Consultation Questions

Response from the Inland Waterways Association (IWA)

- **Organisation:** Inland Waterways Association (IWA)
- **Contact:** Paul Thomas, IWA South West and South Wales Region Secretary
- **Email:** paul.thomas@waterways.org.uk
- **Address:** Hardy House, Northbridge Road, Berkhamsted, HP4 1EF
- **Publication:** IWA is content for this response to be published with the organisation's name.

IWA is a UK-wide charity, founded in 1946, with members in Wales, that campaigns for the protection, restoration and fullest use of Britain's canals and navigable rivers. IWA attended the stakeholder event in Cardiff on 30 September 2026. We have answered the questions where we have something specific to say.

Summary of What IWA Is Asking For

Future Wales: the national plan 2040 has no policy on canals or other inland waterways. We would ask Welsh Government to correct this omission in the revised National Development Framework, in four ways:

1. **Recognise canals and other inland waterways as national green-blue infrastructure.** This should cover the waterways that are navigable now as well as the canals under restoration.
2. **Safeguard canal routes awaiting restoration.** *Planning Policy Wales* already safeguards disused railways. The same principle should apply to canals, set nationally and mapped in Strategic and Local Development Plans.
3. **Treat the water needed by canals as infrastructure.** A canal without a secure water supply delivers none of its benefits.
4. **Plan for navigable waterways, not just towpaths.** The economic, health, heritage and environmental benefits depend on canals being open, in water and used by boats, which bring a waterway to life and draw visitors to the bank.

IWA has answered questions 3, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46 and 48, and Part D. Each answer is marked "IWA response" and shown in a shaded box. The other questions are left blank.

1.0 Purpose of this consultation

The Welsh Government is undertaking a revision of the National Development Framework (currently known as *Future Wales*) to reflect the priorities and ambitions

of this Government and to ensure Wales is well placed to respond to future challenges and opportunities.

The National Development Framework is the highest tier of the statutory development plan system in Wales. It sets out how places, communities, infrastructure and natural resources should be planned and managed across Wales through the planning system. Since its adoption in 2021, Wales has continued to face significant social, economic and environmental change, including the climate and nature emergencies, evolving economic conditions, demographic pressures, infrastructure challenges and growing demands for resilience and energy security. Looking forward it will be important to secure the opportunities and overcome the challenges to ensure that our Wales of the future meets the needs of communities across the length and breadth of the nation.

The revision of the National Development Framework also provides a unique opportunity to hold a national conversation about the future of Wales. Rather than consulting on individual planning policy issues, engagement through this process will invite people to consider the long-term future of the nation and the role of places, communities, infrastructure, environment and culture in achieving that vision.

The draft **Statement of Public Participation (SoPP)** sets out how the Welsh Government will engage and involve people in the development of the National Development Framework. It also provides details on the procedural requirements, timescales and consultation during the National Development Framework process.

The draft **National Conversation Engagement Plan (NCEP)** looks to frame the national conversation on the future of Wales and the role that places, communities, infrastructure and natural resources should play in delivering that future. This will help shape the vision, objectives, spatial priorities and policies of the revised National Development Framework and ensure that decisions are informed by the experiences, aspirations and evidence of people, communities, organisations and stakeholders across Wales.

The evidence obtained through the National Conversation will also help to inform the development of a range of other plans and strategies that will be taken forward by the Welsh Government between now and 2030. This will help to ensure that there is better co-ordination where there are cross cutting implications, or where different spatial plans interface such as Marine Planning and the National Development Framework. This consultation seeks your views on the draft **Statement of Public Participation** and **National Conversation Engagement Plan**. Also, your views on key topics, spatial planning themes and how a revised National Development Framework could meet Wales’s needs, empower local government and deliver reduced costs, bureaucracy and duplication within the planning system.

Given the way devolution currently works in Wales it may not be possible for all ideas and responses put forward as part of the national conversation to be

progressed, and where this is the case, this will be explained as part of responding to the evidence received.

2.0 Questions

The questions below cover a broad range of topics. Respondents may wish to answer only specific questions where they feel that they have something particular to say rather than feel that they need to answer every question.

As highlighted above the responses we receive to these questions will be used within Welsh Government to help inform and develop a number of plans and strategies, in addition to progressing the National Development Framework. In some cases, evidence may be published in support of future stages of policy development. If a respondent does not wish to be identified in consultation reports they are able to indicate that on the online response form, or if submitting a response by other means they should indicate within that response that they wish for their personal details to be withheld.

Part A

Statement of Public Participation

The following questions focus on the Statement of Public Participation which provides details on the procedural requirements, timescales and consultation process for taking forward a new National Development Framework.

1. **To what extent do you agree the proposed timetable provides sufficient opportunity for meaningful engagement and evidence gathering?**

   Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree/Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

2. **Are there any other stages in the process where additional public engagement or consultation would be beneficial, in addition to those being provided for Options, and draft National Development Framework? If so, please explain why?**

3. **Are there particular stakeholder groups who may require additional support or tailored engagement?**

   > **IWA response:** Yes. Glandŵr Cymru, the Canal & River Trust in Wales, cares for the Monmouthshire and Brecon, Llangollen, Montgomery and Swansea Canals and will no doubt be engaged directly. Much of the restoration of Welsh canals, however, is led by volunteer charities and canal societies, working alongside Glandŵr Cymru and local councils. They hold detailed local knowledge but have little capacity to follow a four-year national plan process. Direct notification at each consultation stage, and a sector discussion on waterways and other linear green-blue infrastructure, would help them to take part. Volunteers also raise funds,

> run events and carry out restoration work that draws support from across Britain.

4. **Are there communities or groups whose views are underrepresented in planning processes and who should receive particular attention during the revision of the National Development Framework?**

5. **A) To what extent do you agree with the engagement methods highlighted?**

   Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree/Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

   B) Are there any additional methods or approaches that should be considered?

6. **Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the draft Statement of Public Participation?**

National Conversation Engagement Plan

The following questions focus on the National Conversation Engagement Plan which looks to frame the national conversation on the future of Wales and the role that places, communities, infrastructure and natural resources should play in delivering that future.

7. **Do the proposed themes (see 4.1 of the National Conversation Engagement Plan) cover the most important issues for Wales's future?**

   Yes **[X]**
   No
   Don't know
   If no, what is missing?

> **IWA response:** Inland waterways do not need a theme of their own. They cut across almost all of the themes, including economy, climate adaptation, nature, health and wellbeing, transport, heritage and recreation. Tourism, which is not a theme of its own, depends on several of these. An asset that cuts across every theme risks being missed. That is how the current plan came to say nothing about inland waterways. We would strongly ask that canals and other inland waterways are considered explicitly under each relevant theme.

8. **Are there any places, communities or issues that should receive special attention during the national conversation?**

> **IWA response:** The canal corridors of Wales and the communities along them. These include the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, the Llangollen and Montgomery Canals, which both cross the border with England, the Swansea Canal and the Neath and Tennant Canals. Several run through post-industrial Valleys communities and rural towns where regeneration is most needed. Some councils, such as Powys County Council, Torfaen County Borough Council and Neath Port Talbot Council, already have canal strategies or feasibility studies in place and would benefit from consultation and support.

9. **How can we make sure that everyone in Wales has a chance to take part?**
   Free text

10. **What is the best way to engage with you?**
    Online survey
    Local event
    Workshop **[X]**
    Focus group
    Social media
    Written response **[X]**
    Other

11. **Are there any additional comments you wish to make on the draft National Conversation Engagement Plan?**

Part B

National Conversation Themes

The following questions look to facilitate a national conversation on the future of Wales and the role that places, communities, infrastructure and natural resources both on land and in the sea should play in delivering that future. This will help shape the vision, objectives, and policies of various plans and strategies that are being taken forward by this government, including spatial land-use policy for inclusion in a new National Development Framework.

In Wales public policy and strategy is informed by and needs to follow the Wellbeing of Future Generation Act 2015 seven wellbeing goals. These are:

- **Prosperous**
- **Resilient**
- **Healthier**

- **More Equal**
- **Cohesive Communities**
- **Vibrant Culture and thriving Welsh language**
- **Globally Responsible**

The key thematic areas are set out strategically first, focussing on Wales as a whole in 2050 before focusing in on specific themes, which are set out alphabetically, aligned to the 7 goals of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015. The order in which they appear therefore should not be considered to hold any priority or importance as part of this call for evidence.

Wales in 2050

12. What would you like Wales to be known for in 2050? How can planning, development and infrastructure help make this happen?

13. What should we pass on to future generations in terms of our communities, environment (land, sea and air) and infrastructure?

> **IWA response:** A network of canals and other inland waterways that is in better condition, and longer, than the one we inherited.
>
> Inland waterways are unusual in doing many jobs at once. They are heritage and wildlife corridors, places for recreation, sport and tourism, routes for walking and cycling, part of the drainage and flood management system, and a focus for community and volunteer activity. Glandŵr Cymru, the Canal & River Trust in Wales, cares for about 76 miles of canal in Wales. Further lengths are in the care of local authorities, private owners and restoration charities.
>
> That multifunctional value justifies stronger recognition in the planning system than they have now, and greater protection of their historic setting in the landscape and in towns. The generation that built the canals passed on a working system. Our aim should be to pass on one that is fully protected, has a secure water supply, supports valued wildlife and has had its missing lengths restored.

14. Looking ahead to 2050, what are the biggest challenges and opportunities facing Wales, and how should they influence future development?

> **IWA response:**
>
> **Challenge: water.** Climate change is making water supply less reliable, and competition for water between public supply, rivers and navigation is growing. In 2025 the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, a navigable canal for 35 miles of its original length, came close to closure. New abstraction licence conditions, set to protect the River Usk Special Area of Conservation, limited the water it could take. It now relies on a paid supply from Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water, with Welsh Government providing cover of up to £400,000 a year for five years. IWA

welcomed that support. The lesson for a plan that looks to 2050 is that the water a canal needs has to be planned for alongside public supply and river protection, not left to be resolved in a crisis.

Opportunity: restoration. Wales has canals awaiting restoration in the places it most wants to regenerate. Restoration brings benefits at every stage, long before a canal fully reopens, and volunteers deliver much of the work at low cost. The opportunity is lost for good each time a route is built over.

Prosperous Wales

Economy and Jobs

15. Which parts of Wales should be prioritised for jobs, investment and economic growth, and why?

16. How can planning and infrastructure help create opportunities for people and businesses across all parts of Wales?

IWA response: Canals are economic infrastructure in every region of Wales. Glandŵr Cymru's prospectus *Waterways for Wales* (August 2026) reports that in 2022 its waterways generated a direct Gross Value Added contribution of £168m in Wales and supported 5,815 full-time-equivalent jobs. It values the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal at up to £30m a year to the regional economy.

The businesses behind those figures depend on navigation. Hire boat companies, trip boats, boatyards, marinas and canal-side pubs and shops need the canal open and in water. Planning can help by:

- recognising canals as assets in regional growth and regeneration strategies
- protecting canal-side sites for waterway-related businesses and moorings
- safeguarding the routes that would let restoration extend these benefits to more communities

17. Which industries do you think will be most important to Wales by 2050, and what land, natural resources or infrastructure will they need?

IWA response: Tourism will always be an important income generator in Wales. The Mon & Brec Canal is the most visited attraction in the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park, and it needs a long-term, secure water supply, planned as part of the wider River Usk catchment. A fully restored Montgomery Canal would give Wales another tourist destination, in the mid-Wales borderland.

Energy

18. How can renewable and low-carbon energy projects bring the greatest benefits to local communities and the Welsh economy?

19. What should be considered when deciding where renewable and low-carbon energy projects are located?

20. What opportunities are there to reduce energy use and meet more of our energy needs locally?

Net Zero and the Circular Economy

21. What changes to the way we plan and develop places are needed to support Wales's transition to net zero, a circular economy, nature recovery and wider environmental sustainability?

22. How can these changes support a just transition which addresses inequality, creates opportunities and is fair to people and communities across Wales?

Resilient Wales

Community Resilience and Climate Change

23. What are the biggest climate and environmental risks facing different parts of Wales, including flooding, storms, heatwaves, coastal change, water pressures, pollution and impacts on infrastructure, services and natural resources, and how should planning respond?

> **IWA response:** For canals the biggest risk is water shortage, followed by storm and flood damage to ageing structures.
>
> IWA's representation to HM Treasury for the Autumn Budget 2026 records that a long-term lack of investment in reservoirs and feeder channels, combined with weather extremes, has closed major waterways in peak summer months in four of the last ten years. It calls for all canal reservoirs and feeder channels in England and Wales to be fully repaired by 2030.
>
> Planning should respond by treating canal water supply, including reservoirs, feeders and abstraction points, as infrastructure to be identified and protected. Canals can also be part of the answer. They store and move water, and the Llangollen Canal shows that a canal can carry water for public supply and remain fully navigable. IWA's *Guidelines for Water Transfer via Navigable Waterways* (February 2026) set out what a transfer scheme needs to address. The condition is that the canal's own navigation supply is secured first.

Nature and Land

24. How can planning help nature and natural systems adapt to climate change so they continue to support wellbeing, ecosystem resilience and essential services for people and communities?

25. How should land-use planning protect and enhance nature while also supporting housing, renewable energy, food production, timber, economic development, circula economy opportunities, flood resilience and community wellbeing?

26. How can the planning system help ensure that important landscapes, habitats, coastal and marine areas, and natural resources are protected, restored and effectively managed for biodiversity, climate resilience and future generations?

> **IWA response:** Canals are linear habitats that connect towns, farmland and protected landscapes. They are ready-made ecological corridors, **yet the green infrastructure policy in *Future Wales* does not mention them**. The revised framework should name canals and other inland waterways, navigable and under restoration, as part of the national green-blue infrastructure network, so that regional and local plans include them in their ecological networks.
>
> Navigation and nature can be reconciled. IWA's approach is to look for engineering and management solutions before restrictions, to base decisions on evidence, and to agree management plans early with conservation bodies. On the Montgomery Canal, off-line nature reserves have been created so that navigation and wildlife can be accommodated together. Designations should be able to recognise them. A canal in water and in use is maintained. A disused one silts up, dries out and loses much of its habitat value.

Sea and Coast

27. What do you value most about the sea, and what should it provide for future generations? What does this mean for how we use and manage land and coastal areas?

> **IWA response:** Several Welsh canals were built to reach tidal water: the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal at Newport on the Usk, and the Neath and Tennant Canals at Port Tennant. There have been proposals to restore canal links to the sea, including connecting the Swansea and Tennant Canals in Swansea. These may be many years away, but planning policy should protect the possibility rather than allow it to be lost. On the Dee, the lock at Chester that links the river to the canal network is unusable, with its lower gates missing. Although it is in England, it is the gateway between the Dee and the wider network, and Welsh Government should work with partners across the border to bring it back

> into use. Keeping estuaries such as the Usk and the Dee navigable, and protecting access to them, could connect the inland waterways to the coast and to the wider network.

Healthier Wales

Health and Wellbeing

28. How can planning and development help create healthier places and improve people's wellbeing?

> **IWA response:** Towpaths are free, level, traffic-free and close to where people live, often in communities with the poorest health. Boating, canoeing, stand-up paddleboarding, angling and restoration volunteering are also outdoor, physical and social activities. Canals offer a sheltered, accessible setting where young people can try outdoor activities.
>
> Planning can help by protecting canals and towpaths from being severed, narrowed or enclosed by development, and by requiring development next to a canal to face it and open access to it. None of the health benefits survive if the canal is drained or closed.

29. What services, facilities, infrastructure and environmental features are most important for people's health and wellbeing?

> **IWA response:** Accessible green and blue space close to home. Canals provide both in one corridor, and they reach into town centres in a way that most other green space does not.

30. Are there any places or communities that need extra support to improve health, wellbeing or economic opportunities?

More Equal

31. How can planning make it easier for people to access jobs, healthcare, education, shops, services and community facilities?

> **IWA response:** Towpaths already work as car-free routes between communities, and many form part of active travel networks. Towpaths are often part of recognised national cycle routes, such as National Cycle Network route 81 along the Montgomery Canal. Planning should support improvements to them. IWA's *Towpaths Policy* (December 2025) asks that upgrades do not narrow the channel or crowd out moorings and boat handling. A towpath is part of a working waterway as well as a path.

32. How important is good digital connectivity, such as broadband and mobile coverage, for the future of communities and businesses? Where should investment be focused?

Cohesive Communities

Homes and Housing

33. What makes a good place to live, and how can planning help create and support these communities?

> **IWA response:** Water and green space within walking distance, a sense of local history, and places where people meet. Canals offer all three. New neighbourhoods beside canals should be designed around them, with public access to the waterside. Moorings can be designed into housing schemes, and residential moorings and boaters' facilities belong in local housing strategies. IWA's *Moorings on Navigable Waterways* policy (April 2025) supports this.

34. What kinds of homes will Wales need over the next 25 years, and where should they be built?

Regeneration and Development

35. How should towns, cities, villages and rural communities change and grow to meet future needs?

> **IWA response:** Canal corridors are natural lines for regeneration in post-industrial and rural towns and villages. New development should make use of canals, not turn its back on them. The one change that cannot be undone is building across a canal route. Where towns grow near a canal awaiting restoration, the line should be kept clear, and new roads, bridges and utility crossings should keep full navigable clearance.

Transport and Logistics

36. How should people and goods travel around Wales in 2050, and what transport and infrastructure will be needed?

> **IWA response:** Canals and other inland waterways, with their towpaths, should be planned as part of the transport system: for active travel, for leisure travel by water, and for freight where it is practical. *Planning Policy Wales* already says that planning authorities should promote the use of inland waterways, and that Welsh Government wants more freight moved by rail and water. The revised framework should carry that through, and should ensure that new transport schemes crossing a canal or a restoration route do not create new obstructions.

Vibrant Culture and thriving Welsh language

37. How can planning and new development help support and strengthen the Welsh language?

38. How should local history, culture and identity be reflected in decisions about new development?

> **IWA response:** The canals tell the industrial story of Wales: iron, coal and limestone, and the communities that grew up around them. Pontcysyllte is a World Heritage Site, but most canal heritage has far less protection. Locks, bridges, aqueducts, wharves and canal-side buildings are at risk from development, lack of maintenance, loss of skills and climate change.
>
> Decisions on new development should protect canal structures and their settings, in the countryside and in towns, and should treat a canal as a whole historic route and not as a set of separate listed structures. Bilingual interpretation and the use of Welsh canal and place names help connect that heritage to the language.

39. How can different parts of Wales contribute to a shared vision for the country while keeping their own unique character and identity?

> **IWA response:** Each canal in Wales has a unique character while still sharing common recognisable features. The Mon & Brec Canal is well known for being picturesque; the Neath and Tennant Canals and the Swansea Canal are known for their industrial heritage, the Montgomery Canal for its rural beauty, and the Llangollen Canal for its spectacular engineering. Together the canals and other inland waterways of Wales can contribute to business and tourism across Wales.

Part C

The following questions focus on the role the revised National Development Framework should play in meeting Wales's needs, empowering local government and reducing costs, bureaucracy and duplication within the land use planning system.

Effective Governance

40. Do you agree that local councils and regional partnerships should play a stronger role in preparing and delivering the National Development Framework, while reducing unnecessary bureaucracy and duplication? Please explain your views and suggest any improvements.

The Planning System

41. Are there any issues that should be planned for at a Wales-wide level rather than by regional or local plans?

IWA response: Yes. Canals and other inland waterways are linear and cross council boundaries. The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal alone runs through several local planning authority areas and a National Park. At present each authority decides separately whether, and how well, to protect its length. **There is no national policy to guide them.**

What action is needed. The revised framework should include a short national policy on inland waterways that:

- recognises canals and other inland waterways, both navigable and under restoration, as national green-blue infrastructure
- safeguards the routes of canals awaiting restoration from development that would prevent them being brought back into use
- requires new road, rail and utility crossings of a canal or restoration route to keep navigable clearance
- identifies the water supply canals need, including reservoirs and feeders, as infrastructure

There is a direct precedent. *Planning Policy Wales* (Edition 12, paragraph 5.3.8) says disused railways should "be safeguarded from development which could adversely affect them being brought back to rail use in the future". There is no equivalent for canals.

Who needs to be involved. Welsh Government planning and water policy teams, Corporate Joint Committees, local planning authorities, Natural Resources Wales, Cadw, Glandŵr Cymru, other canal owners, restoration charities and IWA. IWA would be glad to help draft and test policy wording.

What government can do differently. Set the principle once at national level, and add matching wording to *Planning Policy Wales* so that it applies before the new framework is adopted in 2029/30.

How progress could be measured:

- the number of Strategic and Local Development Plans that map and safeguard canal routes
- miles of canal in Wales that are navigable, in water and under restoration
- days of navigation lost each year to water shortage
- no planning approvals for development on a safeguarded canal line, and no new crossings below navigable clearance

42. How can overlap and repetition between national, regional and local plans be reduced?

> **IWA response:** Some overlap is unavoidable, because lower plans quote higher ones to justify their proposals. What reduces it is a clear, agreed definition of what is a national, a regional and a local matter.
>
> Canals are a good test case. The national framework should state the principle once. Strategic Development Plans should map canal corridors across council boundaries. Local Development Plans should apply them to sites. No level then needs to repeat another.
>
> The Welsh Government's *Future Wales* monitoring report (March 2026) records that no Strategic Development Plans have yet been adopted in any of the four regions. Until they are, national policy is the only level above the local plan, which makes clear national wording more important.

Making Decisions and Delivering Development

43. How can the National Development Framework give communities, developers and decision-makers more confidence and certainty about future development?

> **IWA response:** By being specific and by being mapped. A safeguarded canal corridor shown on a plan tells a developer what is possible before a site is bought or an application made. It also tells volunteers and funders that the route they are working on will still be there.
>
> Canals outside the care of Glandŵr Cymru have no national navigation authority to speak for them. Their protection depends entirely on development plan policy being clear.

44. How can planning decisions be made more quickly while still making sure people have a meaningful opportunity to have their say?

> **IWA response:** Certainty up front is the quickest route. A clear national policy and a mapped corridor settle the principle before an application is made, so it does not have to be argued one application at a time.
>
> An example from Neath Port Talbot shows what happens without that certainty. The Local Development Plan protects the canal routes. At Abergarwed the Council refused development on the line of the Neath Canal in 2022 because it would prejudice future restoration, then in January 2025 approved development on the same site under the same policy. A national policy, with each canal corridor properly mapped, would give a clear answer the first time.

People have a more meaningful say when they are involved as plans are written, not just when applications are made. Waterway interests should be consulted at that stage.

Efficient planning processes matter as much as policy. These are practical suggestions on process, not waterway policy, but everyone who relies on the system would benefit from them, including the volunteer groups who have to respond to applications:

- enough qualified planning staff in every local planning authority, with the funding to support them
- a single scheme of delegation agreed for the whole of Wales, so that officers decide a larger share of routine applications
- enough planning inspectors for appeals to be dealt with promptly
- written representations as the normal route for appeals, with Welsh Government defining the exceptional cases that need a hearing

45. What are the main obstacles that stop developments from being delivered once they have planning support?

Strategic Planning and Delivery

46. How can the National Development Framework help ensure that infrastructure, such as transport, energy, water and digital networks, is delivered alongside new development?

IWA response: Three points on canals:

- **Water.** Where new development increases demand for water, plans should consider the effect on canal supplies and the part canals can play in moving and storing water. Canal reservoirs, feeders and abstraction points should be identified as infrastructure.
- **Towpaths as utility corridors.** A towpath is a continuous route, usually in one ownership, that already links towns and rural communities. Glandŵr Cymru's prospectus notes that canals can host cables and pipes for water, electricity and internet fibre, which is particularly useful for connectivity in rural Wales. Canals can also provide water-source heating and cooling for nearby development. Hosting these services brings income to navigation authorities, which helps pay for the upkeep of the waterway. The framework should recognise canal corridors as routes for this kind of infrastructure, provided the work does not obstruct navigation or harm the towpath and its heritage.
- **Crossings.** New roads, pipes, cables and bridges are often built across canals and restoration routes. Each one should keep navigable clearance. It costs little at the design stage and a great deal to put right afterwards.

47. How can the National Development Framework bring together housing, regeneration, transport, economic growth and infrastructure objectives into a clear long-term plan for Wales?

48. What information and evidence should be used to help shape the revised National Development Framework?

> **IWA response:**
>
> We suggest creating or using the following:
>
> - a national map of canal routes in Wales: navigable; in water but not navigable; and awaiting restoration
> - Glandŵr Cymru's *Waterways for Wales* prospectus (August 2026) and its economic evidence
> - restoration feasibility studies and local canal strategies
> - water resource evidence for each canal, including abstraction licences and supply agreements
> - IWA's published policies and standards, listed in Part D
>
> IWA would be glad to help compile the map of routes and to meet officials to discuss any of this.

Part D

Call for Evidence

Please provide evidence that you have to support the revision of the National Development Framework.

*Drop down menu to include opportunity to upload evidence by theme *

a. Wales in 2050
b. Homes and Communities
c. Economy and Prosperity
d. Planning for Nature Recovery, Climate Resilience, a Circular Economy and Environmental Sustainability
e. Movement and Connectivity
f. Health and Wellbeing
g. Culture, Language and Nationhood
h. Planning
i. Academic Research
j. Local Studies
k. Other

IWA response: IWA offers the following published evidence, under the themes "Planning" and "Planning for Nature Recovery, Climate Resilience, a Circular Economy and Environmental Sustainability":

- IWA, *Design Standards for Construction, Restoration and Maintenance of Inland Waterways* (February 2024): https://waterways.org.uk/about-us/library/standards-for-construction-restoration-and-maintenance-of-inland-waterways
- IWA, *Policy Statement on Restrictions on Waterways Use* (February 2024): https://waterways.org.uk/about-us/library/policy-restrictions-waterways-use
- IWA, *Towpaths Policy* (December 2025): https://waterways.org.uk/about-us/library/towpaths-policy
- IWA, *Moorings on Navigable Waterways* (April 2025): https://waterways.org.uk/about-us/library/moorings-on-navigable-waterways
- IWA, *Heritage Policy* (February 2022): https://waterways.org.uk/about-us/library/heritage-policy
- IWA, *Guidelines for Water Transfer via Navigable Waterways* (February 2026): https://waterways.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Water-Transfer-Guidelines-V1-26-02.pdf
- IWA, *Submission to HM Treasury for Autumn Budget 2026* (September 2026): https://waterways.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/IWA-Autumn-Budget-Representation-2026.pdf
- Glandŵr Cymru, *Waterways for Wales: A prospectus for Welsh canals* (August 2026)
- Welsh Government, *Planning Policy Wales, Edition 12*, paragraphs 5.3.8 and 5.3.14 to 5.3.16

How to respond

We welcome responses via the online response form or written responses from individuals, communities, organisations and partners across Wales. Responses may draw on formal data, published research, organisational experience, lived experience, case studies, examples of good practice or practical proposals for change.

We particularly welcome evidence that is clear about what action is needed, who needs to be involved, what government can do differently, and how progress could be measured. These questions are intended as a starting point and may be developed further through engagement with partners.

All written submissions should be sent to: planconsultations-h@gov.wales

The deadline for submissions is 12th November 2026

Your rights

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tell us.

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please see contact details below.

Data Protection Officer

Data Protection Officer
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Email: **Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales**

Information Commissioner's Office

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113

Website: **ico.org.uk**

UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Welsh Government will be data controller for Welsh Government consultations and for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation.

Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. The lawful basis for processing information in this data collection

exercise is our public task; that is, exercising our official authority to undertake the core role and functions of the Welsh Government. (Art 6(1)(e))

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. In the case of joint consultations this may also include other public authorities. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses then this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing.

You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation and that the Welsh Government may be under a legal obligation to disclose some information.

If your details are published as part of the consultation response, then these published reports will be retained indefinitely. Any of your data held otherwise by Welsh Government will be kept for no more than 3 years.