what it says about its success. The remainder of the paper will assess whether the Act has been a success through different aspects. Firstly, applying traditional policy success literature to the Act, and particularly McConnell (2010) and Marsh and McConnell's (2010) policy success framework. Also, through others policy learning from the Act, and through holding the Welsh Government and public bodies to account to adhere to the legislation.

The dissertation will then progress to discuss the two most significant elements for measuring the Act's success, with Chapter Three focusing on success through improving well-being as the Act is centred around this. Doing so through an analytical study of the national indicators and milestones to assess whether they have improved. Also analysing the effectiveness of the seven well-being goals, which all the indicators relate to, and the role of the Future Generations Commissioner (FGC) or (the Commissioner) in improving well-being. The fourth chapter focuses on behaviour change and success through changing the behaviour of government, local bodies, and the public in line with the WFGA. This is central to the Act as improving well-being often requires a change in behaviour. The chapter undertakes document and speech analysis of Welsh Government and Senedd sources of to assess the extent of the WFGA's influence on policy decisions. Before doing the same for policy decisions of other public bodies and finding whether the behaviour of the public has changed both directly and through the impact of the highlighted policies. Finally, the dissertation will provide a framework for measuring the success of the WFGA, and other future generations policies. Success in multiple of these aspects can constitute overall success of the policy.

The dissertation ultimately argues that there is great difficulty and little value in assessing the success of the WFGA against traditional measures. Success through others policy learning and through holding government and public bodies to account are more effective means, have seen relative success, but also face issues. Additionally, well-being can be considered to have improved, and behaviour change to have occurred, yet both face issues over how much can be attributed to the Act and therefore, it is difficult to definitively state that the WFGA has been a success in these regards.

## **Literature Review**

This literature review is separated into two sections, firstly exploring literature on policy success. This begins with a chronological overview of the academic literature on the topic, in addition to the of note McConnell (2010) and Marsh & McConnell (2010) framework for measuring policy success, and a review of the literature on measuring success of long-term policy. The second section explores literature on areas that are used to measure the success of the WFGA throughout this dissertation. Including what is said about the Act's success. But mostly focusing on policy success through policy learning; improving well-being; and behaviour change. The literature review concludes with a discussion of the methodology that is used to assess the different aspects constituting the Act's success.

In general, the literature on policy success is rather thin. McConnell's (2010) separation of the literature into six strands is effective yet can be expanded upon. Firstly, there is a large collection of literature focused on policy evaluation discussed as early as Lasswell (1956, 1971). (McConnell 2010, p.347) notes that as the concept has developed, the focus has shifted to the belief that policy success resides in good design and focusing on ex ante evaluation. The work of Boyne (2003, 2004) is significant, with a focus on linked organisations and viewing success as achieving targets and outcomes. Second, is the concept of public value, originating with (Moore 1995) in response to the American view of government as wasteful and bureaucratic. He argues for the need for things to be of value to stakeholders and operationally feasible (Moore, 1995, p.71). Third, is good practice in policymaking and management. Including the work on the benefits of policy design (Schneider and Ingram 1997), and problem definition (Bardach 2009). Fourth, is the political aspect of success, which focuses on evaluating policies based on their ability to benefit certain political actors (McConnell, 2010, p.348). Fifth, is the view of policy evaluation through success which is not common and often overly concerned with achieving goals (Nagel 2002). Some focus on mixed success (Murray and Primus 2005), and partial success (Pollack 2007), whereas the work of Bovens et al (2001) progressed



this. Finally, a substantial section of the literature focuses on failure, with some considering it objective, such as those dealing with human error (Reason 1997), whilst others addressing things such as policy fiascos (Bovens and 't Hart 1996) consider failure to be subjective. The scholars who do the latter also argue for an increased focus on success as failure is not as common as many neo-liberals claim with their rhetoric of public sector failure (Bovens et al., 2001, p.643).

In the work of (Marsh and McConnell 2010; McConnell 2010), there is an attempt to move beyond the perception that the purpose of policy analysis is about client-oriented advice and that ideal complete success is rarely met. They create a three-dimensional framework to address issues raised in the previous section and allow policy analysts to move beyond binary success and failure (McConnell, 2010, p.346). This develops from the work of (Bovens et al. 2001) which categorises policy evaluation into two dimensions. Firstly programmatic, where there is a focus on the effectiveness, efficiency, and resilience of a specific policy. Second is political, which relates to the way policies and policymakers are evaluated in the political arena (Bovens et al., 2001, pp.20-21). This is built on to introduce the third dimension of process: which refers to the stages of policymaking from an issue emerging and setting the agenda; formulating policy options; legitimising these options; to implementing the policy (McConnell, 2010, p.350). In response to the binary approach to policy evaluation, (McConnell 2010) considers policies to be able to succeed or fail along a spectrum, consisting of success, resilient success, conflicted success, precarious success, and failure. Whereby, each of the three realms of policy can succeed or fail along this spectrum. Additionally, Marsh and McConnell (2010) identify multiple indicators for each realm, which include suggested evidence and can be used to measure success. Furthermore, policy has multiple dimensions which can overlap or be treated separately, and can succeed in some ways and not others (McConnell, 2010, pp.345-349). This notion of policy success not being mutually exclusive is best demonstrated by the possible contradictions where a policy might experience process success through the government getting its policy yet be unsuccessful programmatically as it is not effective. Similarly, achieving success in one realm may mean sacrificing it in another (McConnell, 2010,

pp.357-359). The scholars note significant complexities in measuring success, including what constitutes success differing based on perspective; the failure to consider external factors when evaluating a policy's impact; and of a policy appearing successful in the short term but a failure long term (Marsh and McConnell, 2010, pp.575-581). This model is applied to the WFGA in Chapter Two of the paper, to assess the Act's success through a typical policy success framework and find how effective this model is in doing that.

A major barrier faced in attempting to evaluate the success of the WFGA, is the lack of literature on long-term policies and specifically on how to measure their success. This is largely due to the short-termism focus of policymaking, due to the pressure of immediate political and electoral concerns (Marsh and McConnell, 2010, p.576). With most policy analysis focusing on social costs and benefits (Jacobs, 2016, p.436). Elements of the literature highlight the importance of a long-term approach to policymaking, to respond to the major, social, environmental, and economic challenges we face (Department for BEIS, 2020, p.6). Boston and Stuart (2015) directly correlate this with taking a future generations focus, as they have no voice and are reliant on the current generation to protect their interests. They also note suggestions of approaches to protect future generations' interests. These include non-constitutional approaches such as: moving long-term decision rights away from elected officials, and creating legislative chambers for future generations. Additionally highlighting constitutional approaches which have seen success, that with appropriate wording can provide future generations greater moral and legal status (Boston and Stuart 2015). Despite a consensus that traditional models are not effective for measuring the success of long-term policy, there is no alternative framework. Such a means of measuring success is important to assess the extent to which progress is being made towards major long-term problems. This dissertation attempts to address this through its success framework, which can be applied to other long-term policies.

Of the little available literature addressing the success of the WFGA, there fails to be a consensus of what can be constituted as its success. The Act creates the national indicators and milestones as a

means of evaluating its progress towards the well-being goals and establishes the role of the FGC to hold public bodies to account in pursuing the goals, however each possess issues and beyond this it mentions little about its success. Former Welsh Government minister, Jane Davidson, who proposed what ultimately became the WFGA, highlights in her book *#futuregen* (where she tells the story of the Act), that the fundamental question of success is whether after ten years Wales will be governed differently because of it (Davidson, 2020, p.107). Other suggested aspects of success include changing the behaviour of public servants to think more long-term, which (Jones 2019) states has been a success. Additionally, Sophie Howe, as the first FGC, considers interest from other countries and governments in the policy as constituting success (Future Generations Commissioner, 2024a). The different aspects of success suggested demonstrate the complexity of measuring success for a policy such as this, which has not yet been addressed. Whereby evaluating the Act's success is important to understand whether this policy is an effective way of improving the lives of current and future generations.

One aspect of success which is explored in greater detail and included in the framework, is through others 'policy learning' from the WFGA, which the FGC believes demonstrates success (Future Generations Commissioner, 2024a). This concept has been present for centuries, and work by those such as (Bennett 1991) is built upon by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996). They consider it the process in which knowledge of policy goals; structure and content; policy instruments; institutions; ideology; ideas; attitudes; and negative lessons (Rose, 1993, pp.132-134) in one place or period, are used in the development of the same things in another place or period (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996, p.344). With transfer occurring through forms such as copying; emulation; hybridisation; synthesis; and inspiration (Rose, 1993, pp.132-134). Paul Cairney (2019, p.207) notes the strengths of doing this and questions why actors would not want to learn from the mistakes of others. With regards to linking this to policy success, Nagel (2002, p.6) notes that if such research from elsewhere is referred to in a policy, then it constitutes good evaluation and therefore policy success. The FGC believes the Act to have been impactful through inspiring other countries and institutions (Future Generations

Commissioner 2024a, 2024b). Furthermore, this can be included as an aspect of McConnell's (2010) political dimension of policy success, where praise and the degree to which the WFGA is transferred to other institutions can be placed along the success to failure spectrum. There is a gap in the literature on others learning from your policy demonstrating its success, especially for the WFGA, which this dissertation addresses.

Well-being is at the core of the Act through making sustainable development the central organising principle of the Welsh Government and certain public bodies, which the Act defines as the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales (Welsh Government 2015a). The concept of well-being has deep roots, with the (World Health Organisation, 1946, p.1) constitution considering health as "the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being ... not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" The WFGA aims to improve well-being through its seven well-being goals, which have a legally binding common purpose for national and local government and public bodies, and fifty national well-being indicators against which progress towards the well-being goals can be measured (Welsh Government 2024a). Therefore, this can be considered an aspect of success, with Chapter Three assessing whether well-being has improved. However, there are issues over measuring a concept such as well-being, which must be addressed to be able to assess this. These issues are largely due to the complexity of well-being as a concept as it lacks an agreed definition, and an agreed method for measuring it (Huppert, 2017, pp.164-165). This is largely because it possesses elements which are both hedonic: feeling good which is largely subjective; and eudemonic, which is functioning well and objective (Adler and Seligman 2016). It is difficult to measure subjective experience as it is impossible to know if one person's report of feeling a certain percentage sad is the same as another person's (Happy City Measurement and Policy Team, 2016, p.4). Additionally, it is difficult to measure well-being only through objective means as well-being is more complex than just reporting facts. There is a lack of literature which looks at whether the WFGA has improved well-being, and a need to assess to assess this beyond the indicators.

Another major goal of the legislation is to change the behaviour of the Welsh Government, public bodies (Future Generations Commissioner, 2022, p.75), and the public (Davidson 2020) to best pursue the well-being goals. Chapter Four focuses on this aspect of success and the extent to which the WFGA has changed the behaviour of the Welsh Government and public bodies through influencing their policy actions, and the impact these policies and the Act directly has had on changing the behaviour of the public. Governments often use behaviour change interventions which are fundamental to address many issues facing society (Michie et al 2011). These interventions can take many forms and are characterised by (Michie et al 2011) into a 'Behaviour Change Wheel', alongside sources of behaviour and policy categories.

Policy instruments can be used for such interventions and are best illustrated by the model of *carrots*, which provide incentives (often economic); *sticks*: providing regulation (bans or mandates); and *sermons* to provide information (McCormick 1998). However, Tummers (2019) notes that these three instruments are all based on rational decision making, yet people do not always make rational decisions, often experiencing bounded rationality and choosing satisfactory options over optimal ones, which policymakers must consider when seeking to change behaviour. In response, Tummers proposes to include the instrument of the *nudge* following Thaler and Sunstein's (2008) groundbreaking book. With the *nudge* changing behaviour without major cost change, through something such as clarifying social norms (Tummers, 2019, p.926). An example of which Thaler and Sunstein (2008, p.187) highlight is of presumed consent around organ donation if there was a lack of organ donors. A policy changing behaviour can be considered a success, as it has achieved what it set out to do. The success of the WFGA in doing this has not yet been addressed, with a similar lack of literature on changing the behaviour of governments and behaviour change demonstrating policy success, which this paper rectifies.

To assess whether the WFGA has been a success the paper explores different aspects which are considered to constitute its success. First applying traditional means of measuring policy success to

the Act, analysing the interest the Act has received from elsewhere, and how effective it has been in holding government and public bodies to account through analysing the work of the FGC. In the third chapter there is an analytical study into the extent to which each of the indicators has improved (this is shown in Appendix A) and an analysis of the impact of the FGC in improving well-being. Finally, Chapter Four includes both document and speech analysis to assess the extent to which the Act has changed behaviour of Welsh Government, public bodies, and the public.

## **Chapter 1: The Act**

This first chapter of the main body of this dissertation provides an overview of the WFGA: looking at the background to it, its intentions, its contents and implementation, and what it says about its success. The Act is ultimately about improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. Where amid current and future challenges there is a need to think about the long-term impact of decisions (Welsh Government, 2015b, p.3-4). The Act does this through making it legally binding for public bodies to do things in pursuit of improving well-being (Welsh Government 2015a).

### **Background**

Haydn Davies (2016) notes that the WFGA originates from the 2006 Government of Wales Act's duty to promote sustainable development, which was ultimately laid out in the One Wales: One Planet scheme. This scheme set out the intention to make sustainable development the central organising principle of governance and highlighted well-being as an indicator for this (Welsh Assembly Government 2009). Alternatively, Jane Davidson (2020), notes the Act was rooted far deeper than Davies suggests. Highlighting the significance of earlier Welsh Assembly Government schemes of: Learning to Live Differently (2000) and Starting to Live Differently (2004). She also notes the later

impact of the Wales we Want Report (Davies 2014) which highlighted seven foundations that helped influence the WFGA's final iterations (Davidson, 2020, p.85).

### Intention

The Welsh Government (2024a) states that the WFGA is needed to respond to the number of challenges Wales is facing currently, and in the future. Including climate change, poverty, health and well-being, and economic activity. Whereby to tackle these large-scale issues and provide current and future generations with a good quality of life, there is a need to work collaboratively and think about the long-term impact of decisions. The Act through law, attempts to ensure public bodies do this, but also intends to change the public's actions and provide them with permission to make good decisions for the climate and have wild ideas for the future (Davidson, 2020, pp. 100-106). Davidson (2020) additionally notes the wider scope and longer-term intentions such as to shift away from an infinite growth, consumerist, and carbon reliant society towards a focus on community, kindness, and care for nature. With the Act intending to provide an overarching framework for all Welsh Government policy with sustainable development as the central organising principle.

### Contents and Implementation

The WFGA outlines seven well-being goals, which are broad and overarching, show the kind of Wales we want and provide a shared vision for public bodies to work towards (Welsh Government, 2015b, p.6). The goals are: 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; and A globally responsible Wales (Welsh Government 2015a). Additionally, sustainable development is at the core of the Act, placing it as the central organising principle of governance and being considered as the process of improving the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales (Welsh Government 2015a). The Act provides this common purpose to certain 'public bodies' which include the Welsh Government, the twenty-two local authorities, the seven local health boards, and other bodies including NHS Trusts, National Park Authorities, Fire and Rescue Authorities, and

Natural Resources Wales (Welsh Government 2015a). In addition to recent commitments for more organisations to come under the Act (Future Generations Commissioner, 2024c). With regards to implementation, the Act creates a well-being duty that the Welsh Government and other public bodies are expected to carry out. Where, by law, they must set well-being objectives to contribute to each of the well-being goals and take “all reasonable steps” to meet those objectives (Welsh Government 2015a). Additionally, the Act establishes a sustainable development principle, which informs organisations how to achieve their duty, where they must ensure that any actions meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations (Welsh Government 2015a). The Act also sets out five ways of working for public bodies to achieve the well-being goals: collaboration, integration, involvement, long-term, and prevention (Welsh Government 2024a).

To support and monitor public bodies in achieving their goals and to act as the guardian for the interests of future generations, the Act establishes the role of the FGC, independent from Welsh Government. The role includes functions which support and push public bodies to achieve their objectives and improve well-being, such as publishing a Future Generations Report on improvements that should be made (Welsh Government 2015a). Similarly, the Auditor General for Wales may carry out assessments of public bodies’ actions (Welsh Government, 2015b, p.8). With both aiming to hold public bodies to account in line with the goals of the Act. Also, to improve well-being at the local level, the WFGA establishes Public Services Boards (PSB), which for each local authority area includes the relevant council, health board, fire authority, and natural resources body. Each PSB must improve the well-being of its area by assessing the state of well-being, and setting objectives to contribute to the well-being goals (Welsh Government 2015a).

### Success

To measure success and progress made towards the well-being goals, the WFGA establishes that Welsh Government Ministers (Ministers) must publish national indicators. These must be expressed as a value or characteristic and measured against an outcome. They also must set milestones for



certain indicators to show expectations, and must publish annual reports on progress towards these indicators (Welsh Government 2015a). Each of the fifty indicators published relate to multiple well-being goals and tell the story of progress towards them. As is explored in Chapter Three, there are multiple issues with using this to assess the legislation's success. Including, how much well-being improvement can be attributed to the influence of the Act, and the difficulty of measuring well-being. Therefore, this cannot be the only means of assessing the WFGA's success, a more developed approach assessing success through multiple aspects is required.

## **Chapter 2: Other Aspects of Success**

This second chapter is split into two sections, the first looks at traditional measures of policy success, and applies McConnell's (2010) and Marsh and McConnell's (2010) Process, Program, and Politics policy success framework to the WFGA, analysing how effective this is for measuring its success. The second section addresses areas which have been noted by scholars to constitute success of the Act outside of the main dimensions, which are discussed in the following two chapters. Addressed here is policy learning in the form of influencing other countries to adopt similar policies (Future Generations Commissioner 2024a), and through being able to hold the Welsh Government and public bodies to account to adhere to the Act (Jones 2019; Davidson 2020).

### **'Typical' Policy Success**

As discussed in the literature review, much of the discourse on policy success is narrow focused, and practically non-existent for long-term policies especially for one such as the WFGA. A lot of the literature due to often being produced from within government, struggles to move beyond the assumption of success as meeting objectives or making 'better' policy (Marsh and McConnell, 2010,

p.565). This includes the work of Stuart Nagel (2002) who considers policy analysis as determining which of various policies will best achieve a set of goals. Additionally, he notes key elements of policy evaluation including goals, means of achieving goals, relations between policies and goals, drawing cautious conclusions, and the ease of choosing another option. When applying this to the WFGA, the central focus on largely normative and quantitative goals does not transfer well due to the broad and hard to measure goals of the WFGA, and the complexity of the Act and the concept of well-being. A more developed approach to policy success is created by Boyne (2003) on public sector improvement. He focuses on improvement over effectiveness as it is a more dynamic concept and focuses on the delivery of success. Additionally, he explores five conceptual models for the criteria for policy success: goal model; systems-resource model; internal processes model; competing values model; and multiple constituency model. In applying this to the WFGA there are the previously noted issues over the goal focus, and a lack of relevance to the second and third models. However, the final two models provide convincing notions of the contestation of success which often reflects power relations, and different stakeholders using different success criteria. Ultimately, the lack of applicability of these measures of success to the Act, highlights the need for an alternate means of measuring success for this policy.

#### Process, Program, and Politics Success Framework

A more convincing model for measuring policy success is proposed by (McConnell 2010) and (Marsh and McConnell 2010). As they attempt to move beyond the binary of success or failure, conceiving policy to have three realms: process, programs, and politics, where a policy in any of these areas may succeed or fail along a spectrum. First is process where governments identify problems, examine solutions and make decisions (McConnell, 2010, p.350). Through combining the indicators and evidence provided by (Marsh and McConnell 2010) and the success-failure spectrum of (McConnell 2010), the WFGA can be considered a success in this dimension. Including over legitimacy, as the policy went through due process as evidenced by the multiple Welsh Assembly Government schemes leading to it (2000, 2004, 2009), and a lack of legislative amendments from the bill (Welsh

Government 2014) to the act (Welsh Government 2015a). In addition to success of political sustainability, demonstrated by support from the third sector, civil servants (Messham and Sheard 2020), and a degree of cross-party support as illustrated by the final vote (Senedd Business 2015). Also demonstrating innovation and influence success, through creating an innovative response to societal challenges and using other policies to shape the Act (Messham and Sheard 2020). Second, programmes are what governments do (McConnell, 2010, p.350). Where there is conflicted operational success as the FGC holds government and public bodies to account to improve well-being through a duty (Welsh Parliament 2015a). Yet it is difficult to conclude that this has been effective, and bodies are only required to take reasonable steps towards these (Davies, 2016, p.55). There is similar difficulty in answering whether it has achieved its intended outcomes, as this paper addresses, also facing the same issues over whether it was an efficient use of resources. Additionally, being unable to yet demonstrate benefit for the target group of future generations. However, it can benefit the Welsh Labour Government as they can create policy which uses the Act as a sort of mandate, despite this not being their admitted intention (Howe 2017). Third, is politics, where governments' choices have political consequences (McConnell, 2010, p.350). Here there appears to be political success as Welsh Labour won a majority in the following two elections, however it is very unlikely there is any causation between these two things. Additionally, public opinion was utilised prior to the Acts creation with the Wales We Want report (Davies 2014), however there is a lack thereof since.

Overall, in terms of applying this model to the WFGA, the Act can be considered a conflicted success. There are also still large degrees of ambiguity and wider issues in using this model to assess the Act's success. The major issue is that despite Marsh and McConnell's (2010) indicators and evidence, there is still a large degree of subjective personal interpretation required in this and in the success/failure spectrum (McConnell 2010). Additionally, this framework is ineffective as it is developed for smaller policies with fewer elements, this is made evident by a lack of a clear answer to many of the highlighted indicators of policy success.

## Others Policy Learning from the WFGA

Others policy learning from the WFGA is an of note aspect of success that is highlighted by the FGC (Future Generations Commissioner, 2024a). Policy learning can generally be considered as the process where policy goals; structure and content; policy instruments; institutions; ideology; ideas; attitudes; and negative lessons in one place or period, are used in the development of the same things in another place or period (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996, p.344). In terms of the WFGA, policy learning occurs with other countries, governments, institutions, or political actors adopting similar future generations policy because of the Act, and/or receiving external praise from the same actors. Other countries learning from the Act is underlined as an element of success by Jane Davidson (2020), and the FGC who considers the attraction of interest from other countries as offering an opportunity to make long-lasting change to current and future generations worldwide (Future Generations Commissioner 2024a). In this sense the WFGA can be considered successful as Howe (2021) notes that it has inspired the United Nations (UN). Having received recognition from the UN Secretary General (United Nations 2023). Additionally, it has influenced the establishment of a UN Special Envoy, a Futures Summit, and a UN Declaration for Future Generations. With Jayathma Wickramanayake, the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, stating they were inspired by "progress being made in some countries around the world, including Wales" (Howe 2021). Additionally, there has been interest in the future generations policies from countries such as Canada, New Zealand, Australia and Portugal (Davidson, 2020, p.22). The WFGA and the FGC have also had a direct impact on countries, where after discussion and input, Gibraltar created a Sustainable Development and Future Generations Commissioner. Also influencing Scotland who committed to a Well-being and Sustainable Development Bill (Future Generations Commissioner 2024b). The Commissioner aims to support any country to adopt similar approaches, creating a Future Generations Policy Toolkit to do this (Foundations for Tomorrow and FGC 2023). Similarly supporting others through chairing the Network of Institutions for Future Generations (NIFG), which

consists of institutions, organisations and leaders, from around the world who focus on future generations (NIFG 2024).

Overall, in this sense the WFGA can be considered a partial success. This is due to receiving praise from intragovernmental organizations and other countries, and influencing the adoption of future generations policies. Whereby success of the FGC in influencing this is also the success of the Act, as it established the role to do this. However, the extent to which this element constitutes success would be improved through explicit recognition for the influence the WFGA had on policies. Additionally, as more time passes and presuming such approaches are adopted elsewhere, there will be more examples to analyse the WFGA's influence.

#### Holding Government and Public Bodies to account

The WFGA's potential of being able to hold the Welsh Government and other public bodies to account is highlighted as an element of success by Jane Davidson (2020), who considers it to be an Act of the people where the public can hold government and public services to account on behalf of current and future generations. She additionally argues that the test of success will be when the Act threatens the desires of government (Davidson, 2020, p.125). This view is shared by Davies (2016, p.44) who believes that success will depend on the political will of those tasked with holding public bodies to account, yet he notes the potential issue with measuring success in this way as the well-being duty focuses on the process and not the outcome.

The significance of holding to account is demonstrated in the first sentence of the WFGA's introductory text (Welsh Government 2015a). It states that public bodies are required to do things in pursuit of the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. Doing so through creating a well-being duty which the Welsh Government and other public bodies are expected to carry out through setting their own well-being objectives and taking steps to achieve them. The Act creates the independent FGC and provides it and the Auditor General for Wales with the task of helping public bodies to think about the long-term impact of their decisions (Future Generations

Commissioner 2023a) and hold them to account through the duty. The Commissioner is the core actor for doing this and publishes annual reports detailing improvements public bodies and the Welsh Government should make to best pursue the well-being goals. The FGC has had success in doing this for the Welsh Government, where following recommendations to invest in wildlife restoration and skills and training; to ensure people can access green space near their homes; and to pilot a basic income, steps have been taken by the Welsh Government to do this (Future Generations Commissioner, 2022, p.15). The FGC has had a similar impact on different public bodies who have acted upon recommendations over carbon and eco-literacy training, moving away from traditional transport planning, and a focus on wider well-being over economic prosperity (Future Generations Commissioner, 2022, p.17). Additionally, the Commissioner publishes a monthly newsletter which includes examples of where it has held government and public bodies to account. Recent examples include calls for the Welsh Government to set a robust plan for growing a seaweed industry in Wales (Future Generations Commissioner 2024c) and to create a national food strategy for Wales (Future Generations Commissioner 2024d). The Auditor General also aims to hold both to account. This is demonstrated through their 2020 report where they highlight what public bodies need to do to achieve their well-being objectives. Additionally stating that the Welsh Government needs to itself “get it right” to help other public bodies (Auditor General Wales, 2020, p.14).

Ultimately, in this sense the WFGA can be considered a somewhat success, as the Welsh Government and public bodies have been held to account in line with the Act, mostly by the FGC. Which constitutes success of the Act as it established the Commissioner for this purpose. However, there is difficulty in being able to measure how much government and public bodies have been held to account, with large degrees of personal interpretation and subjectivity required. Similarly, there is little opportunity for the public to directly hold these actors to account. Whereby if a means was created which allowed this, and if after more time there were more examples of holding to account available, then this would be stronger aspect of success. The purpose of holding to account is to improve well-being, which is often achieved through changing behaviour, both of which are explored

as the major elements of the Act's success in the following two chapters. This highlights the complexity of measuring success and how many of its aspects overlap.

### **Chapter 3 – Improving Well-being**

The WFGA is entirely centred around the concept of well-being, with its core purpose to improve “the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales” (Welsh Government 2024a).

The Act states that Ministers must set indicators to measure progress made towards the well-being goals (Welsh Government 2015a). This demonstrates the importance of this in assessing the success of the WFGA and other future generations policies, however there are issues with measuring well-being that must be addressed. This chapter firstly explores well-being as a concept, before discussing the findings of an analytical study this dissertation has undertaken to assess the Act's success in this sense. It analyses well-being improvement through the fifty national indicators, national milestones, and seven well-being goals that the Act sets out. Finally, analysing the impact of the FGC in improving well-being.

#### **Well-being as a Concept**

A clear and agreed definition of well-being remains elusive due to different academic disciplines defining it in several ways (Jarden and Roache 2023). However, a notable definition, and one useful here, considers it “how people feel and how they function both on a personal and social level, and how they can evaluate their lives as a whole” (Michaelson et al, 2012, p. 6). This is effective as it demonstrates the complexity of well-being possessing multiple dimensions. Alder and Seligman (2016) explore this notion, noting that well-being consists of elements which are both hedonic which is subjective and based on how people evaluate their lives, and eudemonic which is objective and often externally measured through quantitative means. Furthermore, different aspects to well-being also include social, physical and psychological (Happy City Measurement and Policy Team, 2016, p.4).

Similarly, the OECD (2024) Better Life Index considers there to be eleven topics essential to quality of life and well-being. Consisting of housing, income, jobs, community, education, environment, governance, health, life satisfaction, safety, and work-life balance.

Well-being is at the core of the WFGA. It makes sustainable development the central organising principle of the Welsh Government and certain public bodies, which the Act defines as the process of improving economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being (Welsh Government 2015a). The legislation treats well-being as a more rounded concept than others have previously, moving beyond a personal approach to include both the individual and all of society including nature and culture. Also believing that each of the four dimensions of well-being should be considered with equal weight and focused on to the same degree (Davidson, 2020, p.11). Furthermore, the Act directly correlates sustainable development with improvements in well-being, this contrasts with much of the literature who consider the two global policy priorities to be invariably isolated (O'Mahony 2022) and not always positively correlated with one another (De Neve and Sachs 2020). The WFGA (Welsh Government 2024a) aims to improve well-being through the shared vision of its seven well-being goals, placing a well-being duty on public bodies which include the Welsh Government and local authorities. It requires them to set well-being objectives to help pursue the well-being goals.

Improving well-being is a key aspect of the WFGA's success and therefore must be measured to find whether the Act has overall been a success. However, there are issues faced in measuring well-being, largely due to the complexity of well-being, without an agreed definition, nor framework for measuring it (Huppert, 2017, pp.164-165). First, there are issues over measuring hedonic well-being as you are unable to compare two different people's subjective experiences, whereby if someone states they feel a certain percentage sad and another says the same, there is no way of knowing whether the two experiences are identical (Happy City Measurement and Policy Team, 2016, p.4). This is an issue with the (Office for National Statistics, 2024a,2024b) UK Measures of National Well-being which attempts to measure well-being through these subjective means. Secondly, there are



also issues with eudemonic well-being as it and aspects of it are more complex than just objectively reporting facts. This is also an issue with the (Office for National Statistics 2024b) measures. Therefore, when there are improvements in well-being, these issues must be considered.

#### Fifty National Well-being Indicators

As a means of measuring progress made towards the seven well-being goals and therefore improvement in well-being, the WFGA requires Ministers to set national well-being indicators (Welsh Government 2024a). The Act states that an indicator must be expressed as a “value or characteristic that can be measured quantitatively or qualitatively against a particular outcome”; may be measured over a period Ministers consider appropriate; and may be measurable in relation to Wales or any part of Wales (Welsh Government 2015a). The indicators were set in 2016 after widespread public consultation on what indicators would best measure progress against the well-being goals. Then in 2021 after further consultation and learning from the COVID-19 pandemic, some indicators were updated, and four new ones were added (Welsh Government 2023a). There is a significant breadth in the areas the indicators address, from the percentage of people in income poverty, people’s mean mental well-being score, the number of Welsh speakers, and the area of healthy ecosystems (Welsh Government 2024b). This demonstrates the widespread approach to well-being taken by the Act (Welsh Government 2015a). Similarly, each indicator corresponds to at least two of the seven well-being goals, with a milestone set for sixteen of the indicators to illustrate expectations of what they should show at a certain point (Welsh Government 2024a). The Welsh Government also produces annual reports on the progress being made towards achieving the well-being goals, where they use improvements in indicators as the means of measurement. This highlights how the indicators are considered by the Welsh Government as the means of measuring improvements in well-being and success of the Act. Therefore, the remainder of this section will assess the extent to which these indicators have improved and that this is an effective means of measuring the Act’s success.

To achieve this, the dissertation has undertaken an analytical study into the indicators as shown in (Appendix A) through utilising (Welsh Government 2024b) data. (Appendix A) first highlights each of the fifty indicators on the range of topics, then notes which of the seven well-being goals each indicator relates to, and which include a milestone (Welsh Government 2024a). The most significant aspect of the study is explored in the next three paragraphs through discussions of: the type of well-being related to the indicator, hedonic or eudemonic; whether the indicator is measurable quantitatively or qualitatively; and whether the indicator has improved.

Firstly, as noted by Adler and Seligman (2016), well-being integrates hedonia, and eudemonia. This study applies these elements of well-being, which are often considered through personal dimensions (Ryan and Deci 2001) to the wider realms that the Act uniquely addresses. It applies them to the indicators which address economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being. As demonstrated in (Appendix A), most of the indicators relate to eudemonic well-being. These notably include different dimensions of well-being such as the individual healthy life expectancy, societal measures such as Wales' Gross Value Added, and environmental measures such as country-wide greenhouse gas emissions. All of which are measured objectively and quantitatively. Whereas the indicators which also possess hedonic well-being, of which there are fewer, are concerned with areas such as feeling involved, safe, satisfied, a sense of community, and mental well-being and loneliness. Each of these relate to the individual's subjective well-being, which possesses issues as well-being is difficult to measure in this way and fails to capture the complexity of philosophical conceptions surrounding the concept (Adler and Seligman, 2016, p.5).

Second, as previously stated, each of the indicators can be measured quantitatively or qualitatively against a particular outcome (Welsh Government 2015a). (Appendix A) illustrates which indicators can be measured in what way, whereby in practice each have been provided a quantitative means of measuring improvement. However, despite many indicators being able to be measured quantitatively such as the percentage of people in work or air quality, a small percentage of them are more

complex. There is therefore difficulty in measuring these with only a numerical score or a binary response that could be overcome through also measuring through qualitative means. For example, over indicators concerned with feeling certain ways and of complex concepts such as mental well-being and loneliness. This illustrates the complexity of well-being and of measuring it. Furthermore, there is a direct correlation between qualitatively measurable indicators and hedonic well-being, as they are concerned with individual feeling. In addition to quantitatively measurable indicators and eudemonic well-being. The indicators as a mode of measuring well-being improvement would be strengthened if qualitative and quantitative means were combined in assessing improvements.

Thirdly, utilising the data from (Welsh Government 2024b) the study assesses whether each indicator has improved since the Act became law in 2015 (see Appendix A). Overall, out of the fifty indicators, twenty-five have improved, which is exactly half. Major improvements have occurred in both hedonic and eudemonic indicators concerned with the individual, including Gross Disposable Household Income per head, the percentage of people feeling able to influence decisions in their area, the percentage of people feeling lonely, the percentage of people participating in multiple sporting activities. In addition to improvements in environmental indicators of levels of Nitrogen Dioxide and greenhouse gas emissions. Fourteen indicators have not improved, of which nine have worsened and five have remained constant. The COVID-19 pandemic is blamed for a decrease in children developing the right skills, school leavers with skills and qualifications, and the percentage of innovation active businesses (Welsh Government 2024b). For the remaining indicators, it is not possible to conclude whether they have improved as some lack recent data (indicators 13 and 44), don't have data that goes far back enough (indicators 19 and 33), or are newly added (indicators 46,47,48,50). Excluding other factors and treating each indicator equally as the Act requires, the WFGA can be considered a success as a half of the indicators have improved, some significantly, and only nine out of the fifty have worsened.

However, there are multiple issues with measuring well-being improvement through this way. The most prominent is the extent to which improvement of indicators can be attributed to the impact of the Act. Whereby even if an indicator improved and was stated to have because of the WFGA, there would still be issues in being able to demonstrate such causation. This is due to the constant multitude of external factors which impact the indicators and there being no way to measure the Act's impact in this sense. The 2023 Wellbeing of Wales Report highlights the impact of the external factors of covid-19, the war in Ukraine, and the cost-of-living crisis as having a dominant effect on data (Welsh Government 2023a). Furthermore, there are issues surrounding the data for some indicators, such as a lack of data for recent years (e.g. indicators 13 and 31) or being unable to compare different types of study (e.g. indicators 32 and 33). In addition to issues surrounding measuring indicators with qualitative elements only through quantitative means.

Overall, there is some value in measuring well-being through these indicators. However, this is largely overshadowed by the highlighted issues, particularly how much can be attributed to the Act. Additionally, the indicators as a way of measuring improvement in well-being would be improved with more consistent and comparable data and by being measured through a combination of both quantitative and qualitative means, which should've begun when the indicators were published. This could be overcome in a future study which assesses the indicators in this way, whereby after more time, increased data on the indicators would also be available.

### National Milestones

Furthermore, to show expectations of what indicators should be showing at certain points and to assist in measuring progress towards the well-being goals, the WFGA states that Ministers must set national milestones in relation to certain indicators. In setting a milestone, Ministers "must specify the criteria for determining whether the milestone has been achieved", and the time by which it is to be achieved (Welsh Government 2015a). After consultation, the first set of national milestones were published in December 2021, before the remainder were the following year (Welsh Government

2023a). Skeels (2022) highlights the importance of the milestones, to set a clear, realistic target and enable progress against it to be measured over time.

As demonstrated in (Appendix A), sixteen of the fifty indicators have a milestone attached to them, which sets a long-term target of improvement until 2050. They address areas concerned with each of the Act's four dimensions of well-being and seven well-being goals, with milestones including narrowing the gap in life expectancy between least and most deprived, increasing the percentage of adults with a level three qualification, reaching one million Welsh speakers, and achieving net-zero emissions. These milestones have been deliberately created as they align with the international milestones of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Skeels 2022). Through an analysis of improvements of indicators with a milestone attached (Appendix A), the study finds that nine out of the sixteen indicators have seen improvement towards reaching their milestone. Including progress towards 99% of children having two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours, eradicating the gap between employment rate, and increasing the percentage of people who volunteer. With only three having worsened. It is unclear why more and ultimately all indicators don't have a milestone as it would make measuring improvement easier and provide greater incentive. This is also significant as all indicators should be treated with equal attention as each of the four dimensions of well-being are supposedly considered equal (Davidson, 2020, p.11). Similarly, the milestones could be improved through all having quantitative targets where possible (such as indicators, 10, 14, and 18), moving beyond 'improving' and 'reducing' (Welsh Government 2024b). They can also be improved by measuring improvement in indicators through both qualitative and quantitative means.

In this sense, well-being can be considered to have improved and the WFGA can be considered a success, since over half the milestones have improved and only three have worsened. However, there are still the underlying issues of knowing the extent of the Act's impact with external factors influencing indicators. The milestones as a means of measuring well-being improvement would be

improved through providing more milestones with quantitative targets and assessing progress both quantitatively and qualitatively.

### Seven Well-being Goals

The WFGA outlines seven well-being goals which are at the core of the legislation. They show the kind of Wales we want and provide a shared vision to work towards (Welsh Government, 2015b, p.6). The goals are provided with a legally binding common purpose to ensure that public bodies work to achieve these goals (Welsh Government 2024a). This is through placing a well-being duty on public bodies to pursue objectives that are designed to achieve the well-being goals (Welsh Government 2015b). The goals are, 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; and A globally responsible Wales (Welsh Government 2015a). The goals stretch across multiple areas and are vital to ensure current and future generations are given a good quality of life (Welsh Government, 2015b, pp. 4-6).

The Act publishes the indicators to measure progress towards achieving these goals (Welsh Government 2015a). Almost all fifty indicators relate to a minimum of three of the well-being goals, with many addressing more (Appendix A). As previously noted, and demonstrated in (Appendix A), there have been improvements in exactly half of the indicators, and only nine have worsened. As the indicators that have improved relate to all the different well-being goals, it can be considered in this sense that well-being has improved.

However, the purpose of the well-being goals is not to measure well-being improvement against, as the Act creates the indicators and milestones to do this. Their core purpose is to show the shared aspirational vision for improving well-being, and act as the foundation for improving well-being. Whereby, the Act's means of enforcing the policy and measuring its impact are all based on these goals.

### Future Generations Commissioner Improving Well-being

The WFGA establishes the role of the FGC, independent from Welsh Government, to act as “a guardian for the interests of future generations”, to support and monitor public bodies and PSB’s pursual of the well-being goals and to encourage them to think about the long-term (Welsh Government 2015b). The FGC aims to improve well-being through assisting public bodies in setting and working towards their well-being objectives, and through producing recommendations for how well-being can be improved (Welsh Government 2015b).

One way the Commissioner aims to improve well-being is through the publication of Future Generations Reports, which the WFGA requires to be published a year before a Senedd election. The report must include an assessment of how public bodies should improve the chances for future generations to meet their needs and take greater account for the long-term impact of their actions; and must consult each public body and several other actors (Welsh Government 2015a). The inaugural (Future Generations Commissioner 2020a) report was considered the culmination of five years of engagement and research, and an assessment of the progress of the Act so far. It considered there to have been mixed progress from public bodies towards the well-being goals and improving well-being. The success is demonstrated by the ‘Simple Changes’ public bodies had made in working towards the goals. In comparison to the issue of many public bodies not understanding the definitions of the goals when setting their objectives (Future Generations Commissioner, 2020b, pp.26-28).

The FGC also produces annual reports detailing an overview of the work they have done in pursuit of improving well-being. They state to have influenced the Welsh Government on a ninety-million-pound housing innovation grant (Future Generations Commissioner, 2018, p.24); provided evidence and intervention that was crucial in the decision not to build the M4 relief road (Future Generations Commissioner, 2019, pp.15-16); secured an increase in Welsh Government funding towards tackling the climate emergency (Future Generations Commissioner, 2020c); and influenced the Welsh

Government on their commitment to a basic income pilot (Future Generations Commissioner, 2022, p.49). This illustrates the effective impact the Commissioner has had in influencing decisions that improve well-being.

A large aspect of the role of the Commissioner, as explored in the previous chapter, is to hold government and public bodies to account to improve the well-being of current and future generations. The 2020 Future Generations Report highlights how the development of a budget improvement plan, and the decision against the M4 relief road were done “as a result of recommendations from my (the Commissioner’s) monitoring and assessment in 2019” (Future Generations Commissioner, 2020b, p.18). Similarly, the FGC’s pursuit of improving well-being is often delivered through changing the behaviour of government and local bodies, which is fully explored as a major aspect of success in the following chapter. The report highlighted the partial success in changing the internal culture and leadership of public bodies (Future Generations Commissioner, 2020b, pp.7-13). The success of the Welsh Government in terms of innovation is also highlighted, with the new school curriculum and innovative housing. However there had been issues in implementation and the gap between aspiration and delivery demonstrating a lack of long-term vision for the kind of government needed for the future (Future Generations Commissioner, 2020b, pp.18-24). This ultimately demonstrates the overlapping nature of the different aspects of success, which underlines the complexity of measuring success.

In sum, the FGC appears to have been effective in improving well-being. This is demonstrated by the highlighted instances where the Commissioner has impacted decisions, particularly those of the Welsh Government. This is additionally shown through the FGC’s support for public bodies and PSBs in setting and working towards their well-being objectives, where improvements in these objectives could constitute policy success. If one assumes that the Commissioner has improved well-being, this can be considered success of the Act as it established the role to do this (Welsh Government 2015a). However, there are issues in assuming this, whereby it is difficult to be certain that the FGC has



impacted Welsh Government decisions, without such an explicit statement and the presence other factors such as financial and legislative constraints. Similarly, there is a lack of data on whether well-being objectives have been achieved and bodies are only required to take reasonable steps in pursuit, rather than achieve them (Davies, 2016, p.55). Additionally, the FGC largely fails to have an effective means of measuring its own impact, demonstrated by the previous Commissioner's ambiguous strategic performance measures (Future Generations Commissioner, 2018, p. 6), and by the (Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee 2024) critique of the new Commissioner's lack of success measures in their 2023 annual report.

### Conclusion

To a degree, well-being can be considered to have improved, (as shown by Appendix A) with half of the fifty national indicators and over half of the milestones improving. This is also demonstrated through the FGC impacting Welsh Government decisions and supporting public bodies and PSB's pursual of the well-being goals. However, the major underlying issue in measuring well-being improvement is the extent to which it can be attributed to the Act. Similarly, over how much the FGC truly has impacted Welsh Government decisions. Both could be in-part overcome with explicit statements of impact and through future study after more time has passed. Additionally, the previously noted issue of measuring the complex concept of well-being, is still present, with both its hedonic dimension where you are unable to compare two people's subjective experiences, and its eudemonic dimension where it is difficult to measure well-being through only quantitative means. Acknowledging these issues is vital, as well-being improvement is a key aspect in assessing whether the WFGA has been a success, as the Act is centred around improving well-being. In this sense, there is difficulty in considering the Act to have been an explicit success as any well-being improvements are overshadowed by the highlighted issues.

## Chapter 4 – Behaviour Change

Another major goal of the WFGA is to change behaviour. This is complex, takes time and “is a real organisational and human challenge” (Future Generations Commissioner, 2019, p.10). The Act aims to change the behaviour of both the Welsh Government and public bodies (Future Generations Commissioner, 2022) through influencing their policy actions, and the public (Davidson, 2020) both through the impact of such policies and directly. This highlights the significance of this as an aspect of the WFGA’s success, whereby successful behaviour change correlates with success of the Act. The chapter first explores an overview of behaviour change, looking at how policy can change behaviour, examples of the Welsh Government previously doing this, and changing behaviour as constituting success. Before the main section where there is a document and speech analysis of relevant Senedd and Welsh Government sources to assess the extent to which the Act has changed the behaviour of the Welsh Government. Additionally assessing how much the Act has impacted the policy actions of other public bodies and caused behaviour change in the public.

### Behaviour Change as a Concept

To tackle problems that societies face, ranging from unemployment to poor health, governments are often required to change the behaviour of the public through policy. With behaviour change interventions being fundamental to addressing such issues (Michie et al 2011, p.1). These interventions can take many forms and are characterised by (Michie et al 2011) into a ‘Behaviour Change Wheel’. However, a more useful and simpler model is proposed by (Tummers 2019) of the policy instruments of *carrots*, *sticks*, *sermons* and the *nudge* which respectively provide incentives, regulation, information, and a nudge to try and change people’s behaviour. This model is utilised in this chapter to illustrate where the Welsh Government have used such instruments and whether the WFGA has caused behaviour change in these ways.

As with any government, the Welsh Government have previously sought to change behaviour through policy. Examples which include preventative approaches to improve public health, and reduce environmental harm are explored here. Firstly, was the introduction of the 2007 smoking ban

which utilised the whip instrument by making it illegal to smoke indoors to “protect people from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke” (Watkins 2021) and to change the behaviour of smokers. Second was the introduction of minimum pricing for alcohol to reduce alcohol consumption of ‘hazardous’ drinkers, improve health, and reduce costly alcohol related hospital admissions (Evans 2022), through a nudge. Both policies saw success through a reduction in the number of smokers (Office for National Statistics 2023), and the alcohol consumption of heavy drinkers (Evans 2022). Additionally, in 2010 a charge on single-use carrier bags was introduced to change public behaviour through utilising a carrot by providing a financial incentive. This also successfully changed behaviour (Poortinga et al., 2013). The WFGA seeking to change behaviour differs from these traditional examples, in the sense that it aims to change not only the behaviour of the public but also of public bodies and the government itself.

Within the text of the WFGA (Welsh Government 2015a), there is no explicit mention of the Act changing behaviour, however it is central to the requirement of public bodies to carry out sustainable development. Whereby they must pursue well-being objectives in line with the well-being goals, which requires a change in behaviour. Additionally, the Commissioner considers “bringing change to people’s lives and changing behaviours” (Future Generations Commissioner, 2019, p.10) as key for the Act. Achieving this for different groups is considered an important intention such as to change the culture of public servants to think more long term (Jones 2019); and of the Welsh Government, where (Davidson, 2020, p.107) considers a test of the Act being if in ten years, Wales is governed differently because of it. A large degree of this change is through legislation, which the Act seeks to influence as this is considered effective to change behaviour of the public (Davidson, 2020, p.89). In addition to the impact such policies have on people, the Act also aims to directly impact the public through making it easier to make good decisions and providing them with permission to have wild ideas for how to tackle major issues (Davidson, 2020, pp.100-106). Therefore, the Act successfully changing behaviour can be considered a form of success, and it is important to assess whether the Act has done this to conclude whether the WFGA has been a success.

## Impacting Policy Decisions and Actions of Welsh Government

The most important actor for the WFGA to change the behaviour of is the Welsh Government, as the Act intends to provide an overarching framework for all its policy decisions (Davidson 2020). This is also due to the importance of policy in changing behaviour, and to be able to achieve the aspirational goals of the Act, the Welsh Government needs to lead by example (Future Generations Commissioner 2020b, p.15). The extent to which behaviour has changed can be seen through the impact the Act has on the government's policy decisions. This can be demonstrated in legislation, other policy documents, chamber speeches, committee discussions etc. It is important to recognise the distinction between a policy referencing the WFGA where it acts as a tick box over which (Howe 2017) raises concern, compared to a policy being influenced and shaped by it, which constitutes true success. As it is not possible to assess whether the Act influences every policy, this section aims to assess a general idea of its impact. Firstly, through analysing policies which the Act has been considered to have impacted to assess the extent to which it influenced their outcomes, and then an assessment of the WFGA's influence on Welsh Government policy in general.

Firstly, the most renowned example of the WFGA impacting a policy decision was the decision against building the M4 relief road. This is significant due to the long-term attention on the issue and this proposed solution; the cost already spent on it; and the supposed impact the WFGA had on the outcome. The FGC believes that the Act and their office impacted the decision, considering the relief road "not being fit for future generations" (Future Generations Commissioner, 2019, pp.15-16). This view was supported by Mark Drakeford, who scrapped the plans, stating in his final speech as First Minister that the policy was "not in the long-term interests of Wales" (Drakeford, 2024). Additionally, he noted at the time the impact the climate emergency and Net Zero targets had on this decision (Drakeford 2019a), which could demonstrate partial influence of the WFGA. However, in his official decision statement he evidently considered the WFGA, believing that not building the road did not breach his duties in line with the Act (Drakeford, 2019b, p.8). However, this was not the only influence on the decision, with (Drakeford 2019a) also highlighting the factors of austerity and Brexit.

The policy's influence is also questioned by the First Minister challenging the Commissioner's recommendations on the ground that development proposals don't need to satisfy all well-being goals (Drakeford 2019a). The WFGA can be considered to have helped impact the decision, but there was ultimately a combination of factors that led to the decision. The notion that the Act impacted the outcome would be supported if a direct alternative policy was taken or as Howe (2020) argues, the funding was invested in future generations causes.

The second notable policy is the Curriculum for Wales, which became law in 2021. This is significant because it is a major change from the previous curriculum and was supposedly influenced by the WFGA. The (Future Generations Commissioner 2024e) proposes that the Act influenced this policy, stating that it is purpose driven and embodies a long-term approach with future generations at its core. Also noting that the curriculum was designed to align with the WFGA, with it treating creativity, digital skills, and problem solving with high importance which demonstrates a long-term view as these are skills that will be needed in the future (Future Generations Commissioner, 2021a, p.52). The impact the WFGA had on the curriculum is illustrated in the curriculum guidance, through the encouragement of schools to seek to contribute to the well-being goals and adopt the five ways of working (Education Wales, 2020, p.19). Similarly, part 1 of the Curriculum and Assessment Act sets out four purposes of the curriculum to enable children to develop as: ambitious, capable learners; enterprising, creative contributors; ethical, informed citizens; and healthy, confident individuals (Welsh Government 2021a). Whereby centring education on these aims "is critical" in pursuing the well-being goals of the WFGA (Education Wales 2024). Furthermore, former Education Minister Kirsty (Williams 2020), stated in the Senedd education committee that she considers the curriculum to have been designed to best maximise its contribution to all the well-being goals and being central to improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. The WFGA can be considered to have influenced this policy as demonstrated by its four purposes, the encouragement of schools to contribute to the well-being goals, and a rather explicit statement on influence from the minister at the forefront of the policy.

Third, is the changing of the speed limit on restricted roads to twenty miles per hour. This is notable due to the major public attention and opposition this policy received. The FGC considers the policy to adhere to the WFGA's requirements of utilising preventative means to protect well-being now and in the future (Walker 2024). The WFGA appears to have influenced the speed limit reduction, as the (Welsh Government 2022) consultation considered the policy to have the potential for significant positive effects on the health of the population, and to deliver on all seven well-being goals. Similarly, this is supported by the former Deputy Climate Change Minister who stated there is a need to look at the long term, not just the short, as the WFGA tells us to do (Waters 2023a). He states that this is a very good example of this and acting in line with the WFGA (Waters 2023b). The introduction of this policy aligns with the goals of the WFGA, and it is plausible that it considered the Act. However, it is unclear how much the WFGA influenced the policy, which questions the extent to which it changed the government's behaviour.

Of the ten acts that have so far been passed by this current Senedd, only half contain reference to the WFGA in their legislation's text, and some only minorly. This demonstrates that the WFGA has not necessarily influenced all Welsh Government policies, despite the Act's intention to act as the overarching framework for all policy decisions (Davidson 2020). However, this does not mean that there has not been success in changing behaviour, as the Act has also influenced multiple policy areas as demonstrated through recent strategy documents. For example, on health, the WFGA is considered in the 'Healthier Wales' ten-year national health plan, which maps out how the proposed system contributes to the well-being goals and makes many references to the consideration of future generations, improving different aspects of well-being, and achieving a more equal Wales (Welsh Government 2021b). Similarly, on waste, the Act is considered "at the heart of the development" of the 'Beyond Recycling' document, where they have produced a strategy which looks to maximise contribution to the well-being goals (Welsh Government 2021c). Also, on transport in the 'Llwybr Newydd' transport strategy, the impact of the WFGA is demonstrated by the plan adopting the five ways of working and setting out well-being ambitions to contribute to the well-being goals (Welsh

Government 2021d). The WFGA impacting these key policy documents highlights the Act's influence in changing behaviour as these long-term plans are now guided by this legislation.

This section has demonstrated that the WFGA can and has changed the behaviour of the Welsh Government through specific policies, with the notable influence of the Act on the curriculum, the M4 relief road decision, and the highlighted policy documents. In this regard the Act can therefore be considered a relative success. However, it is difficult to understand the true impact it has had, as not all policy decisions reference it, this could be overcome through an outright statement on its influence. An alternative notion may be that the Act has changed the behaviour of the government through changing the culture of policymaking more generally. Which was one of Davidson's (2020) intentions, yet this is difficult to measure or illustrate.

#### Impacting Policy Decisions and Actions of Other Public Bodies

Changing the behaviour of other public bodies included in the WFGA is also a core intention of it. It aims to make public bodies think more long term, and act to pursue well-being objectives in line with the well-being goals and sustainable development (Welsh Government 2024a), which requires behaviour change. Whereby a change in behaviour can be demonstrated through progress towards these objectives and having an impact on policy decisions. This subsection looks at the FGC's assessment of public bodies' through both these means. Before assessing policy decisions of public bodies and the extent to which the WFGA has impacted these and changed their behaviour.

Firstly, a major duty of the FGC is to monitor and assess the extent to which public bodies' well-being objectives are being met (Welsh Government 2015a). The Commissioner considers there to have been mixed success over this since despite progress towards objectives in some areas, most bodies have failed to attempt to contribute to the goals; the quality of objectives and steps to meet them did not meet the aspirations of the WFGA; and more progress is required for change (Future Generations Commissioner, 2020c, pp.54-55). Additionally, there has been limited assessment and data on progress towards objectives, as bodies are only required to take reasonable steps in pursuit

(Davies, 2016, p.55). This makes it difficult to utilise this as an aspect of behaviour change, which could be overcome through more pressure on bodies to meet objectives and greater assessment of their progress. Secondly, the Future Generations Report highlights the success in part of changing the internal culture and leadership of public bodies to think about innovation, implementation, more integrated, and consider the long-term (Future Generations Commissioner, 2020b, pp.7-13).

Additionally, the Commissioner explicitly notes the change in behaviour over things such as active travel and electric fleets (Future Generations Commissioner 2020c), and in bodies including different health boards, councils and TFW (Future Generations Commissioner, 2019, 2021a, 2022). However, it is not possible to categorise all public bodies as having changed their behaviour.

Additionally, there are notable examples, many of which the FGC highlight, of instances where public bodies have changed behaviour due to the WFGA. First is the Cardiff Council's joined up approach to achieve its well-being objective of growing in a resilient way, and addressed the city's major challenges of air pollution, congestion, and obesity through promoting active travel. Changes include projects such as: 'Greener Grangetown' which improved cycle-footpaths and targeted active travel at unhealthiest communities; changes to Cardiff Castle Street; and pedestrianising primary school areas (Future Generations Commissioner 2021b). Through this Cardiff Council can be considered to have successfully changed their behaviour to pursue their objective and improve lives of residents. With active travel specialist, Chris Roberts, considering them to have "fully embraced the aims of the WFGA" (Future Generations Commissioner, 2021b, p.8). Second, the Cardiff and Vale UHB has changed its behaviour through adopting a joined-up approach to increase biodiversity, address the climate crisis, and improve the well-being of their staff and patients. Examples of this include the creation of the 'Health Meadow', a green space for well-being; the critical care unit's tree planting scheme; an increased approach to sustainable healthcare; and increasing green spaces across the health board (Future Generations Commissioner, 2021c). This joined-up approach tackling different areas of well-being exemplifies behaviour change and demonstrates the impact of the WFGA. This has also been demonstrated by 'Climate Ready Gwent', a collection of public bodies, and PSBs which



is overseen by Natural Resources Wales. They delivered carbon literacy training to over two hundred people. They also established the Blaenau Gwent Climate Assembly, where members vote on recommendations for what organisations, communities and individuals should do to tackle the climate crisis (Future Generations Commissioner 2021d). This is an example of multiple public bodies coming together and changing their behaviour. However, beyond the climate crisis, it fails to address other areas of the WFGA, which questions how much it was impacted by the Act.

This section has illustrated that public bodies have changed behaviour and have been impacted by the WFGA, however likely not as much as the Act or the Commissioner would have aspired for. Whereby there has been limited and unknown progress towards objectives. However, behaviour change has been demonstrated through the policy examples highlighted. In this sense, the Act can be considered in-part a success. This as an aspect of success could be improved in a future study after there is more pressure put on bodies to pursue objectives, more examples of behaviour change, and explicit statements of the WFGA's influence on public bodies' actions.

#### Impacting Change in the Behaviour of the Public

The WFGA also intends to change the behaviour of the public, with Davidson considering a key measure of success being whether the WFGA will inspire new and different actions in Welsh communities (Davidson, 2020, p.107). Behaviour change in the public can be sought through two dimensions. Firstly, as explored in the previous two sections, through changing the behaviour of the Welsh Government and public bodies, to create policy which seeks to change public behaviour in line with the Act. Secondly, through the Act directly changing the public's behaviour. This section will assess the extent to which the WFGA has influenced change in the public's behaviour through both means.

Firstly, of the highlighted Welsh Government policies, the twenty miles per hour policy demonstrates a significant attempt to change the behaviour of the public. The policy aims to change behaviour through a nudge which intends to decrease the speed of cars to reduce the risk of collisions and

severe injury; promote active travel by encouraging walking and cycling over driving; improve safety of residents; and improve health and well-being (Welsh Government 2022). Since the introduction of the policy, there has been a significant decrease in the number of serious casualties on twenty and thirty miles per hour roads (Stats Wales 2024). Whereby if one assumes this was influenced by the WFGA, then the Act has successfully changed public behaviour through this policy. Similarly, the cancellation of the M4 relief road and the wider Welsh Government transport approach as detailed in Llwybr Newydd (Welsh Government 2021d), highlights a focus on sustainable transport and active travel. Seeking to change the public's transport habits through a modal shift, and the nudge instrument. Setting an aim of forty-five per cent of journeys to be made by public transport, cycling or walking by 2040 (Welsh Government, 2021d, p.48). It cannot yet be concluded whether behaviour in this regard has changed. Additionally, of the previously explored examples of public bodies changing their behaviour, many have also sought to change the public's behaviour. For example, the Cardiff Council's sought to "create long-term behavioural change" for children and young people through promoting active travel as habitual practice (Future Generations, 2021b, p.6). They also targeted active travel at communities with the poorest health to seek behaviour change. Both of these utilise the instrument of the nudge and can be considered somewhat effective so far, as there has been an increase in the number of children walking or cycling to school in the area (Cardiff and Vale UHB 2023), however this will need to be assessed over a longer period.

Additionally, the WFGA seeks to directly change the behaviour of the public, with an important element of the Act being that it becomes the Welsh public's legislation rather than just government law (Davidson, 2020, p.138), and that it brings change to people's lives and behaviour (Future Generations Commissioner, 2019, p.10). The FGC highlights examples of one hundred 'changemakers', consisting of heads of organisations, writers, poets, and activists who have changed their behaviour and made the Act more than a piece of legislation (Future Generations Commissioner 2023b). Additionally, the Commissioner considers it to have influenced the public in the pursuit of a circular economy, noting examples of the North Wales reusable nappies scheme;

repair café's; and a community 'Library of Things', where people can borrow what they need and donate what they don't (Future Generations Commissioner 2021e). The Commissioner similarly notes the behaviour change of staff at Gwynedd Hospital, shown through the establishment of a 'Green Group' to create a platform for discussion and action on sustainability, in aim of reducing the hospital's environmental impact (Future Generations Commissioner 2021f). However, it is difficult to conclude the impact the Act has on the public with few examples, and a lack of outright statements detailing its influence. Ultimately a wider in-depth approach is required, which could include surveys and interviews, to gain an understanding of whether the Act has directly changed public behaviour.

This subsection demonstrates some success of the WFGA in changing public behaviour and influencing policy which also seeks this change. If it is assumed that the WFGA has influenced these policies and they have successfully changed behaviour, then the WFGA can be considered a success. However, often more time, examples, and analysis is required to conclude whether behaviour has changed through policy, and it is difficult to be certain that the WFGA has influenced policy without explicit statements. Similarly, more study is required to conclude the extent to which the Act has directly changed public behaviour.

### Conclusion

To an extent, behaviour change has occurred of the Welsh Government, public bodies and the public. This is demonstrated by the Welsh Government's decision against the M4 relief road and the twenty miles per hour policy, and through the Cardiff Council's active travel approach. All of which also sought to change the behaviour of the public. However, there are multiple issues, such as difficulty in being able to measure whether behaviour change has occurred, and in being able to directly attribute change in behaviour to the influence of the Act without an explicit statement. It is important to acknowledge these issues as being able to conclude whether behaviour has changed is an important aspect of measuring the WFGA's success, as changing behaviour is central to the Act. Much of this can be overcome in a future study where more time would allow for fairer assessment

of whether behaviour has changed, and more examples to be available. Such a study should also include an in-depth assessment on the WFGA's direct impact on the public, and on policy decisions. Ultimately, it is difficult to explicitly state that the WFGA, in this regard has been a success.

## Conclusion and Framework

This dissertation has aimed to assess the extent to which the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 (Wales) has been a success, and whether the success of such a policy can be measured. This is important as it is an aspirational, overarching, and world-leading policy (Howe 2022) whose success has yet to be assessed, whereby there is a necessity to discover whether this is an effective approach to address major societal issues and protect the lives of current and future generations. The dissertation has sought to evaluate this through highlighting different aspects that are considered to constitute success and assessing whether these aspects have achieved their intentions; how impactful the Act was on achieving these; how effective each is as a means of measuring success; and therefore, the extent to which this demonstrates success of the WFGA. The conclusions for these aspects have varied throughout this paper. Firstly, both 'typical' measures of policy success and the (McConnell 2010) and (Marsh and McConnell 2010) framework lack applicability to this policy and are ineffective means of measuring its success. Second, others learning from the WFGA is considered a partial success as the FGC notes examples of this, but it could be improved through more explicit recognition of the Act's influence. There has also been relative success of holding government and public bodies to account, which would be a more effective measure if measuring this was made easier and the public could do it more easily. Fourthly, well-being can be considered to have improved yet faces major issues over how much can be attributed to the Act and the difficulty in measuring well-being, therefore it cannot be considered an explicit success. Finally, behaviour change has occurred and can partly be considered to have done because of the Act. A more explicit

statement of its impact could confirm this and improve it as a measure of success. Consequently, it is difficult to categorically state that the WFGA has been a success in this aspect.

Therefore, this dissertation proposes that an effective framework for measuring the success of the WFGA and other 'future generations policies' includes:

- Has the policy influenced the adoption of a similar policy elsewhere?
- Has the policy allowed national government and public bodies to be held to account on their actions?
- Has well-being improved?
- Has behaviour changed? – Of the national government, public bodies, and the public.

Success in multiple of these aspects can constitute overall success of the WFGA, and if this policy can be concluded to be a success, then it could help inspire other countries to adopt such an approach.

An in-depth study of whether the WFGA has been a success, which utilises this framework, should be undertaken by an independent actor in a reasonable number of years after more time has passed.

There are multiple issues with each of these aspects which through such a study can be overcome.

For example, more time would allow for more examples of countries policy learning; holding government and public bodies to account; and instances of behaviour change to effectively assess all of these as elements of success. Also helping the measuring of well-being improvement as more time would result in increased data of the well-being indicators to be available, which could also be improved with assessment that combines both quantitative and qualitative means. Similarly, more time would also allow for fairer assessment of whether behaviour change has occurred. Additionally, the most consistent issue in assessing the WFGA's success is the uncertainty in how much can be attributed to the influence of the Act. This can be overcome through greater study and through explicit statements of the Act's influence on others adopting similar policy; and on changing the

behaviour of governments, public bodies, and the public. In addition to a similar statement on the Commissioner's influence in holding bodies to account and influencing policy seeking to improve well-being. Acting on these recommendations would allow for a better and fairer assessment of the policy's success. However, there are other issues that cannot be as easily overcome such as the influence of the WFGA, when an explicit statement does not suffice. Particularly for assessing the Act's impact on the well-being indicators and on policy decisions where external factors are present and personal interpretation is required. In addition to the underlying issue of measuring the complex concept of well-being: hedonically being unable to compare two subjective experiences and eudemonically by measuring well-being only through quantitative means. The WFGA further complicates this through considering well-being not just in individual terms but also of society.

This success framework can be directly applied to other future generations policies, whereby after following these suggestions, success can be effectively evaluated an appropriate number of years after implementation. Furthermore, elements of this framework and lessons learnt from this paper can be useful in assessing the success of other long-term policies. Firstly, with whether the policy has influenced others in adopting a similar approach. Secondly, and more notably, whether the policy has caused a change in behaviour which is often necessary to tackle long-term societal problems (Tummers 2019). This should be combined with other policy specific measures of success that would include a replication of well-being improvement. Furthermore prior to implementation, policymakers should set out what success of their policy will be, make it measurable, have multiple aspects of success, and have an independent actor assess it.

In conclusion, the success of the Well-being of Future Generations Act can be measured despite doing so being complex with multiple aspects to success, many of which can overlap. However, it is not yet possible to conclude that it has been a complete success, as any success in different aspects is largely overshadowed by the highlighted issues. If the framework's recommendations are acted

upon and an in-depth study is undertaken in due course, then it is still possible for the Act to be considered a success, despite the presence of unavoidable issues.

**Word Count of Dissertation: 14,741**

**Word Count Including Bibliography: 16,869**

## **Appendix**

### **Appendix A**

<b><u>National Well-being Indicators</u></b>	<b><u>Well-being goals Relating To</u></b>	<b><u>Has a Milestone?</u></b>	<b><u>Hedonic / Subjective or Eudemonic / Objective</u></b>	<b><u>Quantitatively or Qualitatively Measurable?</u></b>	<b><u>Has it Improved? (since 2015)</u></b>
<b>01. Healthy babies</b>	- Healthier - More Equal	<b><u>No</u></b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No – increased percentage of underweight babies
<b>02. Healthy life expectancy</b>	- Healthier - More Equal	<b><u>Yes</u></b> – narrow the gap in healthy life expectancy between least and most deprived by at least 15% by 2050.	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No - Remained consistent but expectancy slightly decreased in males
<b>03. Healthy lifestyle (adults)</b>	- Healthier - More Equal - Cohesive Communities - Culture and Language	<b><u>Yes</u></b> – increase percentage of adults with two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours to over 97% by 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No - Remained the same
<b>04. Air quality</b>	- Prosperous - Resilient - Healthier - Globally Responsible	<b><u>No</u></b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – level of Nitrogen Dioxide pollution has decreased
<b>05. Healthy lifestyle (children)</b>	- Healthier - More Equal - Cohesive Communities	<b><u>Yes</u></b> – increase percentage of children with two or more healthy behaviours to 94% by 2035 and 99% by 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – number of children with two or more healthy behaviours has increased
<b>06. Young children developing the right skills</b>	- Prosperous - More Equal - Cohesive Communities - Culture and Language	<b><u>No</u></b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No – measures have mostly decreased largely possibly due to COVID-19
<b>07. School leavers with skills and qualifications</b>	- Prosperous - More Equal - Culture and Language	<b><u>No</u></b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No – school performances decreased slightly due to COVID-19 and performance results were not calculated
<b>08. Adults with qualifications</b>	- Prosperous - Healthier - More Equal	<b><u>Yes</u></b> – 75% of adults with Level 3 or higher	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – number of adults with qualifications has increased



		qualification by 2050			
<b>09. Productivity – Gross Value Added</b>	- Prosperous	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – slightly but is still lower than most other comparable regions
<b>10. Disposable household income</b>	- Prosperous - Healthier - More Equal	<b>Yes</b> – Improve GDHI per head by 2035 and a setting growth target for 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes - GDHI per head has gradually increased
<b>11. Innovative businesses</b>	- Prosperous - Resilient - Globally Responsible	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No – decreased overall but impact of COVID-19
<b>12. Renewable energy</b>	- Prosperous - Resilient - Cohesive Communities - Globally Responsible	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – capacity of renewable energy equipment installed has increased
<b>13. Healthy soils</b>	- Prosperous - Resilient - Globally Responsible	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	N/A – not enough or recent enough data
<b>14. Global footprint</b>	- Prosperous - Resilient - Globally Responsible	<b>Yes</b> – Wales to use only its fair share of resources by 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – global footprint per person has decreased – until 2018 N/A after
<b>15. Waste not recycled</b>	- Prosperous - Resilient - Cohesive Communities - Globally Responsible	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – non recycled household waste per person has decreased
<b>16. Fair pay</b>	- Prosperous - Healthier - Cohesive Communities - Globally Responsible	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – percentage of people who earn real living wage has increased
<b>17. Pay difference</b>	- Prosperous - More Equal	<b>Yes</b> – eliminate the pay gap for gender, disability and ethnicity by 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No – the pay gap for gender, ethnicity and disability has not decreased
<b>18. People living in poverty</b>	- Prosperous - Resilient - Healthier - More Equal - Cohesive Communities	<b>Yes</b> – reduce the poverty gap by 2035 and commit to a stretching target for 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – the percentage of people living in households below average UK income has decreased

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Culture and Language</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>				
<b>19. People living in material deprivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prosperous</li> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> <li>- Culture and Language</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	N/A – does not go back to 2015, decreased from 2018-2022 and increased since and overall
<b>20. Pay set by collective bargaining</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prosperous</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – percentage of jobs set by collective bargaining slightly increased but fluctuated
<b>21. People in work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prosperous</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b> – eradicate gap between employment rate in Wales and the UK by 2050, focus on fair work and raising employment of under-represented groups.	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – employment rate has increased amongst select groups
<b>22. People not in education, employment and training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prosperous</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b> – 90% of 16–24-year-olds to be in education, employment, or training by 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – overall percentage in education, employment or training amongst 19-24. But decreased amongst 16-18
<b>23. People feeling involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More Equal</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Hedonic	Quantitatively with the potential for qualitative as is more than a yes or no	Yes – percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area increased
<b>24. Satisfaction with access to facilities and services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Hedonic	Quantitatively with potential for qualitative as there are differing degrees of satisfaction	Yes – satisfaction with accessing facilities and services has increased (but from 2017)

<b>25. Feeling safe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Hedonic	Quantitatively with the potential for qualitatively as the concept of feeling safe is more complex	No - percentage of people feeling safe in local area has remained constant
<b>26. People satisfied with where they live</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> <li>- Culture and Language</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Hedonic	Quantitatively with the potential for qualitative as concept is not necessarily binary	Yes – percentage of people satisfied with where they live has increased
<b>27. Sense of community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> <li>- Culture and Language</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Hedonic	Quantitatively with the potential for qualitative as the concepts mentioned are more complex	Yes – percentage of people with a sense of community in their area has overall increased
<b>28. Volunteering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> <li>- Culture and Language</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b> - increase the percentage of people who volunteer by 10% by 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – percentage of people who volunteer has increased
<b>29. Mental well-being</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b> – improve adult and child mean well-being and eliminate gap in well-being between most and least deprived areas by 2050	Hedonic	Quantitatively with the potential for qualitative as mental well-being is more complex than just numerical scores	No - mean mental well-being score has decreased
<b>30. Loneliness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Hedonic	Quantitatively with the potential for qualitative as loneliness as a concept is complex	Yes - percentage of people who feel lonely has decreased
<b>31. Hazard-free homes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	N/A – but percentage of homes free from hazards has increased 2008-2018
<b>32. Reducing flood risk to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	N/A – unable to compare data from 2019 to any previous

<b>homes and businesses</b>	- Cohesive Communities				
<b>33. Energy efficiency of homes</b>	- Prosperous - Resilient - Healthier - More Equal - Globally Responsible	<u>Yes</u> – all homes to have adequate and cost-effective energy performance by 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	N/A – no previous data before 2018
<b>34. Homelessness</b>	- Prosperous - Healthier - More Equal - Cohesive Communities	<u>No</u>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No – number of households successfully prevented from homelessness on average has decreased, but certain local authorities have improved
<b>35. Participation in arts, culture and heritage</b>	- Prosperous - Healthier - More Equal - Cohesive Communities	<u>No</u>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No – the number of people participating in arts and cultural activities has decreased – but only data since 2017
<b>36. People speaking Welsh every day</b>	- Cohesive Communities - Culture and Language - Globally Responsible	<u>No</u>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No – the percentage of people speaking more than just a few words has remained constant
<b>37. People able to speak Welsh</b>	- Cohesive Communities - Culture and Language - Globally Responsible	<u>Yes</u> – a million Welsh speakers by 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No – the percentage of people able to speak Welsh has remained constant
<b>38. Participation in sporting activities</b>	- Resilient - Healthier - Cohesive Communities - Culture and Language - Globally Responsible	<u>No</u>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – the percentage of people participating in sporting activities has increased
<b>39. Professional standards in heritage collections</b>	- Culture and Language - Globally Responsible	<u>No</u>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes - since 2017 the percentage of museums and archives with meeting standards has increased

<b>40. Looking after our cultural heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Culture and Language</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	No – percentage of historic assets in stable or improved conditions has decreased
<b>41. Greenhouse gas emissions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prosperous</li> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b> – achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – greenhouse gas emissions have decreased
<b>42. Greenhouse gas emissions from global goods and services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prosperous</li> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – total consumption emissions have decreased
<b>43. Healthy ecosystems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prosperous</li> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> <li>- Culture and Language</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	N/A – no comparison available
<b>44. Biological diversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prosperous</li> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> <li>- Culture and Language</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b> – reverse decline in biodiversity and improve status of species and ecosystems by 2030 and clear recovery by 2050	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	N/A no data since 2016
<b>45. Water quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> <li>- Culture and Language</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – percentage of water bodies achieving good/high status has increased
<b>46. Active global citizenship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prosperous</li> <li>- Resilient</li> <li>- Healthier</li> <li>- More Equal</li> <li>- Cohesive Communities</li> <li>- Culture and Language</li> <li>- Globally Responsible</li> </ul>	<b>No</b>	Hedonic	Quantitatively with the potential for qualitative as there is more to the concept than the measurable actions	N/A – first asked in 2021-22 – no comparison

<b>47. Confidence in the justice system</b>	- More Equal - Cohesive Communities - Globally Responsible	<b>No</b>	Hedonic	Quantitatively with the potential for qualitative as the answer may not always be binary	N/A - newly added indicator – no data
<b>48. Journeys by walking, cycling or public transport</b>	- Prosperous - Resilient - Healthier - More Equal - Globally Responsible	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	N/A – first asked in 2021 – no comparison
<b>49. Housing costs</b>	- Prosperous - More Equal - Cohesive Communities - Culture and Language	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	Yes – percentage of households spending third of their income on housing has decreased
<b>50. People digitally included</b>	- Prosperous - More Equal - Cohesive Communities	<b>No</b>	Eudemonic	Quantitatively	N/A - newly added indicator – no data

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