

Report of Performance and Compliance Co-ordinator

Subject: Annual Report on Meeting Well-Being Objectives 2023/24

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 places a duty on the Authority to set out its Well-being Objectives and to demonstrate how these contribute to the Welsh Government's seven Well-being Goals. Under the legislation each year bodies must publish an annual report showing the progress they have made in meeting their objectives. They must also demonstrate how they have applied the 5 ways of working under the sustainable development principle of Long Term, Prevention, Integration, Collaboration and Involvement.

In order to ensure biodiversity considerations are mainstreamed across the Authority it also acts as one element of the reporting on how the Authority complies with the Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystem duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The report reflects our performance against activities noted in our Corporate and Resources Plan 2023/24 – 2026/27 and associated Delivery Plans for 2023/24 and additional developments during the year.

The design of the report is simple to support uploading of the report in HTML format to our website to support compliance with Web Accessibility Regulations.

A number of data sets included in this report have previously been reported in performance reports and have been reviewed and subsequently amended where needed.

Compliance

The National Park Authority is required to comply with reporting requirement under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies to act in accordance with the sustainable development principles. In this plan we have highlighted how the sustainable development principles are embedded in the Authority's work.

Equality

Report includes performance information for activities that also support delivery of the Authority' Equality Plan and Objectives.

The design of the report is simple to support the uploading of the report in HTML format to our website to support compliance with Web Accessibility Regulations.

Section 6 - Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

The Authority has in place an Environment (Wales) Act 2016 [Section 6 \(Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty\) Signposting document](#) that outlines the approach taken by the Authority to embed the duty within its corporate planning framework and reporting. This report constitutes one element of the Authority's reporting on how it complies with the S6 duty. Relevant activities have [Section 6 Duty] noted against them in the report.

Welsh Language statement

The document will be published in both English and Welsh on the Authority's website and references performance information on the Welsh Language.

Recommendation:

Members are requested to approve Annual Report on Meeting Well-being Objectives 2023/24 and provide delegated Authority to officers to incorporate as necessary any minor changes as needed (e.g. typos, factual corrections).

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Annual Report on Meeting Well-being Objectives

2023/24



**Parc Cenedlaethol
Arfordir Penfro**

**Pembrokeshire Coast
National Park**

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Introduction

This report sets out Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority’s (The Authority) performance in 2023/24 and contribution to its Well-being Objectives. It also shows how we have applied the 5 ways of working under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act in our work.

We would like to thank staff, Members, volunteers, partners and communities within and beyond the Park for helping us deliver activities highlighted within this document.

Note on Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

The Authority has in place an Environmental (Wales) Act 2016 Section 6 (Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty) signposting document that outlines the approach taken by the Authority to embed the duty within its corporate planning framework and reporting. This report constitutes one element of the Authority’s reporting on how it complies with the Section 6 duty. Relevant activities in the report have [\[Section 6 Duty\]](#) noted against them.

National Park and its Special Qualities

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park was designated in 1952 under the National Park and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The National Park covers an area of 629km², with approximately 21,000 people living in 49 community, town and city council areas. Most of the National Park is in private ownership with the Authority owning only about 1%.

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park's "special qualities" are

- Accessibility
- Coastal splendour
- Diverse geology
- Diversity of landscape
- Cultural heritage
- Islands
- Rich historic environment
- Space to breath
- Richness of habitats and biodiversity
- Remoteness, tranquillity and wildness
- Distinctive settlement character
- The diversity of experiences and combination of individual qualities

National Park Authority and Park Purposes

The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority was created as a free-standing special purpose local authority under the 1995 Environment Act (the Act). The Authority

consists of 18 Members, 12 nominated by Pembrokeshire County Council and six appointed by the Welsh Government.

The Environment Act 1995 specifies that the Purposes of a National Park Authority are

- ❖ To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the park area
- ❖ To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.

The Act also states that in pursuing the above purposes the Authority has a duty to seek to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities.

Placemaking Plans

Every five years the Authority is required to produce a National Park Management Plan which sets out how it would like to see the National Park managed, not just by the Authority itself, but by the other agencies and organisations whose activities might impact on the Park.

Our current National Park Management Plan pursues National Park purposes through partnership action across five complementary themes.

- A national asset - A landscape for life and livelihoods
- Landscapes for everyone - Well-being, enjoyment and discovery
- A resilient Park - Protecting and restoring biodiversity
- A place of culture - Celebrating heritage

- Global responsibility - Managing natural resources sustainably

During the year officers began preparation work for the review of the National Park Management Plan in 2024/25. Including facilitating an online survey to capture people's views on the Special Qualities of the Park.

The Authority is the statutory planning authority for the National Park and is responsible for the preparation of the Local Development Plan. The Authority's Local Development Plan 2 was approved in September 2020 and is monitored through its Annual Monitoring Report.

Funding

The Welsh Government sets the level of Government funding for the National Park Authority on an annual basis through National Park Grant. For 2023/24, the level of core funding allocated resulted in a flat-cash settlement at the same level since 2020/21 at £3,249k. However, during the year the Authority received a revenue top up of £440k for 2023/24 and capital allocation of £115k (2023: Top up of £312k) which ensured the budgeted deficit was prevented and enabled the delivery of projects and additional capital expenditure.

In setting the amount of National Park Grant, the Welsh Government also determines, in accordance with statutory powers, the minimum amount that can be raised by the National Park Authority as a Levy against Pembrokeshire County Council.

The National Park Grant represents 75% of the Authority's core grant funding, with the remaining 25% represented by the Levy. This has remained the same at £1.083m since 2021/22. The Authority however, generates 25% (2023: 25%) of its income locally, for example through car park charges, planning fees and 20% from other service and project specific grants such as the maintenance of the Coast Path (National Trail). Any deficit or surplus is managed via the Authority's revenue reserves.

Measuring Performance – Well-being Objectives

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public bodies to act in accordance with the sustainable development principles of: Long Term, Prevention, Integration, Collaboration and Involvement. Throughout the document there are examples that demonstrate these principles being applied in practice.

We have also looked to assess our progress towards our well-being objectives through considering:

- Completion of Future Generations Commissioner's Online Journey Checker tool.
- Well-being of Future Generations Commissioner's Future Generations Report 2020.
- Audit Wales Reports in terms of 5 ways of working
- Well-being Indicators and National Milestones for Wales

The Authority monitors its progress against its well-being objectives during the year, through performance reports provided to Members through relevant Committees. Some statistics are captured on an annual basis.

The Authority amended its performance framework during 2023/24 and will carry out further quality assurance work during the year to improve accuracy and categorisation of data reported

The Authority has adopted the Welsh Government's net zero carbon reporting methodology for public bodies for carbon emissions.

Our Well-being Objectives and their contribution to the Well-being Goals for Wales

Development of our Well-being Objectives

The Authority approved a new high-level strategy in July 2021, identifying four priority areas for 2022-26 and a revised vision.

Priority: Conservation – Boosting biodiversity and halting its decline

Impact: Nature is Flourishing

Priority: Climate – Destination Net Zero

Impact: We're an Authority aiming for net zero and a carbon neutral National Park

Priority: Connection – Natural Health Service

Impact: People are healthier, happier and more connected to nature and heritage

Priority: Communities – Vibrant Communities

Impact: Places people can live, work and enjoy.

Vision: A National Park where nature, culture and communities thrive

Online surveys with staff, Members and wider public were carried out as part of its development. In person engagement opportunities were limited due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The approval of the high-level strategy triggered a review of our Well-being Objectives. The Objectives were revised to align with the new priorities and to take account of key policy developments and challenges including the nature and climate emergencies. Staff, Members and the Public were consulted on the revised Objectives and associated outcomes. A new set of Well-being Objectives were approved and included in the Corporate and Resources Plan 2022/23. These Well-being Objectives were carried forward to the Corporate and Resources Plan 2023/23 – 2026/27. A set of delivery plans have been put in place to support implementation of the Corporate and Resources Plan.

Meeting the Sustainable Development Principles

Long Term: The world is facing a nature and climate emergency; lack of action now will have long term consequences for future generations and the Park. Supporting action to address these challenges is at the heart of our Well-being Objectives.

Prevention: All our Well-being Objectives are focused on delivering interventions that will look to prevent problems occurring or getting worse across the National Park area.

Integration: Our Well-being Objectives can only be achieved by taking a strategic and integrated approach with partners. Our delivery plans support an integrated approach maximising cross cutting impacts across our Well-being Objectives.

Collaboration: We have placed collaboration at the heart of all our Well-being Objectives and delivery plans. From experience we know that positive change can only be achieved through working together with others.

Involvement: Our Well-being Objectives can only be achieved by proactively involving and listening to people. Engagement will be used to ensure we develop the right interventions to break down barriers to support a more diverse range of people to take action for nature or experience the outdoors and wonders of the Park.

Below we set out how our well-being objectives in the Corporate and Resources Plan 2023/24 – 2026/27 contribute to the Well-being Goals for Wales, embed the sustainable

development principles in practice and our performance against each objective for 2023/24.

Corporate Priority: Conservation

Our Conservation Well-being Objective: To deliver nature recovery and connectivity at scale, so nature is flourishing in the Park, contributing to the protection of 30% of our land and seas for nature by 2030.

Contribution to National Well-being Goals

This Objective aims to deliver the following outcomes:

- Promote and deliver nature recovery on land and in the marine environment supporting the protection of 30% of our land and seas for nature by 2030.
- Favourable conservation status is achieved on high nature value sites.
- Increase in land managed for nature recovery in the Park (achieved through influencing and working with others and managing our own estate.)
- Increase in ecological connectivity.
- A wide range of people are supported to participate in taking action for nature.
- The management of marine designations has improved through working with partners, nationally and locally.

Through delivering nature recovery it will support a prosperous Wales, resilient Wales, healthier Wales and globally responsible Wales. Contributing to the '30x30' commitment to protect 30% of our land and seas for nature by 2030 and national indicators for Wales on

- Areas of healthy ecosystems in Wales
- Status of biological diversity in Wales
- Percentage of surface water bodies, and groundwater bodies, achieving good or high overall status

Through supporting a wide range of people to participate in taking action for nature and working in partnership with others, including landowners, farmers and communities it will support a more equal Wales and a Wales of cohesive communities.

Our activities during the year took account of the wider policy context impacting on conservation and nature recovery:

- UK and Welsh Government's public commitment to support the 30x30 target of protecting 30% of our land and seas for nature by 2030.
- The [recommendations and collective actions](#) developed as part of the Welsh Government Biodiversity Deep Dive.
- Consultation and developments linked to [Sustainable Farming Scheme for Wales](#) which will impact on how land is managed for nature in the Park.
- Working in partnership with Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership to support delivery of the [Pembrokeshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan](#) .

- Development of [Biodiversity and the Nature Emergency project](#) within the Well-being Plan for Pembrokeshire.
- [South West Wales Area Statement](#), [Marine Area Statement](#), and [State of Natural Resources for Wales Report](#).

The Authority has put in place a Nature Recovery Delivery Plan, with actions in other Delivery Plans also supporting more people to take part in action to support Nature Recovery.



Conservation Areas of Impact 2023/24

1. Increase in extent of effective protection and management for nature recovery happening in the Park area (focused on Authority intervention and management regimes)

Land Managed for Biodiversity [Section 6 Duty]

The Authority saw an increase in the land managed for biodiversity in partnership with private landowners from 1,544.04 hectares in 2022/23 to 1,651 in 2023/24. The figure excludes sites which have come into Conserving the Park previously, but do not require our active involvement at present.

There was an increase in the property owned or leased by the Authority managed for biodiversity, increasing from 477.77 hectares in 2022/23 to 503.24 hectares in 2023/24. This change reflects a recalculation of the data from accurate mapping data.

In 2023/24 there were 3,792.51 hectares of access land where the Authority supported commons management partnerships. This is an increase on 3,718.59 hectares in 2022/23.

Conserving the Park [Section 6 Duty]

The Conserving the Park Scheme facilitates practical conservation action on privately-owned sites across the National Park. It increases the resilience of key habitats and species by safeguarding a network of nature-rich sites. It helps landowners who wish to maximise the wildlife value of their land, through tool kit approach that can include formal management agreements.

No new formal management agreements were made through Conserving the Park scheme in 2023/24 as there was no spare capacity in management agreement budgets. This compared to 5 in 2022/23 covering 88.62 hectares. 100% of conservation sites were in line with their formal conservation management plan in 2023/24, continuing the trend from 2022/23.

There were 17 new sites where we worked with owners for conservation (outside formal management agreements) in 2023/24 compared to 18 in 2022/23. In addition, two sites have given more of their land over to conservation. Including this additional land it amounts to 113.73 hectares, this compares to 44.12 hectares in 2022/23.

113.73 hectares of new pollinator habitats was created in 2023/24 building on the 132.74 hectares created in 2022/23.

Positive Impact Spotlight: A stronghold for yellowhammers has been discovered on a site near Roch where a management agreement supports traditional practices which favour them. The Authority has also supported a winter feeding programme there, plus a ringing project to get a clearer picture of numbers. This has surpassed all expectations and currently stands at 60 individuals. Elsewhere, we have funded specially-designed feeding trays which are now in use at other hotspots around the National Park.

Connecting the Coast [Section 6 Duty]

During 2023/24 the Authority's new Connecting the Coast pilot land management scheme was launched. Funded by the Welsh Government's Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places (SLSP) Scheme it offers funding for the creation and maintenance of wildlife habitats along Pembrokeshire's rich and diverse coastline.

A successful promotion period resulted in 75 expressions of interests. Farms were visited, proposals drawn up, scoring carried out and budgets allocated during 2023/24. Applications over 20k were approved by Members through SDF Committee (now the Grants Committee).

39 sites are covered by the new scheme, and 24 of these sites are commercial farms.

21 new sites have been signed into 5 year management agreements (grant offer to landowner) through the project, covering 188.49 hectares.

18 sites are receiving capital only grants (grant offer to landowners). With 159.88 hectares of habitat to be created on capital only sites. 147.68 hectares of herbal ley, and 2,621 meters of hedgerows are to be created. 986 trees are to be planted for field trees and woodland planting and capital grant will assist with 18,484.48 meters of fencing to support conservation.

In addition to direct benefits for biodiversity, the capital grants have also provided a positive engagement tool for introducing conservation approaches to farmers/ landowners the Authority has previously had limited engagement with. Ecological monitoring will be undertaken at sites to assess impact of this project. Interviews and questionnaires for landowners, particularly farmers will evaluate their perceptions of changes in land management and establish best practice for owner engagement in future schemes.

Positive Impact Spotlight: The Connecting the Coast Scheme is supporting the Authority to expand the extent of land managed for nature recovery in the Park building on the work of the existing Conserving the Park Scheme. Through the additional SLSP funding it has enabled the Authority to put in place new formal management agreements. This is important as budget constraints can limit the number of new

formal agreements that can be made each year through the Conserving the Park Scheme.

Traditional Boundaries [Section 6 Duty]

A new expression of interest window opened in 2023/24 for the Traditional Boundary Scheme with 55 expressions of interests received. 3 times the amount submitted in 2022.

At the beginning of the season 18 agreement letters were finalised and signed but due to the adverse weather only 8 were planted. Agreements focused on the gapping up of old hedges with one new hedge being created and another layed. Due to the unrelenting wet weather over the winter of 2023/24 the ground has been saturated and this had made gaining access to hedgerows difficult. A total of 1,492 meters of traditional boundaries were restored under the Scheme in 2022/23. This compares to 2,266 meters in 2022/23 and cumulatively since the scheme started 7,436 meters of traditional boundaries have been restored.

Peatland Action Programme [Section 6 Duty]

The Authority secured external funding to support its Peatland restoration work with first year of the project completed by end of March 2024. Work in 2023/24 focused on Waun Fawr Puncheston Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Activities to support reintroducing cattle grazing to this site will restore the functionality of the peatland and reduce colonisation by

scrub species that dry out the peat. It will also help towards bringing the SSSI into favourable condition. 8 No fence cattle collars were bought for the grazier of Waun Fawr Puncheston and a lease agreement signed between them and the Authority. Rhododendrons were felled and their stumps treated around the SSSI, to stop them spreading onto the site. Vegetation cutting has been done across the SSSI, clearing patches of scrub and opening up areas for cattle to get around the site. Permission has been obtained to delay the fencing until the next financial year, due to impact of exceptionally wet conditions.

Permission was given for us to use the remaining budget to buy No Fence collars for cattle to graze Gors Fawr (this had been proposed for the 2024/25 financial year).

Collaboration Spotlight: The Pembrokeshire Grazing network capitalises on established relations between landowners and Graziers to ensure that land is managed for conservation purposes. During 2023/24, 403 hectares were managed by grazing across 67 sites throughout the National Park. The Pembrokeshire grazing Network relies heavily on Ponies to deliver targeted grazing but over the past year the network has facilitated goats and Cattle using no fence collars to graze at small number of sites.

Commons Resilience [Section 6 Duty]

Due to the excessive wet weather fire breaks were only created in a few areas this year. In Partnership with the Fire Service the following areas were cut. Geulan Goch, Mirrianog Fawr (Preseli). Trellys, Ty Dwr (Carningli), Rhos Hescwm, Y Foes (Dinas).

A Successful Grant application was made to the Heritage Lottery - Nature Networks Fund. For common land the aims and deliverables are focused on boundary fencing, habitat restoration and the creation of fire breaks. Planning was underway at the end of 2023/24 ready for delivery in 2024/25.

Collaboration Spotlight: Pembrokeshire Sustainable Agriculture Network - Wildfire Group works with landowners and communities to help reduce outbreaks of wildfires and through practical land management minimising the potential damage. Group attended 3 agricultural shows (Fishguard, Nevern, Pembrokeshire Agricultural Society Show) over the Summer alongside MAWW Fire Farm liaison officer. Meetings during the year have looked at fire break infrastructure in Pembrokeshire. The Group hosted a Vegetation Fire Foundation and Operator Course and all who attended gained a Lantra qualification.

Stitch in Time [Section 6 Duty]

35.26 hectares were under high intensity control (cutting Himalayan balsam) during the 2023 growing season across sites in Stitch in time (Nature Networks grant), SLSP grant and biodiversity budget. Monitoring and maintenance for Invasive Species was undertaken across 11.7 hectares in 2023/24. 1,802 Japanese Knotweed stems were injected during July to October 2023 by Stitch in Time Officer and North Ranger.

During 2023/24 the project continued to engage volunteers in removing invasive species. Contractors were also engaged with to carry out vegetation cutting at sites to create access for control work.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority continued to provide financial support and participate in the Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership. With the Authority's Lead Ecologist chairing the partnership. This partnership supports delivery of Pembrokeshire Nature Recovery Plan. Officers working on behalf of the partnership have developed, submitted and secured a 2 year revenue and capital programme under Welsh Government's Local Places for Nature Scheme. This funding contributes to projects, that support delivery of local nature recovery plan. The Authority's conservation activities have been supported through this funding.

Nature Recovery Indicators [Section 6 Duty]

The Authority is also exploring options for future nature recovery indicators to help measure impact and target interventions. This should support future assessments of impact of our land management and connectivity work with landowners. This work will be impacted by the outcome of the Welsh Government white paper consultation on Environmental principles, governance and biodiversity targets.

Positive Impact Spotlight: The Castlemartin ranger started monitoring seal pup births in 2004 and has achieved almost a 20 year dataset. The Castlemartin Ranger, more recently a seasonal ranger and in 2023 a volunteer help collect the data. This data will be used by NRW for the Pembrokeshire SAC seal condition assessment. Seal pup births have generally been on the increase annually. The data was also used in Defence Infrastructure Organisation's HRA for recent large scale military training exercises

Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority continued to provide funding towards the Pembrokeshire Marine Special Area of Conservation, Cardigan Bay Special Area of Conservation and Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries European Marine Sites (Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation) and attend relevant meetings. Seagrass is included within The Welsh Marine Treasures project of the Natur am Byth! project and this has allowed the Pembrokeshire Marine SAC Officer paid time to continue working on the Dale seagrass

restoration trial. The project is also looking at the Pink Sea Fan, Crawfish and the Native Oyster.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority participates in the Cleddau Nutrient Management Board in support to the successful implementation of the Nutrient Management Plan. The Nutrient management Board is working to improved favourable conditions status of SAC catchments while facilitating nutrient neutral development in the Park.

2. Embedding Nature Recovery in how we operate with focus on access and heritage

Managing the Paths for Nature Recovery [Section 6 Duty]

The Coast Path and Inland Rights of Way (IROW) network offers a great opportunity for the Authority to explore how it can manage access work in a way that also supports nature recovery. 127 pollinator/ habitat improvement Countryside Management work programme tasks were completed in 2023/24 in support of managing the Coast Path and IROW for nature recovery. This included ant hill, bee banks and scalloped edges work programme tasks. This compares to 404 tasks completed in 2024. There has been a 68.3% decrease compared to 2022/23 however this reflects that the Authority had specific pollinator warden for part of 2022/23. The activity is now mainstreamed into wider rights of way

work programme and work is ongoing to explore how to further embed this within the Countryside Management Team approaches

Positive Impact Spotlight: Carew Castle, its surrounding grassland, the tidal Millpond and Castle Lane were designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1995. Carew Castle's importance as a bat habitat has even been recognised internationally with its inclusion in the Pembrokeshire bat site Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Monthly bat surveys take place in the spring and summer, managed by the conservation team. The grassland habitat at Carew is managed with the aim of supporting wildlife. Welsh black mountain sheep graze the grassland over winter creating a mosaic of vegetation at different heights, allowing wildflowers to grow, flower and set seed each year. The meadow grass is cut in summer, suiting late summer and autumn fruiting fungi. Waxcaps in particular thrive on short, grazed grass and Carew Castle is one of the best sites for them in West Wales. In the last few years, the Carew team have been undertaking planting projects. Hundreds of pollinator-friendly plants, seeds, and bulbs have been planted in the Walled Garden and locally sourced wildflower seed has been sown into its meadow.

Scrub Clearance at Monuments [Section 6 Duty]

The Authority Community Archaeologist has supported scrub

clearance at several sites. They supported scrub clearance activities at Nevern Castle with the area ranger, Pembrokeshire College and volunteers. This work will benefit wildlife, woodland and plants at the site. They joined the area ranger, INNS officer and volunteers to cut dead Japanese knotweed stems on the scheduled leat in St Davids. This was done with the support of volunteers. Scrub clearance activities also happened at Tower Point Rath (St Brides) and Newport Castle.

Ash Dieback [Section 6 Duty]

Targeted ash dieback surveys have been completed on all Authority owned sites with zoning according to the usage of these sites and hence the risk to public safety. Outcomes from survey will result either in continued annual monitoring, more frequent monitoring or removal of tree.

Survey work was undertaken and completed at sites in 2023/24 with trees identified for felling or lopping as appropriate. With trees with ash-die back disease identified for felling works felled at relevant sites.

Strategic Approach [Section 6 Duty]

An initial review has been carried out on Authority's Section 6 Biodiversity Duty Signposting document following approval of the delivery plan. Further work is planned in terms of consultation with staff and further amendments that may be needed following review of National Park Management Plan.

Officers began process of review sustainable procurement policy in 2023/24.

Positive Impact Spotlight: In June 2023 our South Ranger took several members of staff out into the car park of Llanion HQ and its surrounding area for a crash course on bee and invertebrate monitoring. Thanks to the careful management of the Wardens Team, the flowers around the car park were particularly impressive in 2023/24, attracting a range of bumblebees.

Collaboration Spotlight: A joint planning ecologist is in place with salary cost of post shared between the Authority and Pembrokeshire County Council to provide ecologist planning expertise to both Authorities.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Avian Flu outbreak began earlier than anticipated, with the first reports of dead birds in July 2023. A multi-agency response was initiated focusing on public safety and potential economic impact. With Authority Officers attending meetings with Pembrokeshire County Council and other agencies. Key communications were disseminated, and there was close collaboration with the Welsh Government and DEFRA due to concerns about the spread to poultry farms. Risk assessments were updated, safety briefings were held, and PPE was distributed to staff. Dead birds were collected and sent for testing or disposal, and regular meetings were held to keep all agencies informed.

3. Supporting a wide range of people to participate in taking action for nature

Supporting people to appreciate and protect nature [Section 6 Duty]

1,403 volunteer and social action days contributed to nature recovery in the Park and surrounding area in 2023/24. This a 3% increase on the 1,357 days in 2022/23.

Volunteer wildlife monitoring activities included farmland birds, bees, chough. Yellow hammers, wild asparagus and butterfly transects.

There were 3,487 participants in outdoor/ inclusion programme sessions and activities facilitated by the Authority that focused on appreciating and protecting nature and biodiversity. This included practical hedge laying and tree coppicing and gardening activities with Roots to Recovery and Pathway participants. Alongside walks supporting people to experience nature.

Positive Impact Spotlight: Pathways and Roots to Recovery participants and participants from Value Independence were invited to collaborate on creating activities and nature displays for the Lost Words exhibition at Oriel y Parc. The Pathways group made poetry boxes which were placed around the Park

to encourage people to write their own poem to share their experience with passers-by. The Roots to Recovery group made paper leaves and wildflowers for the curated displays of the exhibition. A Signalong resource for the exhibition of the nature words was created which led to walking for wellbeing groups regularly visiting the exhibition following a walk in the area with the words being presented in an accessible way. Value Independence provided feedback on the accessibility of the exhibition, reporting that they enjoyed pausing and listening to the bird song and the paintings made them feel happy.

There were 1,716 participants in community engagement sessions and activities facilitated by the Authority that focused on appreciating and protecting nature and biodiversity. This included conservation and gardening at Carew volunteering opportunities.

There were 3,479 participants in learning programme sessions and activities facilitated by the Authority that focused on appreciating and protecting nature and biodiversity. This included beach studies, woodland studies, river studies and sessions linked to the Lost Words Exhibition at Oriell y Parc.

There were 2,400 participants in public and visitor sessions and activities facilitated by the Authority that focused on appreciating and protecting nature and biodiversity. This included seal walks, nature related trails, biofluorescent night

walk, discovering bumblebee walks, nesting birds at stack rocks event and brilliant bats at St Davids events.



Positive Impact Spotlight: To celebrate Welsh Dark Skies Week, the Authority teamed up with Reveal Nature for an unforgettable night-time walk, focusing on the secret world of communication taking place right under our noses. The sell-out event took place at Pengelli Wood Nature Reserve and introduced participants to a variety of biofluorescent organisms, such as fungi, lichens and insects, that come to life under the cover of darkness.

Corporate Priority: Climate

Our Climate Well-being Objective: To achieve a carbon neutral Authority by 2030 and support the Park to achieve carbon neutrality and adapt to the impact of climate change.

Contribution to National Well-being Goals

This Objective aims to deliver the following outcomes:

- PCNPA to be a carbon neutral Authority by 2030.
- PCNPA has supported the Park on its pathway to becoming carbon neutral as near as possible to 2040.
- The National Park is made more resilient to the impacts of climate change by working with partners and supporting work led by the Public Services Board.
- Engagement activities with staff and wider public have led to behaviour change.

Through supporting the Authority and Park to become Carbon neutral it supports a prosperous Wales ambition for Wales to be a low carbon society. It also supports a globally responsible Wales and a healthier Wales. Contributing to Welsh public sector ambition to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and national milestones for Wales:

- Wales will achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050
- Wales will use only its fair share of the world's resources by 2050

Carbon sequestration activities that also benefit nature recovery support a more resilient Wales. Building resilience in terms of climate adaptation supports a more resilient Wales and a Wales of cohesive communities.

Our activities during the year took account of the wider policy context impacting on climate change and decarbonisation:

- Welsh Government's ambition for public bodies collectively to be carbon neutral by 2030 and its '[Routemap for decarbonisation across the Welsh Public Sector by 2030](#)' and the '[Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2 \(2021-2025.\)](#)'
- Wider Welsh Government national strategies on [circular economy](#) , [transport](#) and Just Transition to Net Zero Framework.
- Introduction of Socially Responsible Procurement Duty and changes to UK procurement legislation
- [The Climate Change Risk Assessment for the UK](#) and [Pembrokeshire Climate Adaptation Strategy](#).
- Development of [Decarbonisation and Net Zero](#) project and [Climate Adaptation project](#) within the Well-being Plan for Pembrokeshire.

The Authority has put in place a Decarbonisation Delivery Plan and Adapting to Climate Change Delivery Plan.

Climate Areas of Impact 2023/24

1. Supporting decrease in emission from Authority Sources or removals

Overall trend analysis

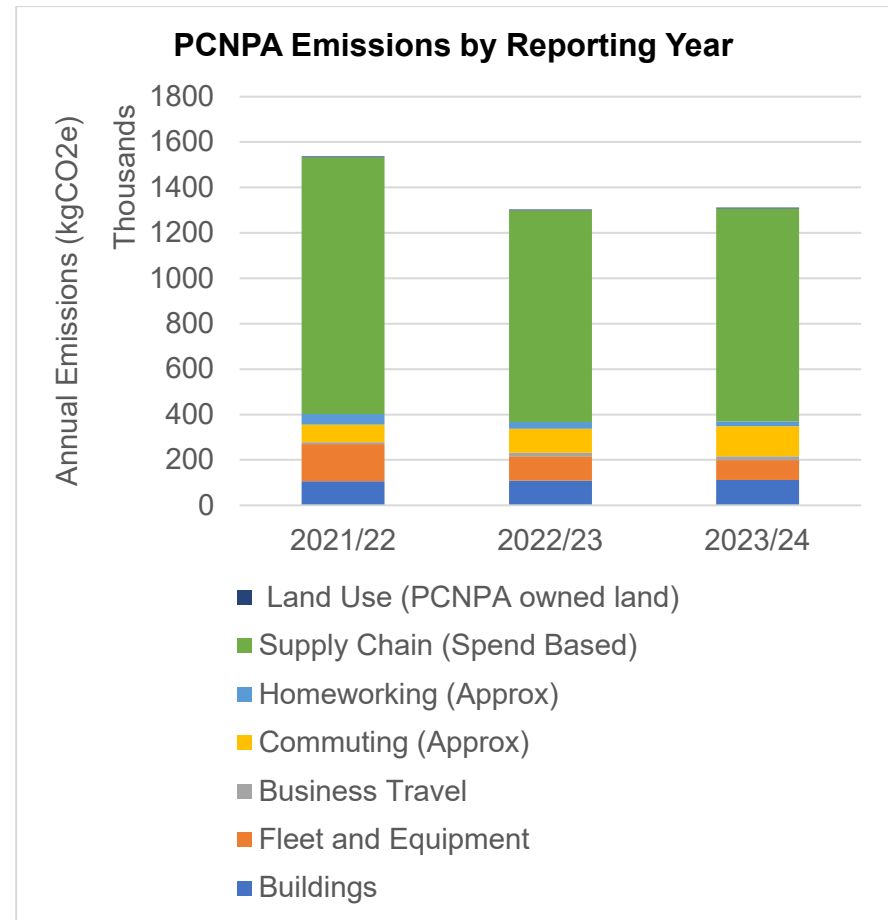
The Authority uses the Welsh Government Net Zero emissions submission calculation and framework to work out its corporate carbon emissions for the year.

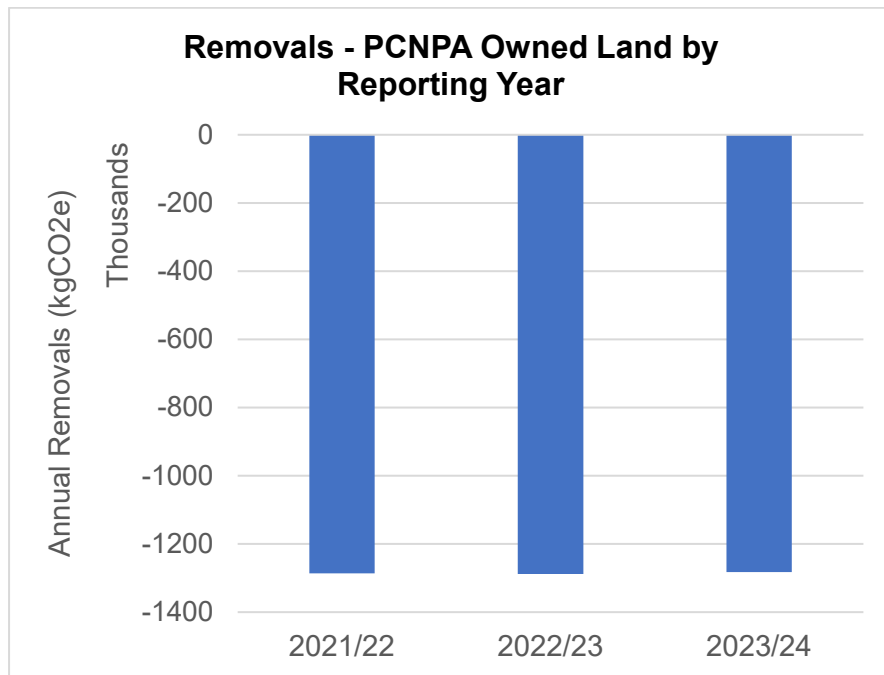
The Authority's new decarbonisation team are carrying out work to enhance both data collection, methodology tiers and analysis to support future reporting and identifying opportunities for reductions.

The data in this section reflects the data submitted as part of the 2023/24 submission. Please note 2023/24 data referenced below has not yet been reviewed by Welsh Government and figures are influenced by changes in calculation methodology across years.

When the Authority's removals from land use are factored in then total emissions for 2023/24 were 29,227 kgCO₂e. When emissions are not offset against land removals, the Authority's emissions were 1,311,318 kgCO₂e - an increase in emissions

of 0.59% compared to 2022/23. There has been 14.68% decrease compared to 2021/22 due to impact in reductions around supply chain and fleet. However, caution is needed when looking at supply chain emissions and trends due to methodology being based on spend and commuting and homeworking figures should be treated as approximates





Trends and Key Factors affecting specific emission areas

Buildings

In 2023/24 the Authority's building emissions were 112,121 kgCO₂e, an increase of 3.27% on the 108,575 kgCO₂e emissions for 2022/23.

This is attributable to a 25% decrease in the use of Biomass for low-carbon space heating in 2023/24, and associated increase in consumption of more emissive grid electricity. It is notable that total energy consumption from all fuels in the

period fell. This reflected the unprecedented global increase in average outside temperatures in 2023 and 2024 and associated reduced demand for space heating.

In 2023/24 5,514 kW of renewable energy was produced from the Authority's PV panels a 15.1% increase on the 4,789 kW produced in 2022/23. However, this is a decrease of 85% on historic renewable generation levels because of faults with the Oriel y Parc Solar PV system present since April 2021. The Oriel y Parc Solar PV system was repaired and upgraded just after close of this reporting period in May 2024, and we can expect to see a return to significantly increased renewable electricity generation in 2024/25.

Reduction Activities: Welsh Government Energy Service completed an estate wide energy study for the Authority in 2023/24. The report from this study highlighted options for carbon reduction and viability of introduction of sustainable technologies across sites. It looked at both cost and carbon savings and financial payback periods and prioritised different options. Based on the report management team agreed to prioritisation of projects with priority being the installation of PV canopies at Llanion HQ and Oriel Y Parc car parks along with some additional PV feasibility work at our other sites. A consultant was hired, and work began, including preparation of report outlining the potential specifications, size, scope, and cost of the proposals. Alongside helping to reduce our buildings based emissions it will also support the reduction of energy costs for the Authority.

Fleet and Equipment

In 2023/24 the Authority's fleet and equipment emissions were 86,749 kgCO₂e, a decrease of 19.65% on the 107,966 kgCO₂e emissions for 2022/23. This decrease positively reflects the increase in electric vans brought into the fleet at the end of 2022/23. This has caused a significant decrease in diesel consumption.

39.9% of the Authorities fleet is electric. The Authority initiated the purchase of accessible electric minibus in 2023/24.



Reduction Activities: The Authority's Decarbonisation Team have secured Welsh Government Energy Service support for high level strategy development in 2024/25, alongside this the

Decarbonisation Team will produce a Fleet decarbonisation plan for the next phase of activities

Positive Impact Spotlight: Feedback from users of the 11 BEV (battery electric vehicle) vans has been positive, with improvements in practicality and operator comfort reported as benefits, alongside a ~50% reduction in fuelling costs. Access to these BEVs in the workplace will expose operators to electric vehicles and build confidence in the technology, potentially influencing uptake of BEVs for private road transportation needs.

Business Travel

In 2023/24 the Authority's business travel emissions were 17,851 kgCO₂e, an increase of 16.93% on the 15,267 kgCO₂e emissions for 2022/23. This increase reflects the continued pattern of return of in person meetings following easing of covid restrictions and international travel related to the Europarc conference. However, it is important to note that business travel only accounts for 1.4% of the Authority's overall emissions.

Further work will be required on review and monitoring of implementation of Travel Policy and considerations around how essential car users impact on this figure.

Commuting and Homeworking

Commuting and Homeworking emissions are modelled using an annual staff survey which achieved 80% engagement this year. Commuting and homeworking figures should be treated as approximates due to wider methodology considerations within the Net Zero calculation framework. They account for 10% of our corporate emissions.

In 2023/24 the Authority's commuting emissions were 131,547 kgCO₂e, an increase of 24.61% on the 105,571 kgCO₂e emissions for 2022/23. In 2023/24 the Authority's homeworking emissions were 21,930 kgCO₂e, a decrease of 25.65% on the 29,497 kgCO₂e emissions for 2022/23. The decrease in homeworking emissions does not offset the increase of 25,976 kgCO₂e from commuting emissions.

The increase in commuting emissions is attributable to a 57% reduction in home working. The average number of days worked from home each week reduced from 2.09 to 1.33 per FTE. At the same time there has been little change in uptake of low-carbon commuting methods. The survey showed that 99% of staff drive to work, 3% in electric vehicles, 4% car share and no one used public transport. 87% of respondents showed an interest in low carbon commuting. Cost of electric vehicles, and impracticality of car-free commuting are reported as main barriers.

Reduction Activities: The Authority's Decarbonisation officer based on the survey result has identified potential emission reduction strategies that could be used to help address commuting emissions. These reduction strategies will be

provided to Management Team for consideration. The Authority has in place a Home and Hybrid Working Policy, in support of enabling where appropriate staff to work from home.

Waste

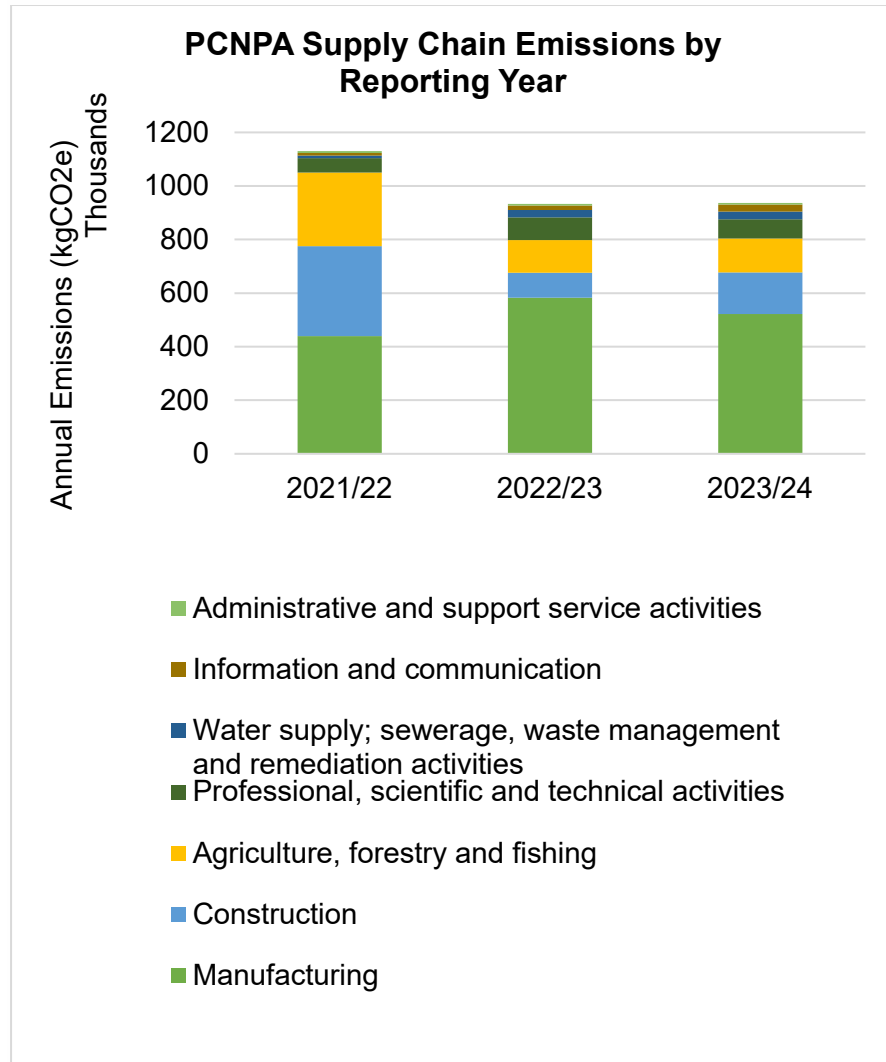
For 2023/24 waste emissions continued to be reported under supply chain. Direct recording of waste quantities has been implemented at Llanion and will be rolled out at the other sites following the summer busy season, facilitating waste reporting at Tier 2 from 2025/26 onwards.

Supply Chain

Supply chain emissions remain the highest source of emissions. However, care is needed in terms of supply chain emission data and looking at trends as it is based on proportionally attributing a subset of total expenditure to one of seven expenditure categories - and so does not account for all expenditure, or consider the other 113 reportable categories of expenditure. The Decarbonisation Team are exploring viability of using alternative supply chain reporting calculation methods in the future, as it is likely that we have significantly underreported our supply chain emissions to date.

In 2023/24 the Authority's supply chain emissions were 936,843 kgCO₂e, an increase of 0.47% on the 932,506 kgCO₂e emissions for 2022/23. The most emissive expenditure categories considered remain Manufacturing and

Construction. They account for 73% of supply chain emissions and over half of all Authority emissions.



Reduction Activities: The Authority’s Decarbonisation officer has proposed an accurate carbon accounting methodology and will carry out further analysis work on procurement data to identify potential emission and cost reduction opportunities. WRAP will also be engaged with to provide consultancy support to complement internal review. Authority will also be developing a Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy in 2024/25.

Land Use – Emissions and Removals [Section 6 Duty]

In 2023/24 the Authority’s emissions from land use (sites it owns) were 4,277 kgCO₂e, an increase of 1.59% on the 4,210 kgCO₂e emissions for 2022/23. In 2023/24 the Authority’s land use emissions removals (from sites it owns) were - 1,282,091 kgCO₂e, a decrease in emission removals of 0.49% on the -1,288,473 kgCO₂e emission removals for 2022/23. This is due to the purchase of land at Traeth Mawr. In previous years the Authority has purchased Graply field site at Trefin and Penpacau site in support of increasing carbon removals alongside nature recovery opportunities.

One of the challenges for the Authority is around current emission factors used for grassland in Welsh Government calculation, which does not capture positive impact of grassland managed for conservation. Moving to Tier 2 methodology could assist with this.

The Authority will look to progress a review of its asset/ estates management strategy in 2024/25 to take account of

decarbonisation emissions and removal opportunities and climate adaptation considerations.

Carbon Literacy Training

Cynnal Cymru developed accredited carbon literacy training for both the Authority and Pembrokeshire County Council. The first block of train the trainer session happened in October 2023, with a follow up session delivered to a mixture of Members, staff and Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum representatives in March.

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- 2. Supporting the Park on its pathway to becoming carbon neutral. Engaging wider public to support behaviour change and understanding of climate change/ decarbonisation.**
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Community Decarbonisation Projects [Section 6 Duty]

The Authority's Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) supports community led projects that contribute towards a reduction in carbon and help respond to the climate emergency. 10 SDF community decarbonisation projects were complete in 2023/24. 6 new projects were approved for funding by SDF (Grants) Committee in 2023/24.

A [map](#) is available on the Authority's website providing details of the projects supported by the SDF fund.

Positive Impact: St John Ambulance Cymru with the assistance of SDF funding set out to install solar battery storage at their community training centre and hub in Haverfordwest to reduce the environmental impact of running their premises near the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. They enlisted the support of a local contractor to design and carry out the installation of 22 solar panels and a 10kW storage battery. In November 2023 they reported that since the installation went live, they have only had to use 0.68 MWh of electricity from the National Grid during darker and poorer weather days, This is equivalent to 15% of their total usage, which is off set by 52% they export back to the National Grid. The amount of electricity generated from their solar system has saved 1,561.9 Kg of CO2 emissions, which is the equivalent of planting 95 trees since the installation.

Collaboration Spotlight: Authority has been working with other National Park Authorities on application for the UN backed "Race to Zero" initiative. Committing to drive action to halve carbon emissions within their landscapes by 2030 and become significant net carbon sinks by 2050.

Green Agriculture

Funding has been secured until 2025 from the Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places Welsh Government Grant to develop the Greening Agriculture pilot with the aim of further

decarbonisation within the agricultural sector, both by reducing emissions and sequestration

7 Greening agriculture (decarbonisation) projects were approved for funding through the scheme by end of 2023/24 with support being provided for heat recovery systems, vacuum pumps, battery storage and solar systems.

Oyster Restoration Project [Section 6 Duty]

This project aims to restore the once-abundant population of native oysters within the Milford Haven Waterway and, in doing so, improve the condition of the Pembrokeshire Marine Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This work is being carried out in partnership with Bangor University, the Pembrokeshire Marine SAC Officer and Tethys Oysters in Angle Bay, and forms part of the Blue Carbon Strand of the Authority's Wild Coast! Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places funded project.

Since the project commenced in November 2023, *Ostrea edulis* broodstock have been collected from Angle Bay and Burton Ferry and transported to Bangor University, with the aim of rearing them and returning them to the Milford Haven Waterway to boost existing populations. It is expected that up to 200,000 native oyster spat may be produced, but numbers could be significantly more. Native British oyster populations have declined dramatically over the decades, because of habitat loss, pollution, over-harvesting and disease. As well as being filter feeders that actively purify the surrounding water,

oysters also store carbon, and their reefs also play an important role in fostering biodiversity by providing food, shelter, and protection for a wide variety of marine life. Following biosecurity protocols and a brief period of quarantine, the first batch of approximately 40 oysters have commenced conditioning to spawn in their temporary nursery. The remaining oysters will be conditioned to spawn in the spring and early summer of 2024.

Tree and Woodland siting Design and Guidance [Section 6 Duty]

At the September National Park Authority meeting Members approved new supplementary planning guidance on Trees and Woodland. The guidance provides advice on the types of landscapes where sensitives may allow new trees or woodland planting, helping to guide the right tree to the right place.

Sustainable Transport

Using SLSP funding external consultants carried out research and produced report for the Authority on access and travel management for the Pembrokeshire Coast. The report identified what approaches could be taken in relation to managing private vehicle and traffic management issues. Officers will look to progress recommendations from report where appropriate including taking forward relevant elements with partners.

The E-bike Hire scheme launched in October 2022/23 as a pilot before the start of the spring/ summer with potential users signing up to MOQO app. Due to poor take up during the pilot period officers have decided to reduce the hire price, which has had a positive impact on take up going into 2024/25.



The installation of EV charging points to create a county wide network was completed in 2022/23. The network is designed to give thorough coverage across the county of Pembrokeshire to address the EV charging needs of residents, visitors and to support and encourage the transition to electric vehicles. Rapid charger locations were chosen to be visitor destination “hubs” and are positioned close to the trunk road network and major ferry terminals in Pembrokeshire. The same charging units as Pembrokeshire County Council were installed to ensure a coordinated approach and seamless delivery across the county.

EV charging points in Authority car parks were used 8,367 times in 2023/24, this compares to 6,634 in 2022/23. With average time taken to charge 1 hr and 53 minutes.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority continued to provide financial support to the Greenways Partnership and Coastal Buses in 2023/24. The Celtic Coaster (service 403 for St David’s Peninsula) had 28,939 passengers in 2023/24. While the Poppit Rocket/ Fflecsi Service (service 405 runs via coast between Fishguard and Cardigan) had 5,603 passengers and the Coastal Cruiser (service 387/88 for Angle Peninsula) had 6,986 passengers. The Partnership also secured the return of the Puffin Shuttle and Strumble Shuttle for 2024/25.

Dark Skies Pembrokeshire Project [Section 6 Duty]

Through the SLSP Dark Sky collaborative project capital funding has been secured to fund lighting schemes and retrofitting projects in Pembrokeshire Coast National Park alongside other designated landscapes. Following a survey in August 2023, sites were identified where improvements could be made to the lighting stock to reduce the incidence of light pollution within the park. A detailed study of those sites (Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi - 3 campuses, The Duke of Edinburgh public house - Newgale, and National Trust Stackpole Centre and cottages) was conducted in November 2023 and reports produced. Work at all three campuses of Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi will be undertaken. Following a fire at the Duke of Edinburgh public house in Newgale it will not be retrofitted, however advice or assistance may be offered in the future if the premises is re-built. The National Trust have agreed to share the cost of retrofitting the external lighting on their properties at the Stackpole Centre, Quay Cottages and the Old Stable flats on the Stackpole estate.

Surveys have also been carried out of Authority buildings and the retrofit changes to Llanion Park have been agreed and will include the North Building.

The Authority and Pembrokeshire County Council have agreed a programme of retrofitting lighting to public toilets in remote areas, this is awaiting supply and installation of light fittings

Decarbonisation engagement [Section 6 Duty]

574.5 volunteer and social action contributing to decarbonisation/ removals in 2023/24, including community tree planting and litter pick activities.

Positive Impact Spotlight: 194 trees were planted in 2023/24, in addition to the 1,182 planted in 2022/23 as part of the Community Tree Planting Scheme to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. This included a variety of native trees, including hawthorn, blackthorn, guelder rose, holly, rowan, crab apple, downy birch, wild cherry, sessile oak and walnut. Several apple trees grown from cuttings of trees in the heritage orchard at St Brides were planted in community locations. A new hedge and 4 apple trees were planted alongside the playing field in Roch. Pupils at Ysgol Bro Preseli in Crymych planted trees in their school garden and Mathry and Brawdy communities gave trees out to local residents to plant in gardens. Rangers have revisited trees planted in 2022/23 and replaced failed trees in two locations.

There were 152 participants in outdoor/ inclusion programme sessions and activities facilitated by the Authority that focused on Climate, decarbonisation, behaviour change and sustainability. This included tree planting, litter picking and hedge laying activities with Roots to Recovery and Pathway participants.

There were 162 participants in community engagement sessions and activities facilitated by the Authority that focused on climate, decarbonisation, behaviour change and sustainability. This included tree planting and litter picking activities with volunteers.

There were 1,232 participants in learning programme sessions and activities facilitated by the Authority that focused on climate, decarbonisation, behaviour change and sustainability. These included sessions focused on Lost Words exhibition, practical tree planting and meadow creation activities and offshore wind education day with Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum for Tenby Church in Wales School.

There were 6,560 participants in public and visitor sessions and activities facilitated by the Authority that focused on Climate, decarbonisation, behaviour change and sustainability. This included Glow at Carew where visitors were also able to power some of the decorations in the walled garden themselves, by jumping on a bike and generating pedal-powered energy. Oriol y Parc hosted activities linked to Lost Words Exhibition and seasonal markets supporting local craft makers.

3. Supporting the Park and Authority's Assets to be more resilient to the impacts of Climate Change

Climate Change Risk to the Coast Path

As part of the SLSP funded Wild Coast Project the Authority will be commissioning work in 2024/25 to provide a Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Strategy for the Management of the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail.

Responding to Coastal Erosion and Poor Weather Conditions

The Authority continued to carry out activities to increase resilience of paths and to respond to the impact of coastal erosion and poor weather conditions on them. Realignment activities include getting relevant SSSI consents and making Public Path Diversion Orders. During 2023/24:

- A major diversion of coast path at Porthyrhaw, Solva was completed to reroute coast path on to more stable ground. This diversion was required as existing coast path route was at risk due to unstable and eroding cliff.
- Realignment of coast path to stable ground at Marloes due to cliff instability was completed. Drainage work at Marloes beach path was completed to future proof against heavy rainfall. In addition, with assistance from

a contractor the warden team undertook surface improvement to Marloes Beach access path and created passing bays to help facilitate the safe passage of both pedestrian and horses. The path had suffered wash out and scouring during heavy rainstorms.

- Design approved for new tidal crossing at the Gann to withstand storm events.
- Two footbridges were identified for replacement at Walwynscastle and Trefigan in order to increase spans to mitigate river bank erosion from flash flooding.
- Work was undertaken at Nevern to repair the weir, preserve the stone pitched ford and stabilise the riverside bank that supports the public footpath alongside the church.
- Phase 3 of coastal protection work on Byway at Angle completed.
- Erosion of beach access path to Monkstone required temporary closure pending geological investigations. Geological report confirmed instability of the slope at Monkstone beach access and the requirement to keep the path closed. Longer term signage has been installed.
- The Authority assisted Pembrokeshire County Council with bespoke signage at landslides that closed coast path at Amroth and Wisemans Bridge.
- The Authority widened a section of the coast path north of Aberforrest after a crack developed by moving the field fence back. This will be followed up with a public path creation agreement.

- A section of approximately 100 metres of coast path between St Brides and Musselwick was realigned following a large landslide which swept away the path.

Coastal Car Park Study

The Authority put out a tender on Sell 2 Wales for a Coastal Car Park Study using grant funding available to the National Park. This will involve a review of charging car parks for enhancements and improvements that future proof sites and accessible gateways to the National Park. This study will identify opportunities to enhance inclusivity and accessibility including analysis of potential delivery of improved toilet facilities and changing places. Included in the tender request are recommendations for climate change resilience.

Land Use and Coastal Change Training

In October 2023 Authority Members attended a training workshop where they received a presentation exploring the flood and coastal change policies in the Local Development Plan. Members received a further workshop by Pembrokeshire County Council officers in March 2023 providing an update on the progress with the Coastal Adaptation Scheme at Newgale.

Corporate Priority: Connection

Our Connection Well-being Objective: To create a Park that is a natural health service that supports people to be healthier, happier and more connected to the landscape, nature and heritage.

Contribution to National Well-being Goals

This Objective aims to deliver the following outcomes:

- People are supported to lead a more physically active lifestyle by accessing the National Park, through promoting sustainable outdoor recreational opportunities.
- People are supported to report that accessing the National Park has had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing.
- PCNPA has helped address where possible the barriers that can impact on people from diverse backgrounds or facing socio-economic disadvantage from connecting with nature and heritage opportunities in the Park.
- Provide support to enable people of all ages to develop an understanding of the National Park.
- Infrastructure is maintained, including the Public Rights of Way network, heritage assets and access points to

enable people to continue to gain access to and enjoy the National Park.

- Historic assets in the National Park are protected and appreciated.

Supporting people to access the physical and mental well-being benefits of the outdoors and engaging with nature and heritage contributes to a healthier Wales and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language. Breaking down barriers to assist a more diverse range of people to take action for nature and heritage or experience the Park supports a more equal Wales, Wales of cohesive communities and a resilient Wales. Contributing to National Indicators for Wales on:

- Percentage of adults with two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours
- Percentage of people who volunteer
- Mean mental well-being score for people
- Percentage of people who are lonely
- Percentage of people attending or participating in arts, culture or heritage activities at least three times a year
- Percentage of designated historic environment assets that are in stable or improved conditions
- Active global citizenship in Wales

Our activities during the year took account of the wider policy context impacting health and well-being, learning and access to outdoors and heritage opportunities:

- [South-West Wales Area Statement](#) and role access to green and blue spaces can play in supporting improved health outcomes.
- [Publication of National framework for social prescribing](#)
- [The New Curriculum for Wales](#) and the ‘what matters statements’ across the six areas of learning and experience.
- Welsh Government’s [Term of Government Remit Letter for the National Park Authorities](#) that stated it would like to see all bodies working with under-represented audiences and communities.
- [Welsh Government’s Equality related plans](#), and Authority’s own [Equality Plan](#).
- Development of the [Reducing Poverty and Inequalities project](#) within the Well-being Plan for Pembrokeshire
- [Rights of Way Improvement Plan](#)
- [Welsh Government Priorities for the historic environment of Wales](#).

The Authority has put in place a Health, Well-being and Access Delivery plan and Engagement, Involvement and learning about the Park Delivery Plan. With actions in Pembrokeshire Life Delivery Plan and Communications and Marketing Delivery Plan also contributing to this Objective.



Connection Impacts 2023/24

- 1. Helping address where possible the barriers that can impact on people from diverse backgrounds or facing socio-economic disadvantage from connecting with nature and heritage opportunities. Supporting use of the National Park for Health and Well-being Benefits.**
-

Beach Wheelchairs and Mobility Equipment

The Authority continued to improve access to Pembrokeshire's award-winning beaches and other outdoor areas by providing a range of mobility equipment including beach wheelchairs. The equipment is available to hire for free from various locations around the coast or directly from the Authority. Most of the equipment is available to hire from popular locations near the coast thanks to the local businesses who have kindly agreed to become hosts.

The Authority's range of mobility equipment is specially designed and manufactured to be used on sandy beaches and other outdoor terrain, including equipment that is suitable for children as well as adults. Following additional funding the equipment available via the scheme has expanded. It has also helped facilitate wider access to our work, through schools being able to use the chairs and equipment.

There were 399 bookings for the Authority's beach wheelchairs and mobility equipment in 2023/24, the same number as in 2022/23.

Impact Spotlight - Beach Wheelchairs Survey comments:

"Being able to use this beach wheelchair has given me more freedom and flexibility. I was able to go on the beach with my family and enjoy dipping my feet in the sea which felt great. I have not been able to do that for the last 6 years. So you can imagine the tears of joy it brought to me and my family. We've actually stayed at Saundersfoot more times than usual last year because of this facility and we hope to be doing this again this new year. Thank you for making this stay so enjoyable because of this beach wheelchair. I now look forward to going to the beach."

"Loved being able to go on the beach for the first time in 20 years amazing and should be available everywhere."

"My husband has recently become disabled, it's been a traumatic time for the whole family, having the wheelchair helped enormously, he could be part of our trip to the beach which was so vital and important. It was truly life changing."

Collaboration Spotlight: The Open to All accelerator partnership project between the Authority and Visit Pembrokeshire was launched in March 2024. It is working with businesses and organisations (including the Authority) to

make Pembrokeshire the first choice for residents and visitors who face barriers to travel and tourism.

Traeth Mawr Access Improvement Work

On 9th May 2023 the National Park Authority purchased Traeth Mawr with the aim of improving the natural environment and beach safety by making the area car-free. At the same time the number of disabled spaces were doubled from three to six and beach wheelchair access was increased. In Autumn 2023 the Authority developed an engagement Survey titled 'What do you want for the future of Traeth Mawr (Newport Sands) to ensure access for all?' with 107 responses. The public engagement in Autumn 2023 highlighted opportunities of improving facilities further at Traeth Mawr.

The Authority has developed a project proposal to enhance the existing car park at Traeth Mawr using grant funding, to replace and upgrade the existing toilet block and provide an enhanced facility including a Changing Places area. Updated drainage facilities will be provided as part of these changes. Additional changes proposed include permeable surfaces in the overflow car park, improved ramps to access the beach and 3 permanent beach wheelchair storage areas. Enhanced landscaping and appropriate planting are also proposed to deliver net biodiversity benefits. Members at the 20 March National Park Authority meeting resolved that the project

identified to improve facilities at Traeth Mawr be supported in its progression to planning and delivery stage.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority is part of a Toilet Working Group with Pembrokeshire County Council and other partners to develop a strategy to seek grant funding to improve general toilet standards at locations around the coast and to develop an Accessible Coast project. The Authority agreed to a financial contribution to toilets of £110k per year to support toilets over a 2 year period. Regular meetings have been established between key officers of the Authority and Pembrokeshire County Council meeting every 2-3 months on this issue. The main area of work to date has been on sharing evidence on sites and identifying what additional baseline information may be required.

Marketing Assets – Showcasing a Park for All

Photoshoots have been planned for 2024/25 at Oriel y Parc, Castell Henllys and Carew to expand our library of images for use in marketing and publications.

Supported Walking

There were 3,519 participants in our supported walking opportunities provided by West Wales Walking for Well-being, Walkability and Well-being wanderers sessions in 2023/24.

December 2023 was the last operational month of the West Wales Walking for Wellbeing project. The project had been active since 2019 with funding through the Healthy and Active Fund and more recently NRW's Resilient Communities Fund. During that time more than 2,000 walking sessions have been delivered across West Wales with an average of between 7-8 walkers on each walk. The project successfully targeted participants with pre-existing health conditions, older people and physically inactive individuals.

In response to the Welsh Government publishing its National Framework for Social Prescribing in January 2024 and evaluation of the West Wales Walking for Wellbeing project the Authority will look to review its health and well-being approach and social prescribing model. The Authority is in process of developing a new supported walking scheme under the Get Outdoors banner.

Outreach and Social Inclusion Work

There were 1,677 participants in our inclusion, outreach and increasing access for underrepresented group sessions. These sessions have included art workshop at Oriel y Parc, range of outdoor activities and guided walks. As part of this work and making new connections, the Authority's inclusion officer visited Haverfordwest Mosque. An activity day was held with Kinship group at Colby Woodland garden, with a scavenger hunt, woodland walk and visit to beach for rock pooling.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Roots to Recovery project in partnership with Mind Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire provides a programme of supported, people-led activity to improve mental health and wellbeing through being outdoors. Each session is planned to achieve all the five ways to well-being. Activities are based at hub locations, local to the hub or opportunities further afield within the National Park. Activities include walks, gardening, conservation work, wildlife spotting, learning new skills and social interaction. The project has recruited peer mentors who provide additional support to participants and aims to develop individual skillset and confidence of mentors. Participant confidence through Roots to Recovery continues to increase and the [Roots to Recovery Facebook](#) page documents the enjoyment participants are gaining from the group activities.

There were 450 participants in our learning programme, inclusion and outreach activities. This included sessions for Springboard and additional learning needs school group linked to Lost Words exhibition at Oriel y Parc.

There were 904 participants in our supported volunteering sessions. The Authority's Pathways supported volunteering project enables individuals who face barriers to volunteering to participate by providing transport, support of volunteer leaders and other support. Activities in 2023/24 included a range of practical access, conservation and site work.

There were 2,498 participants in our early years sessions. The First 1,000 days project is providing programme of activity and support for young families and pre-school children to experience the outdoors. Including working with early years settings supporting families facing poverty. Funding has been confirmed for the First 1000 Day for the period April 2024 to March 2025, with the project to focus on a programme of activity with parents and pre-school children in Haverfordwest.

Positive Impact Spotlight: First 1,000 days project supported local Early Years settings and Nurseries who may not have a great amount of natural play space at their setting to access Colby Gardens. Children had a full sensory experience getting muddy, pond dipping and feeling the textures of the leaves and moss, whilst listening to the bird song and the stream running. This would have been the first outing for many of the children involved. It gave the staff confidence to use the site themselves in the future. Staff commented that children who don't choose to play outdoors in the setting, fully engaged in all the activities provided. Children learnt to respect spring flowers and the importance of collecting litter from the ground. This event achieved a huge well-being boost for both the adults and children involved.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority has contributed to the Pembrokeshire Public Services Board Tackling Poverty: Our Strategy, with Authority leading on specific actions within the action plan.

There were 448 participants in our next generation activities – engagement with young people. This included sessions with Youth Committee, Youth Rangers, Duke of Edinburgh, Point Youth Group, Futureworks, Brownies and Beavers. Ranging from engagement meetings, outdoor activities and practical volunteering sessions.

There were 664 attendees at Castell Henllys quiet hour sessions in 2023/24. These sessions give people an opportunity to experience the Iron Age with no loud or noisy activities or demonstrations.

The Engagement and Inclusion team had a workshop in January to initiate stakeholder mapping activities, to inform development of future partnership projects and joint working with community support and link groups. Further analysis activity is planned for 2024/25. The team will also be looking to develop an annual participant survey to target regular participants in our volunteering and projects in 2024/25.

Volunteering and Social Action Programme

Volunteers and Social Action Participants contributed 3,518 volunteer and social action days in 2023/24 across a range of practical access, conservation, heritage, gardening, activity support and site opportunities. A 5.7% increase on 3,329 in 2022/23.

490 outreach and social inclusion sessions were supported by volunteers. Volunteer walk leaders played an important role in

the number of supported walks delivered in terms of Walkability walks and West Wales Walking for Health walks.

Volunteer Development Officer has been engaging with line managers to identify new volunteering opportunities linked to our priorities.



2. Supporting People of all ages to develop an understanding of the Park

Learning Programme

In partnership with teams that deliver our education programme, the education team is aligning our school programme with the Authority's new priorities and the New Curriculum. Any new changes to education programme for schools will be implemented for the new academic year in 2024/25.

There were 6,863 participants in our education programme sessions from schools in Pembrokeshire. This included

- Beach studies, woodland studies, river studies and cynefin discovery days.
- A range of outdoor engagement activities, including guided walks and opportunities to visit St Brides Orchard as part of Apple Days.
- Heritage focused sessions. At Carew themes of sessions included Capture the Castle, Horrid Histories: Castle Life, Tudor Tales and the Great Tournament. Castell Henllys continued to deliver its popular Daily Life in the Iron Age sessions.
- Practical sessions at school grounds and tree planting activities.

Positive Impact Spotlight: Pembrokeshire school visits to the Lost Words Exhibition in Oriol y Parc were supported by the Education Team securing a travel bursary from Forest Holidays.

There were 2,860 participants in our education programme sessions from schools outside of Pembrokeshire. 75% of the participants attended sessions at Castell Henllys, which continued to get bookings from schools based outside of Pembrokeshire.

There were 63 participants in Duke of Edinburgh sessions. These practical sessions included tree planting at Croesgoch, hedgerow planting at Pentre Ifan, cutting back vegetation on coast path between Pembroke and Pembroke Dock, Himalayan Balsalm pulling in West Williamston and rubbish removal at Skomer.

There were 105 participants in our learning programme from further education or Universities. These sessions included site maintenance activities with Coleg Plas Dwbl students, survey work with Southampton University Students at St David's Head and practical access sessions with Pembrokeshire College students.

There were 136 participants in our learning programme for teachers, with sessions focused on enhancing their outdoor teaching and facilitation skills.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Pembrokeshire Outdoor Schools (PODS) partnership, which is co-ordinated by the Authority, is a network of specialist organisations, head teachers and local authority advisors. Its aim is to support schools in encouraging children to become fully engaged with and confident in their local environment. In 2023/24 the PODS co-ordinator continued to visit schools to provide support with school grounds improvements (biodiversity and learning resources) and curriculum planning for outdoor activities. The partnership supported a series of activities for schools at St Brides Orchard including celebration of National Apple Day and hosted a PODS celebration event in September for Pembrokeshire Primary Schools at Scolton Manor. It supported two 'day-time/night-time' sessions at Neyland and Johnston Schools which involved visit to the Preseli Hills during the day and a night-time event held in the school grounds. The partnership continued to deliver teacher training sessions in support of outdoor learning for Pembrokeshire teachers.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority is the lead organisation for the collaborative all Wales Designated Landscapes education resource project. This project is funded through SLSP grant. The aim of the project is to create a set of bespoke learning resources for all of Wales's 8 Designated Landscapes. Consultants were appointed during the year for the educational resources and Digital and Design element. A portal called "Tirlun" is to be created as part of this project to host the resources developed.

Linked to wider regenerative tourism and community engagement work the Authority is also exploring opportunities to enhance its visitor and community learning offer.



There were 3,063 participants in our community and visitor learning programme. These sessions included art and nature workshops at Oriol y Parc training courses for volunteers, range briefings, outdoor skills for Point Youth Club and range of talks on Pembrokeshire Coast, heritage and invasive species.

3. Public Rights of Way network and heritage assets are maintained to enable people to continue to gain access and enjoy the National Park

Rights of Way Network

87.28% of the Public Rights of Way network was open and accessible and meeting quality standard at end of 2023/24, this compares to 87.19% in 2022/23.

There was a 19.7% increase in Coast Path and Inland Rights of Ways concerns on standards compared with 2022/23. With 225 concerns received in 2023/24, compared to 188 in 2022/23. This increase in concerns is linked to the impact of weather conditions in the last two quarters of the year. With weather storms resulting in surface conditions deterioration and other path damage. Continuous wet weather generated an increase in muddy, slippery conditions on Coast Path. Sometime made worst due to the presence of stock. Concerns on Inland Rights of Way also reflected impact of storm damage which brought down several trees. 1,986 public rights of way work programme cutting and maintenance tasks were completed by the countryside management team. Operational and corporate measures for Coast Path will be reviewed in 2024/25 following recommendations from internal audit report.

Data from the seven fixed Coast Path counters recorded an 8% decrease in the number of people walking the Coast Path when compared to 2022/23. Decreasing from 190,804 in 2022/23 to 174,226 in 2023/24. With regards to the four inland path counters, there was a corresponding decrease in 2023/24 to 30,348 (31,244 in 2022/23). Both decreases were attributed to the very wet weather conditions experienced over the winter of that year.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Pembrokeshire Local Access Forum is a statutory body advising on the improvement of access to the countryside for recreation and enjoyment. The Authority shares secretariat duties for Local Access Forum with Pembrokeshire County Council on a cyclical basis. Currently it is the term of the Authority to provide secretariat for the forum. Four forum meetings were held in 2023/24, with the July meeting being a site meeting looking at the creation of new access opportunities in the National Park.

Volunteering and Social Action for Paths

349 volunteer and social action days supported access and Path work in the Park in 2023/24.

Pathways volunteers practical access work included regrading path and improving drainage at Traeth Lynne, cleaning and cutting and filling steps at Marloes and clearing path at St David's airfield to widen it to improve access for wheelchair

use. Newport Paths Group and Authority volunteers have been involved in scrub clearance and drainage activities on paths. Independent Volunteers have been involved in footpath monitoring activities. Rangers have facilitated practical access sessions with Pembrokeshire College and Ysgol y Preseli students to support the Brynberian community path project.

Safeguarding Public Ancient Monument Scheme

The Authority continued to deliver its Safeguarding Ancient Scheduled Monuments scheme, working with volunteers to monitor and develop a work programme focused on our publicly accessible monuments.

Heritage volunteers were involved in 135 visits to monuments to gather information on their condition in 2023/24, this compares to 152 in 2022/23. This information is then assessed by the Community Archaeologist and a work programme developed. Heritage Crime incidents are also identified as part of this monitoring. Improvement and maintenance work carried out by Authority officers, volunteers and contractors took place at 33 monuments in 2023/24. Practical work included scrub clearance at Nevern Castle with the assistance of Pembrokeshire college students, Friends of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and Friends of Nevern Castle. Work was carried out on a scheduled medieval leat in St Davids by Authority staff, National Trust staff and volunteers to tackle Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam.

Schedule monuments that are part of the Castlemartin range will now be monitored by the Castlemartin Ranger as part of the wider monitoring scheme. Information gathered will be used to inform work to improve the condition of monuments on the range.

Drone surveys have been carried out on scheduled monuments across the National Park to produce baseline data on their condition.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority continued to work with Dyfed Powys Police, Cadw, Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority and Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust on the Heritage Watch Scheme. This Scheme aims to address Heritage Crime in the Park. 17 known heritage crime occurrences were reported during 2023/24, this compares to 22 in 2022/23. Authority staff, heritage volunteers and police colleagues carried out joint patrols during year at sites at risk. A wide range of community engagement activities were undertaken during the year to raise public awareness of heritage crime. Including community archaeologist joining the Dyfed-Powys Police team at the Eisteddfod yr Urdd and a Paws on Patrol event with the Police and Fire Service in the Preseli's to encourage dog walkers to report heritage crime.

Volunteering and Social Action Days for Heritage

460.5 volunteer and social action days supported heritage assets in the Park in 2023/24.

Volunteers at Carew have been helping with site maintenance and gardening. While Coleg Plas Dwbl students helped out with site maintenance activities at Castell Henllys.

Carew Castle Visitor Access Improvement Project

The Carew Castle Visitor Access project which is looking to provide a range of additional physical infrastructure work to improve the accessibility of the site has been delayed. Detailed plans have been drawn up for the various elements of the project, including a number of phases. Some of the initial plans for the driveway have had to be altered following meetings with Cadw. Plans will need to be submitted for SAM and SSSI consent.

Corporate Priority: Communities

Our Communities Well-being Objective: To create vibrant, sustainable and prosperous communities in the Park that are places people can live, work and enjoy.

Contribution to National Well-being Goals

This Objective aims to deliver the following outcomes:

- Visitors make a positive contribution to local communities and the Park's Special Qualities.
- Work more closely with National Park communities to better understand and support local priorities.
- National Park communities are vibrant, sustainable and prosperous.
- Residents and visitors have effective and sustainable options (including using the rights of way network) to travel around the National Park.
- The work of the Authority contributes to Pembrokeshire life supporting delivery of Welsh language, cultural, recreational and community activities.

Promoting regenerative tourism in the park and helping visitors to make a positive contribution to local communities and nature recovery will support a resilient Wales, prosperous Wales, and a Wales of cohesive communities. Sustainable

transport initiatives will contribute to target of 45% of journeys in Wales being undertaken by sustainable modes by 2040.

Through working in partnership with others to enhance cultural, heritage and Welsh Language opportunities in the Park we will support a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language and healthier Wales. Contributing to the National Milestones for Wales of a million Welsh speakers by 2050 and national indicator on Percentage of people attending or participating in arts, culture or heritage activities at least three times a year.

Wider Placemaking activities supporting affordable housing in the Park will contribute to a Wales of cohesive communities, more equal Wales, healthier Wales and prosperous Wales.

Our activities during the year took account of the wider policy context impacting on communities, regenerative tourism and Welsh language:

- [Welsh Government Tourism Strategy for Wales 2020-25](#)
- [Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy.](#)
- Development of [Strengthening Communities Project](#) within the Well-being Plan for Pembrokeshire.
- The Authority's Next Generation – Youth Committee [Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Youth Manifesto.](#)

The Authority has put in place a Supporting Regenerative Tourism through the visitor economy Delivery Plan and Pembrokeshire Life Delivery Plan.

Communities Areas of Impact 2023/24

1. Supporting Visitors to make a positive contribution to local communities

Regenerative Tourism Principles [Section 6 Duty]

The Head of Regenerative Tourism carried out engagement workshops with regenerative tourism team including staff from across our centres to develop a draft regenerative tourism vision and strategy. The vision and strategy will provide a foundation for future regenerative tourism activities. This includes review of events and activities and development of action plans for the centres. Best practice as it is developed will be shared with wider tourism and visitor sector.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority continues to provide funding to Visit Pembrokeshire the Destination Management Organisation. Visit Pembrokeshire developed a new [destination management plan for Pembrokeshire](#) in 2023/24 and this Plan will influence the Authority's wider regenerative tourism work going forwards.

Review of Summer Ranger Role

The Summer Ranger role was reviewed and assigned a new job description to align with the Regenerative Tourism team's objectives. The role will involve people engagement around the Park, generating income from activities provided and educating and advising on enjoying the National Park safely. The post is now called Seasonal Ranger and a Ranger has been successfully recruited for 2024/25 tourism season.

Internal Recreation Group

Following the Authority's restructure an internal recreation group has been established bringing together staff from different teams across the Authority. Members of the group contributed to a range of pre-season multi-agency meetings (many led by other organisations) to ensure that we can meet our statutory duties to conserve and enhance the National Park whilst supporting opportunities for enjoyment and understanding of the Park's special qualities. Microsoft Teams is being used to allow a two-way flow of information between HQ and staff 'on the ground' to facilitate the management of 'live' issues.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority continues to provide funding to Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum who lead on both the Outdoor Charter and Marine Code. Two Outdoor Charter Steering Group Meetings and two Full Outdoor Charter Group Meetings were held in 2023/24.

Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority is part of the Pembrokeshire Water Safety Forum, led by the RNLI. The forum agreed to develop a joint communications strategy for 2024/25 to enhance safety awareness among paddle boarders, small boat users, and kayakers, and to educate about the risks of rip currents and offshore winds.

Castlemartin Ranger/ Seasonal Assistant

The Castlemartin Ranger continued to collaborate with partners to manage recreation on the Defence Training Estate in Pembrokeshire. Supporting access when military use allows while also safeguarding the conservation features of the sites. Measures were taken to protect cliff nesting birds, seals, and other species. A new partnership agreement involving the funding partners (MOD, NRW, and the Authority) was prepared for approval.

Positive Impact Spotlight: Ringed plovers bred successfully on Frainslake Beach for the first time in many years with the nesting sites cordoned off by the Castlmartin Ranger to ensure they remained undisturbed.

Beach Parking at Traeth Mawr/ Newport Sands

On 9th May 2023 the Authority purchased land at Traeth Mawr with the aim of improving the natural environment and

beach safety by making the area car-free. The land had traditionally been used by people to park their vehicles on the beach. Prior to purchase meetings were held to seek a solution to beach parking incidents and anti-social behaviour.

Following the purchase to provide safe access for all, the Authority has limited vehicular access to the beach to emergency services and those requiring essential access. In the initial weeks immediately following the Authority's purchase, the volume of vehicles driving and parking on the beach declined dramatically reflecting the motorists response to a 'soft management approach' of public messaging and in situ signage only. Prior to the start of the summer season proper, that soft approach was bolstered by the installation of physical barriers at both slipways. Those barriers remain in place with the effect that since mid-summer 2023, vehicle access onto the beach has been limited to authorised vehicles for essential operational purposes only. During this same period the capacity of the formalised car park that the Authority operates immediately above the beach has accommodated parking demand with no evidence of displaced parking on surrounding land due to lack of available capacity within the existing car park.

The Authority has as result of both the monitoring of that first year's experience and the feedback from the public developed a specific project plan to improve the physical fabric at Traeth Mawr (See Connection section for further details).

2. Supporting Welsh Language, Cultural, Recreational and Community Activities

Annual Archaeology Day

During November 2023, our annual Archaeology Day event took place in partnership with Planed. This event helps more people to engage with and learn about Archaeology. Over 180 people attended, including six speakers over the day and a range of stall holders. Presentations given on the day were recorded and uploaded to the [Archaeology Day YouTube channel](#).

Public and Community Events Programme

Authority delivered a range of cultural, recreational and community activities and events in 2023/24.

There were 3,192 participants in our community volunteering and social action sessions in 2023/24. This included a mixture of practical heritage, access, site, conservation gardening and other activities. Community groups engaged with included Moylegrove Environment Group, Friends of the National Park and Newport Paths Group.

Positive Impact Spotlight: Roots to Recovery participants noticed a lot of litter in Pembroke Dock, so the group did what

they do best and offered a helping hand. They joined forces with local Councillors as well as some active members of the Pembroke Dock Community and carried out a litter pick around town to help create a cleaner space for the public.

There were 9,528 participants in our community engagement and activity sessions. This included supported walks, outdoor engagement activities, apple days using the Sr Brides Orchard, range of talks covering topics such as Archaeology and Invasive Species, engagement at community shows including Nevern show, Fishguard Show, Pembroke Town show and County Show. Community groups engaged with varied from Merched y Wawr, Kilgetty Friendship Club, VC Gallery and Point Youth Group.

There were 48,772 participants in our events programmes at the Authority's centres, including community events. Castell Henllys continued to deliver its Experience the Iron Age events. Oriel y Parc hosted craft markets, events linked to the Lost Words exhibition and supported the St David's Day Dragon Parade. Carew's event programme ranged from open air theatre, castle construction tours, ghost walks, storytelling sessions, archery and the launching of the giant Trebuchet. They also hosted community targeted events including kids rule the castle, glow event during festive period and Sandy Bear charity day.

There were 1,430 participants in our events programme around the Park, with 100% of attendees who provided

feedback rating our events as excellent/ good, compared to 99.34% in 2022/23. Events included opportunities to explore the heritage, landscape and nature of the Park, including exploring the Castlemartin Range. Our volunteer activity leaders continued to play an important role in helping the authority to deliver its events programme

Impact Spotlight – Event Feedback: “Very impressed with the leader & volunteer knowledge and enthusiasm.”

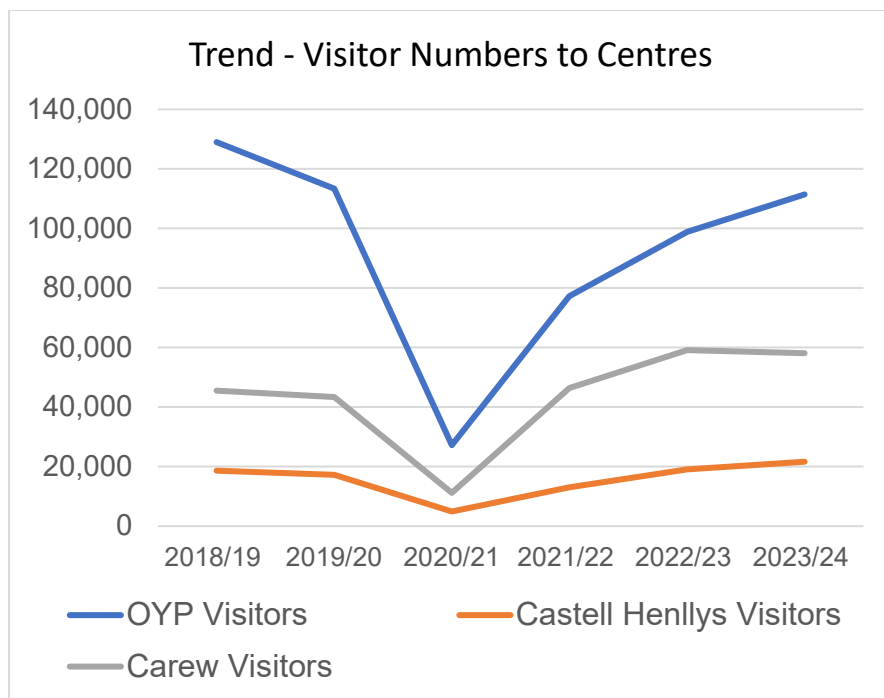
Collaboration Spotlight: The Authority has continued to work with partners to support events in Pembrokeshire. In partnership with Pembrokeshire County Council the Authority has supported Ironman Wales since it was set up. The event provides significant economic benefits to the area and encourages local people to improve their health and wellbeing. The Authority continued to sponsor Pembrokeshire County Show and have a stand at the event. Supporting an important Pembrokeshire community event and using it as platform to engage with the public and promote the Authority’s work.

Experiencing Heritage and Culture through our Centres



Castell Henllys, Carew Castle and Mill and Oriel y Parc provide a great opportunity for people to experience heritage and culture.

Oriel y Parc had 111,388 visitors in 2023/24 a 12% increase compared to 2022/23. Carew had 58,132 visitors in 2023/24 a decrease of 1.7% compared to 2022/23. Castell Henllys had 21,651 visitors in 2023/24 a 13.7% increase compared to 2022/23.



£326,621.67 was generated from admissions to Castell Henllys and Carew in 2023/24 an 11% increase on 2022/23. Our admission prices to our heritage centres remain competitive and offer families good value for money. Concession pricing is in place for 65+ and students at Castell Henllys and Carew, with free entry in place for wheelchair users and carers. Free entry is also in place for residents living close to Castell Henllys and Carew.

All three centres have facilities that communities can use, including cafes and spaces to hire or use.

Collaboration Spotlight: Oriol y Parc hosted in partnership with Amgueddfa Cymru the Geiriau Diflanedig / The Lost Words exhibition in 2023/24. The exhibition brought together the original Lost Words artwork by Jackie Morris alongside the English language poems by Robert Macfarlane and Welsh language poems written by Mererid Hopwood. Specimens from the natural history collections of Amgueddfa Cymru were used to highlight the level of biodiversity loss and explain the work being done to try and arrest this decline. A series of special events and outreach activities were held at Oriol y Parc to support engagement with the exhibition. The exhibition has proved popular, with gallery visitors increasing by 74.8% from 13,259 in 2022/23 to 23,171 in 2023/24.

Welsh Language Promotion Sessions and Activities

1,441 participants attended learning programme sessions facilitated in Welsh in 2023/24. This included sessions with schools involved in the “Perci ni” project. 29 participants attended bilingually facilitated sessions, this relates to a home education day on the Iron Age hosted at Castell Henllys.

No specific outreach/ inclusion sessions and activities were facilitated in Welsh in 2023/24 but 20 participants attended a bilingually facilitated outreach/ inclusion sessions and activity. This related to a Lost Words session for Springboard held at Oriol y Parc.

131 participants attended community sessions and activities facilitated in Welsh. This included practical community volunteering sessions and talks to Merched y Wawr.

5 participants attended public and visitor activities facilitated in Welsh. This relates to a Craig Talfynydd Welsh language walk. 31,634 participants attended public and visitor activities facilitated bilingually. This mainly related to Experience the Iron Age sessions at Castell Henllys which replaced separate English and Welsh Sessions and community events and trails at the Centres.

Impact Spotlight – Event Feedback: “Cyfle i ymarfer Cymraeg gyda siaradwyr rhugl, dysgu am hanes diddorol yr ardal , sgwrs gyda'r parcmon a oedd mor wybodus am yr ardal.” / “A chance to practise Welsh with fluent speakers, learn about the interesting history of the area, a chat with the ranger who was so knowledgeable about the area.”

Carew Castle have introduced a bilingual audio tour of the Castle which has proved very popular.

3. Working with Communities to better understand and support local priorities

Next Generation and Youth Committee

Youth Committee meetings continued to take place in 2023/24 with minutes included in National Park Authority papers. The Committee continue to develop the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Youth Manifesto and have been involved in early engagement around review of the National Park Management plan. The group contributed to a Welsh Government Consultation on Wales Child Poverty Strategy and Plan.

Committee members gained funding for mural work and have used the mural to engage other young people with issues affecting the Park.

Wider Next Generation Activities included practical sessions and outdoor engagement, involving the Youth Rangers.

Collaboration Spotlight: During 2023/24 joint sessions have been delivered between the Authority's Next Generation participants and Bannau Brycheiniog Youth Wardens. Events included a visit to Y Garn Goch a Bannau owned area of woodland, coppicing and woodland management skills session in South Pembrokeshire and a residential in Bannau.

As part of the residential the young people got to talk about youth voice and manifesto, go for a walk in waterfall country and meet the Curlew officer.

Volunteer Forum

Volunteer Forum in place, and minutes provided in National Park Authority papers. Presentation was provided to forum on the National Park Management Plan review, encouraging volunteers to take part in consultation.

Work has been undertaken to introduce new volunteer management system Better Impact during the year.

National Park Management Plan

Activities were under way in 2023/24 to support the review of the National Park Management Plan. Including the launching of an online Special Qualities Survey. The survey asked participants questions on what makes the National Park special for them and what needs to be done to protect and restore these special qualities. Officers engaged with a range of partners and partnerships in February and March 2024 to inform development of the National Park Management Plan for consultation. These included Natural Resources Wales, the Public Services Board (Nature, Decarbonisation and Climate), Next Generation - Youth Committee, the Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership, Volunteer Forum, and Friends of Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

Partnership Framework

As part of wider review of performance related reports it was decided that annual partnership report would be produced to provide overview of our partnership activities. Wider work will be carried out to review the partnership framework following approval of the revised National Park Management Plan in 2024/25.

Community Archaeology

The Authority's community archaeologist has continued to support community based archaeology initiatives. In July they delivered a community lidar session in partnership with the CUPHAT project team in the Preseli. They supported the RCAHMW and the University of Southampton to deliver training to students in 3D surveying techniques on the St Davids Head. In September, the Authority supported UCL's Stones of Stonehenge project excavation in the Preseli. This included borrowing excavation equipment and recruitment of volunteers. In addition, the community archaeologist delivered guided tours of the excavation to the public. A bilingual version of the Nevern Castle guidebook has been completed, this has been a collaboration between the Authority, Friends of Nevern Castle and Durham University.

Community Nature Plans

Work was underway by the ranger team in 2023/24 to complete two pilot community nature plans for Broad Haven

and Carew which, once complete can be used as template plans for other areas if there is potential to do so. Progress is difficult to timetable because the plans involve bringing communities together to collaborate, so pace is determined by the community.

Supporting Placemaking – Planning Policy and Service

Supplementary Planning Guidance

The following Supplementary Planning Guidance was adopted at the September 2023 NPA, after consideration by Members of consultation responses:

- Seascapes (prepared jointly with Pembrokeshire County Council)
- Trees and Woodlands
- Loss of Hotels and Guest Houses

Consultation Preparation Work – Article 4

Preparation work was carried out in 2023/24 to support a paper to be brought to National Park Authority in 2024/25 on gaining approval to consult on whether to make a formal Article 4 Direction to exclude some permitted development rights for camping and caravanning in order to provide a planning framework that will allow the National Park Authority to promote regenerative tourism in a sustainable manner. As part of this preparation a range of options were considered through workshops and meetings with National Park Authority

Members, Authority Development Management Officers, Planning Officers from Pembrokeshire County Council, Stakeholder workshop with agents and statutory undertakers, tourism stakeholders, Pembrokeshire County Council public protection, Welsh Government and Visit Pembrokeshire.

Pre-Application Advice and Planning Performance Agreements

At the February National Park Authority meeting Members agreed to the introduction of a new discretionary pre-application service, in addition to the existing statutory pre-application service. They also supported the introduction of planning performance agreements that would support the planning service in responding to more complex applications. The proposal mirror the approach that many Planning Authorities have already adopted, and the proposed charges was based on model used by Pembrokeshire County Council in order to provide consistency across Pembrokeshire.

Engagement with Community Councils

The Authority delivered two training events for Community Councils in October and November 2023. The online event had good attendance, however only one person attended the in-person event.

Enforcement Service

A new enforcement assistant was recruited during the year and is helping to close off and finalise cases from backlog left

from previous officers and covid. Work will be carried out in 2024/25 to review how data is being logged on system, to ensure that our enforcement figures accurately reflect the work that has been carried out by officers. Officers will also begin process of reviewing the enforcement and compliance policy in 2024/25.

Affordable Housing Completions

Local Development Plan 2 policy 48 set a target to delivery 362 affordable dwellings over the plan period 2016 to 2031. This equates to an annual target of 23 affordable dwellings. The data from the latest Annual Monitoring Report for the Local Development Plan shows:

- There were 27 affordable housing completions in 2023/24.
- Since 2015, 210 affordable homes have been completed, which is above the target of 207.

Planning Performance – Local Development Plan

Performance against Local Development Plan 2 is captured in the annual local development plan monitoring report. This report is presented to National Park Authority and submitted to Welsh Government.

Planning Performance - Welsh Government Indicators

Planning performance [benchmarking data](#) for other planning authorities is available on the Welsh Government Planning

pages as part of the development management quarterly survey.

During 2023/24 the Development Management service has focused on addressing older planning applications and has made good progress with this. A restructure of the team has taken place with two area teams created reporting to two Principals Planning Officers as well as the creation of the new Conservation and Enforcement Assistant role which has added strength to the Authority's enforcement team. These elements have been introduced to improve resilience and outcomes within the Development Management service.

It is pleasing to note that the Q4 statistics show an increased performance in terms of applications determined within agreed timescales.

A major database upgrade took place at the end of Q4 and into the start of Q1 for 2024/25 which caused significant delays in determination and some reporting issues which are still being worked through. This is likely to have impacted performance figures for Q1 2024/25 and means enforcement figures for Q4 are not yet available. This issue is being worked on as a priority.

Information from the Annual Monitoring Report continues to show high levels of delivery for affordable housing and the appeal decisions from PEDW have remained at a 100% level of dismissal during the year, showing PEDW supporting the refusal reasons from the Authority, an indication of quality in decision making. The focus for 2024/25 is to continue to achieve percentages in line with Welsh averages for decisions

agreed within timescales and to improve the timescales for decision taking.

Planning Application Workload

526 planning applications were received in 2023/24. 459 planning applications were decided. 44 planning applications were withdrawn or transferred.

Planning applications determined within statutory and agreed timescales

Quarter	Number determined on time	Number not determined on time	Percentage determined on time	Wales Average
Q1	58	29	67%	84%
Q2	98	36	73%	85%
Q3	68	55	55%	83%
Q4	100	15	87%	87%

Average time to determine planning applications

Quarter	Average time to determine planning applications	Wales Average
Q1	121	105
Q2	123	110
Q3	123	114
Q4	139	116

Appeals Dismissed

Quarter	% appeals dismissed
Q1	100
Q2	100
Q3	100
Q4	100

Decisions made contrary to Officer Recommendation

No decisions were made contrary to officer recommendation in 2023/24.

Enforcement Cases and Positive Action Taken

Quarter	Number of cases investigated in 84 days or less	Number of Cases investigated in more than 84 days	Total Number of Enforcement Cases Investigated
Q1	24	3	27
Q2	25	7	32
Q3	24	9	33
Q4	10	20	30

Quarter	Average time taken to investigate enforcement cases in days
Q1	91
Q2	466

Q3	139
Q4	-

Quarter	Average time taken to take positive enforcement action in days
Q1	118
Q2	532
Q3	98
Q4	-

In Q2 some cases that should have been closed but were not previously closed on the system were identified and subsequently closed. This has cleared a backlog of cases on the system but it had a significant impact on the number of days for Q2 in terms of these measures. Managers are reviewing processes with staff to ensure that cases are closed appropriately going forwards. Migration activities for the planning system has meant that quarter four enforcement figures are not available.

Planning Performance – Additional Indicators

There were 32 applications for works to protected trees determined in 2023/24, compared to 21 in 2022/23. 1 new tree preservation order was made in 2023/24 compared to none in 2021/22. The % of buildings at risk, based on Cadw survey decreased from 5.5% in 2022/23 to 5% in 2022/23. 25 listed building applications were determined under CADW delegated scheme in 2023/24, compared to 19 in 2022/23.

Corporate Areas of Change

Our corporate activities for improvement are informed by:

- Improvement actions identified in the Annual Governance Statement
- Delivery Plans on:
 - Governance and Decision-Making
 - Skills Development and Training
 - Resources and Broadening our Funding
 - Communications and Marketing
 - Digital Transformation
- Risk Management and assurance monitoring against compliance and corporate improvement areas
- Audit Wales and Internal Audit reports.

Corporate Areas of Change Impacts 2023/24

Note: Areas relating to Decarbonisation and Sustainability are covered under Conservation and Climate Well-being Objectives.

Creation of Delivery Plans

The Authority approved a Corporate and Resources Plan

2023/24 – 2026/27 at July NPA and a set of associated Delivery Plans. These Delivery Plans turn our ambitions into operational actions to support their delivery.

New Performance Framework

A new performance framework was developed following the creation of delivery plans. A new set of reports were piloted at relevant Committees.

Risk Management

Following recommendations from internal audit the Authority approved a new Risk Management Policy. The revised policy introduced new elements of assurance to reflect the good practice provided by the three line model and introduces an approach to risk appetite. Astari were appointed as the Authority's new internal auditors during 2023/24 and have provided a more risk focused approach to internal audit. An improved approach to risk management will support the Authority with horizon scanning and consideration of longer-term risks.

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery

A revised Business Continuity Plan and Disaster Recovery Plan were put in place and presented to Audit and Corporate Services Committee. A Business Continuity group was set up alongside a Microsoft Team. A business continuity exercise with relevant officers is planned for Autumn 2024/25.

Audit Cycle

There were delays in the signing of the accounts for 2022/23, due to loss of key staff and corporate knowledge and a later audit timetable issued by Audit Wales. Notice of Certification of Completion of the Audit was issued 20 November. Authority is working with Audit Wales in terms of bringing the audit timetable back to normal schedule, however this will take a number of audit cycles.

There were delays in Audit Wales carrying out planned performance audit work during 2022/23, however this work has now been scheduled for completion in 2024/25.

Corporate Policy Management and Communication

The Authority is undergoing a review of all policies and moving them into new templates with improved version control. A new document management process has been introduced to help with future document control and management. A corporate policy hub has been developed on the new staff intranet. Work will be ongoing in 2024/25 to review and publish updated policies to the staff intranet. Xpert HR is being used to support review of HR policies and HR team are holding regular policy review sessions.

Values

In previous years, engagement work was carried out with staff to inform development of new set of values. However,

following restructure activities and changes to personnel this work was put on hold in 2023/24. Work on this will recommence in 2024/25, including looking at how a new set of values could interlink with review of Employee Code of Conduct.

Complaints Monitoring

16 formal complaints were made to the Authority in 2023/24, this is a decrease on the 24 complaints made in 2022/23.

1 complaint was referred to and upheld by the Ombudsman in 2023/24. It related to failure to respond to a complaint in timely manner and to provide updates to the complainant. Authority acknowledged that more regular updates need to be provided to complainants in future. Changes made to the Authority's complaints procedure in September 2023 should help improve processes and management of communications with complainants going forwards.

Integrated Assessments

In 2023/24 integrated assessment were carried out on the following:

- Corporate and Resources Plan and Delivery Plan
- Welsh Language Strategy
- Pembrokeshire County Council/ Pembrokeshire National Park (Off Street Parking Places) Order Variation

- Pre application and planning performance agreement guidance.

An addendum was added to the integrated assessment on implementation of new management practice at Traeth Mawr (Newport Sands) to stop practise of Beach Parking (following purchase on dunes and beach). This addendum took account of follow up action around public consultation and engagement for proposal for Traeth Mawr. It addressed data and engagement gaps of the original assessment to help enhance mitigation actions for impacts identified particularly for disabled people in terms of access.

A group of staff met to look at development of project checklist linked to integrated assessment approach. Further work is planned to develop the project checklist in 2024/25 alongside updating guidance, trigger and template documents for full assessments.

Member Engagement

Member attendance at Committee for 2023/24 was 84.81%, this compares to 89.61% in 2024/25. There was a fall in Member attendance at training to 56.25%, below 65% target trigger and decrease on 72.92% in 2022/23. Figures impacted by lower attendance at site based sessions and by the poor timing of some externally arranged sessions. Face to face and virtual sessions were generally well attended in 2023/24.

8 personnel development plans were received from Members to inform the Members training plan. Welsh Government

Annual Performance reviews were undertaken for Welsh Government appointees.

Media and Online Engagement

The Authority has seen a 33% decrease in webcast views from 296 in 2022/23 to 197 in 2023/24.

96.67% of media coverage in 2023/24 was neutral or positive, this compares to 99.52% in 2022/23.

There were 476,516 main website users in 2023/24 compared to 290,110 in 2022/23. There were 1,374,007 main website page views in 2023/24 compared to 936,219 in 2022/23. However, this figure has been distorted by high number of page views to the Authority homepage and not the whole site.

Zero Based Budgeting

Zero based exercise undertaken in 2023 but not reflected in 2024/25 budget due to changes in finance team. New process will be completed for 2025/26 budget. Members of the Management Team commenced developing options for dealing with 25% less money over the next two years. This includes income generating and cost cutting options. This information will feed into budget setting scenarios over the next two years.

Income Diversification

Audit Wales self-evaluation checklist was completed by

Members and Officers at workshop. Relevant elements of checklist will be used to assess future income diversification activities and inform development of income diversification strategy in 2024/25. An income diversification group with Members was set up.

Using funding from Welsh Government the Authority has engaged a consultant to contribute to the generation of ideas and options to generate additional income. The consultant will engage with individuals across the Authority and produce a report in 2024/25 to help development of strategy.

Fundraising Strategy

A draft fundraising strategy has been developed by fundraising team. The team have also been working with departments to identify funding needs and opportunities and using the review of delivery plan to help inform decision with forward look approach to 2025/26.

Fundraising teams work on a bid to the National Lottery Heritage fund for Cysylltu Natur 25x25 project an initiative that aims to boost nature recovery across 25% of the northern section of the National Park by 2025 was successful. Securing a grant of £244,450 from fund with an additional £5,000 provided from the Pembrokeshire Coast Charitable Trust. The approach of this project which combines conservation work with opportunities for people from under-represented groups and disadvantaged communities to take part in nature conservation activities shows how well constructed projects can contribute to meeting more than one of the Authority's

Well-being Objectives.

Equality Plan

Initial planning activities including workshop was carried out with officers to inform review of Equality Plan that will happen in 2024/25.

Following advice from the EHRC, the annual equality report will now be a separate report from the Annual Report on Meeting Well-being Objectives. The Annual Equality Report 2023/24 provides further details in terms of progress against general duties and equality plan. It also sets out our workforce and recruitment equality monitoring data for the year.

Welsh Language Strategy and Standards

A revised Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023-28 was approved by Members at the December NPA. The Authority publishes annually a Welsh Language Standards Annual Report.

The Welsh Language Commissioner upheld a complaint made to them that the print version of Coast to Coast was not a bilingual publication. In response the Coast to Coast 2024 print version was produced as a bilingual publication in compliance with Welsh Language Standards requirements. All future Coast to Coast print versions will be bilingual.

Safeguarding

Continuing trend from 2021/22 and 2022/23, there were no safeguarding incidents in 2023/24.

There have been delays in implementing internal audit actions for safeguarding including implementing minor changes to safeguarding policy. One of the internal audit actions relates to annual Safeguarding report and the aim is that an annual report will be provided to National Park Authority in 2024/25.

Digital Transformation and Record Management

New staff sharepoint intranet site was launched, with the creation of new corporate document section.

IT delivered a number of Microsoft 365 training sessions for staff during the year. Wider IT training needs of staff will be picked up through completed Well-being and Development reviews with staff.

Record Management Project initiated during the year, working with departments to restructure the F Drive to reflect new organisation departments and discuss how they can best use Microsoft Teams.

Wider work is being carried out to support record management accountability documentation, with aim to further progress this work in 2024/25. An internal record management group was established to help support this work

and the Authority's Data Protection Officer sits on the group.

Actions within the Digital Transformation plan were reviewed in March 2023/24 and brought up to date to take account of wider IT challenges, risks, priorities and internal audit recommendations.

Data Protection

8 data protection breach incidents were recorded internally. 1 of these incidents was reported to ICO by Authority, and based on information provided no formal enforcement action was taken by ICO. 1 of these incidents related to a complaint made directly to the ICO about sharing personal data with a third party consultant without a legal basis. The ICO were satisfied with the lawful basis we relied on of public task. The Authority reviewed its planning privacy notice following the complaint and sought clarification on frequency staff need to complete data protection training, with ICO recommending training is undertaken annually. In response a refresher training video was developed by our DPO and refresher training programme implemented. Data Protection impact assessments were completed on E-bike booking system and F Drive project.

Information Governance

The Authority had 12 Freedom of Information Requests in 2023/24, compared to 10 in 2022/23 and 14 in 2021/22. Of them 100% were provided within required timescales an

improvement on 90% in 2022/23. The Authority had 26 Environmental Information Requests in 2023/24, compared to 21 in 2022/23 and 16 in 2021/22. Of them 100% were provided within required timescales an improvement on 85.71% in 2022/23. The Authority had 4 Subject Access Requests in 2023/24, compared to 4 in 2022/23 and 2 in 2021/22. Of them 75% were provided within required timescales, a decrease on 100% in 2022/23. However, this reflects that the Authority had a number of complex Subject Access Requests in quarter 1. Responsibility for responses are now being managed by Democratic Services and not split with Customer Services. The SAR received in quarter 4 was responded to in time. Senior Management Team have also agreed that in future additional casual hours can be offered to deal with complex SAR if needed.

Pay and Grading Review

HR carried out significant work to progress the pay and grading review following changes in personnel impacting on this work earlier in the year. Working with relevant staff, job descriptions and supporting information were submitted to the consultants carrying out the review. The consultants have been developing a hierarchical points based structure for posts. Additional posts that were new to the Authority since Autumn 2023 have also been added to the grading process and this has had a further impact on timescales. Initial emerging hierarchy of points was shared and posts matched to employees to ensure that all posts had been evaluated. Moderation of a 10% sample was agreed, and 2 moderation

days were arranged for March 2024. Completion of this work is a priority area for HR for 2024/25.

Updating Induction Process

HR began work on scoping out new process including collating existing material that could be used and identifying best practice. Work will be ongoing in 2024/25.

Appraisal and Training

A revised well-being and development form was created in quarter four of 2023/24 ready for deployment in quarter 1 2024/25. The information contained within completed reviews will be used to identify skills gaps and agree the most appropriate training intervention to meet staff needs. This will inform development of training plan for staff including taking account of new Management Teams training needs.

Pathways to Employment

Authority has developed planning and HR trainee roles and officers have been attending career events. Further work in this area will be progressed once work on pay and grading review is complete.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Group Terms of Reference were changed to better reflect the Authority following its restructure.

Incidents, near misses and health and safety risks are reviewed at the safety meetings, with learning shared across the departments where relevant. In 2024, a smaller working group will form to review and conduct reviews to take forward to the Health and Safety Group to assist in prioritising lessons learned.

Health and Safety policies have been reviewed and updated from historical versions and a new risk assessment template and process, with in-house training as support, has been introduced to standardise the risk management methodology.

In support of the new risk management processes, senior managers attended the IOSH Leading Safely course, while middle management attended the IOSH Managing Safely course. A safety culture survey was carried out in 2023/24 to establish a baseline for perceptions of safety within the Authority.

In 2023/2024, 67 health and safety incidents were reported, with 1 of them classified as a RIDDOR and reported to the Health and Safety Executive. The RIDDOR involved a member of the public who was injured traversing some steps. The internal investigation concluded that the Authority had done everything reasonably practicable with regards to maintaining the steps and that it was a slip accident.

An Annual Health and Safety report will be provided to National Park Authority.

Absences and Health

Wellbeing has remained a key focus for the organisation, with emphasis on physical health and mental wellbeing. The People Services team continue to work collaboratively and in partnership with our Occupational Health provider, ensuring information is reviewed regularly and any emerging trends identified.

731 (Long Term: 269. Short Term: 462) days of absence for 2023/24 compared to 1028 in 2022/23 (Long Term: 380. Short Term: 648.) Showing a 28.9% decrease between 2022/23 and 2023/24. Stress, Anxiety, Depression (SAD) continues to be the top cause of absence from the workplace, in common with other organisations. This will be reviewed in 2024 with a revised policy and procedure to identify the causal factors to try and reduce the SAD absences. Cold, flu and infectious diseases are the second highest cause of work absences. COVID has been a factor and continues to be a cause of absence although not to the extent seen in previous years and only where workers cannot work from home.