

2.0 CONTEXT



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2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1** The Llŷn AONB Management Plan will have to operate within the present framework of plans and strategies. This framework could place restrictions on what the Management Plan can achieve but on the other hand they could also assist with the implementation of certain actions. It is therefore important that the relevant plans and strategies acknowledge and give due attention to the AONB and that they also include, if possible, measures for achieving the Vision, Objectives and Actions of the Management Plan. It should be emphasised that the relationship between the Management Plan and other plans and strategies is a two-way one.
- 2.1.2** The diagram at the end of this section demonstrates how various plans and strategies are inter-related while the sections below provide more information on specific plans and strategies.

2.2 European and International matters

- 2.2.1** Sustaining and safeguarding the environment is important locally, nationally and globally. To ensure important landscapes are protected from inappropriate development and damage it is important to fully consider man's influence on the environment, and to note that local actions can have global benefits. The challenge is to decrease the ecological footprint of communities on the environment while ensuring that people have adequate opportunities to live and work in their areas.
- 2.2.2** In 1971 the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme was established by UNESCO to consider the need to develop a balance between human activity and environmental protection. The programme concentrates on the sustainable usage of resources and the protection of biological biodiversity and basically attempts to improve the relationship between people and their environment. The programme operates by promoting wide-reaching co-operation, undertaking research, and providing training and managing the natural environment for improved understanding. A number of organisations within Gwynedd are already developing based on the programmes' principles e.g. Ecodyfi.
- 2.2.3** On an European level, the European Landscape Convention aims to promote the protection and management of all types of landscapes including natural, rural, urban including land based, inland water and marine based. The Convention strives to raise awareness of the importance of landscapes based on their beauty and order of life and the contribution they make to the quality of life and national well-being. Each nation which signs up to the Convention must be committed to take steps to identify, safeguard, raise awareness and promote landscapes in the widest sense. To date Britain has not signed the Convention but the undertaking associated with it would be beneficial to the country's protected landscapes, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.3. Sustainable development

- 2.3.1** The UK's 1999 Sustainable Development Strategy underlines the need to conserve National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty at the highest levels. It also highlights the importance of protecting the environment alongside social and economic needs locally, thus ensuring that development is sustainable.
- 2.3.2** The Welsh Assembly Government has also committed to sustainable development through Section 121 of the Welsh Assembly Act 1998. It outlines how the Assembly intends to operate in relation to this issue in the 2000 Sustainable Development Plan. This document states: "The National Assembly for Wales will promote development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".
- 2.3.3** The UK Government and the Welsh Assembly's commitment to this issue means that local authorities and other national organisations must adopt sustainable development principles in their plans and strategies, especially in relation to protected areas such as AONB's.
- 2.3.4** The Assembly is also dedicated to the Green Dragon Standard and will be aiming to meet their most stringent requirements. The Green Dragon Standard is an environmental management system based on sustainability and European and International environmental management (ISO 14001 and EMAS) recognition can be secured if they can conform to the requirements.
- 2.3.5** In keeping with national requirements sustainable development is central to the Management Plan and forms the basis for the Plan's Principles and Vision. Because of this the Management Plan also contributes towards Gwynedd Council's aims to gain the Green Dragon Environmental Management Standard.

2.4 National plans and strategies

2.4.1 The Assembly Government has published a number of national strategies and plans on different subjects relevant to Llŷn and the AONB. The need to maintain and protect the environment and sustainable development will be considered in these documents because of the Assembly's commitment to sustainable development on a national level. All these documents are relevant to local plans and strategies which are produced by authorities such as Gwynedd Council. Below is a list of the main relevant national plans and strategies during the period when the Management Plan was being prepared:

- Planning Policy Wales
- Energy Saving Wales
- Waste Strategy for Wales
- National Economic Development Strategy - A Winning Wales
- Farming for the Future
- Woodlands for Wales
- Community Strategy
- Iaith Pawb - National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales
- Walking and Cycling Strategy for Wales.

2.5 National planning policy

2.5.1 The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 has been incorporated into a number of other Acts relevant to protecting areas of sensitive environments and development management, most significantly the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) – with amendments. National planning guidelines provide more detailed information and guidance on planning and development control.

2.5.2 The Welsh Assembly Government planning policy document 'Wales Planning Policy' was published in 2002. Amongst other details it notes "Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty have equal status with National Parks in terms of beauty, their landscape and scenery and the highest status of protection must be given to both against inappropriate development." The document provides guidance for a national policy regarding planning matters including Sustainability, Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Heritage and Coastline, Conserving the Historical Environment, Supporting the Economy, Transport, Housing, Tourism and Pollution.

2.5.3 In addition to the main policy document there are a series of documents offering guidance on planning matters relating to specific developments such as Technical Advice Notes (Wales) – the ones relevant to the AONB are listed below:

TAN No.	Title
2	Planning and Affordable Housing
4	Retailing and Town Centres
5	Nature Conservation and Planning
6	Agricultural and Rural Development
7	Control of Open Air Advertising
8	Renewable Energy
10	Tree Preservation Orders
11	Noise
12	Design
13	Tourism
14	Planning the Coastline
16	Sports and Leisure
18	Transport
19	Telecommunication
20	The Welsh Language
21	Waste

2.6 Gwynedd Community Strategy

2.6.1 Gwynedd Council has a responsibility, as do other local authorities, to prepare a Community Strategy for the whole County including the AONB. Gwynedd Together, published in 2004, aims to secure a better quality of life for the people of Gwynedd now and in the future. The strategy was developed together with other bodies, agencies, organisations, partnerships and the people of Gwynedd to develop an effective plan that meets with the needs of the people and their communities. The adopted Vision is “To work together to improve quality of life for all in Gwynedd – to maintain and support sustainable, flourishing and vibrant communities”.

2.6.2 Five main principles were adopted as a basis for the Strategy, namely: sustainable development, equal opportunities, social inclusion, the Welsh language and listening and hearing. The Community Strategy also includes 6 themes on specific subjects:

- Promoting lifelong learning;
- Improving health, well-being and care;
- Promoting a flourishing economy;
- Enhancing and protecting the environment;
- Encouraging safe, vibrant communities;
- Supporting inclusive, bilingual and dynamic communities.

2.6.3 Theme 4 in its entirety states “A clean and healthy natural and built environment that will be enhanced, protected and enjoyed”. It notes that the Strategy’s partners will be concentrating on the following during the Plan’s duration:

- Protecting and enhancing the area’s biodiversity and other natural resources;
- Reducing private and industrial waste, encouraging recycling, re-using and promoting methods of ensuring energy efficiency;
- Encouraging people to enjoy, respect and become more aware of the local environment and its contribution;
- Maintaining and enhancing the quality of the area’s distinctive built environment in ways that respect and enhance the local culture, environment and character;
- Promoting effective and sustainable transport that offers a wider choice for users.

2.6.4 The Community Strategy shows an understanding of the value of the natural and built environment in Gwynedd and also recognises the need for it to be protected, enhanced and enjoyed. Therefore the vision, core principles and themes of the Community Strategy, as well as the future objectives, form a firm basis for maintaining and managing the Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Community Strategy partners were consulted when preparing this Plan in order to ensure that this was implemented on a strategic level.

2.7 Gwynedd Environmental Strategy

2.7.1 Gwynedd Council’s Environmental Strategy – Protecting the Environment Today and in the Future was adopted in 2002. The Strategy was prepared to give a clear direction to the Council’s work on improving and safeguarding the environment, locally and world-wide, thus the document is an important basis and consideration for all other Strategies produced. The Environmental Strategy includes sections relating to Transport and Traffic, Energy, Water, The Natural Environment, The Built Environment, Waste Management, Environmental Awareness, Purchasing and Public Health.

2.8 Local Development Plan

2.8.1 The Development Plan, that is to say the Development Control Plan, prepared by the Local Authority, has a huge influence on new developments within the AONB. It includes policies on conservation and all types of new developments that need planning permission. The plans relevant to the preparation of the Llŷn AONB Management Plan included:

- Dwyfor Local Plan – Adopted 1998

- Gwynedd Framework Plan – Adopted 1993
- Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan – Deposit Draft 2004

2.8.2 When the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan is formally adopted it will replace the other two plans. This Plan has an important part to play in the conservation and development of the AONB as it will be effective until 2016. Correct implementation of the policies within the Plan is paramount; this will be part of a process that will be undertaken by planning officers and the relevant Committees.

2.8.3 The Development Plan includes specific policies relating to the AONB and statutory and other un-statutory designations as well as specific planning issues such as new housing, transportation, economic developments and tourism. In addition Gwynedd Landscape Design Guidelines and Gwynedd Design Guidelines are associated documents which are relevant.

2.9 Other relevant plans and strategies

2.9.1 In addition to the above there are a number of other plans and strategies which influence the AONB and are relevant for consideration in the policy context of the Management Plan. In the guidelines published by the Countryside Council for Wales they are referred to as stakeholders' Plans and Strategies. These can be divided into two types, namely, one-purpose plans i.e. dealing with forestry or the economy, tourism etc, or Funding Schemes that would include agri-environment schemes, forestry grants etc.

2.9.2 All the plans and strategies prepared by Gwynedd Council, on a large number of issues, are one-purpose plans that must comply with the Community Strategy and Environmental Strategy. The most apparent of these with respect to relationship and impact on the AONB are the Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy, Gwynedd Tourism Strategy, Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Gwynedd Local Transport Plan, Gwynedd Cycling Strategy, Waste Disposal and Recycling Plan and the Floods and Coastal Erosion Policy.

2.9.3 A number of plans and strategies prepared by partnerships are also relevant. The most prominent of these are The Pen Llŷn and Samau Special Area of Conservation Action Plan (a partnership with various organisations including the Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency and Welsh Water), the 'Cadw'r Lliw yn Llŷn' Plan and Natur Gwynedd Biodiversity Action Plan.

2.9.4 The preparation of the Natur Gwynedd Plan (Local Biodiversity Action Plan) was coordinated by Gwynedd Council. The Plan operates throughout Gwynedd excluding the Snowdonia National Park. The Natur Gwynedd Plan operates locally to conform to the Assembly's responsibilities in relation to supporting and protecting national biodiversity. The Plan is based on an assessment, setting priorities, setting objectives and targets and implementing management plans.

2.9.5 There is also a variety of public and private organisations operating within the AONB and these produce a number of plans, strategies and policy statements or other documents that could be relevant to the area's future. Below is a list of the main organisations which are relevant to the AONB:

Countryside Council for Wales	Environment Agency
Forestry Commission	Cadw
Welsh Development Agency	Wales Tourist Board
Tourism Partnership North Wales	Wales Sports Council
Welsh Water/Dŵr Cymru (Glas Cymru)	MANWEB
National Grid	The National Trust
British Telecom	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
CPRW	Telecommunication Operators

2.9.6 Some of these organisations and agencies are under a specific obligation to consider the well-being of the AONB under the Access and Rights of Way Act 2000 (see Section 85 for a definition of relevant organisations). Under the requirements of the Act these organisations and agencies must have "regard for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty when exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in the area of outstanding natural beauty".

2.9.7 The relationship between the Management Plan and the other relevant plans and strategies are shown in diagram format on the following page:

RELATIONSHIP OF AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN TO OTHER PLANS AND STRATEGIES

