Statement of Public Participation for the Welsh National Marine Plan

January 2017
Overview
The key purpose of this publication is to provide an up-to-date timetable for the Welsh Government Statement of Public Participation for the Welsh National Marine Plan.

The Statement of Public Participation (SPP) sets out how interested parties can be involved in the marine planning process.

Further information and related documents
Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

The following link will provide you with further information related to the Statement of Public Participation for the Welsh national Marine Plan:

Contact details
For further information:

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Welsh Assembly Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

By telephone: 029 20 826470

Data protection

How information you give us may be used
Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff working on the development of the Welsh National Marine Plan.

It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff for information sharing purposes and advice.

The Welsh Government do not intend to publish responses to this document.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, it is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone’s name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.
Foreword

The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 introduced a new era in the management of Welsh seas, providing for a much stronger, joined-up and plan-led approach.

In the same way sustainable development is at the heart of everything we do in the Welsh Government, sustainable development will be at the heart of our new marine planning system. The recent Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Environment (Wales) Act 2016 reinforce the principle and importance of involving people in developing and delivering policy.

I want our marine planning system to be proactive and inclusive and provide clarity for everyone with an interest in the future of our seas. I want your help in establishing a system to say to the world; Wales - through the sustainable use of our seas, has significant potential now and for our future generations. This Statement of Public Participation underlines our commitment to working with you throughout the marine planning process.

I encourage you to get involved in developing and implementing our first Welsh National Marine Plan.

Lesley Griffiths AM
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs
Summary

The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) provides the statutory basis for a new plan-led system for marine activities throughout the UK. Welsh Ministers are the Planning Authority for the Welsh inshore and the Welsh offshore regions.

The key purpose of this revised Statement of Public Participation (SPP) is to set out our intentions on how and when the Welsh Government will engage with the public and stakeholders throughout the marine planning process. We will keep the SPP under review and amend it as appropriate. This document updates the SPP published in September 2015.

Glossary

**MCAA**: Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009

**MPS**: UK Marine Policy Statement

**SPP**: Statement of Public Participation

**WCD**: Wales Coastal Directory

**WNMP**: Welsh National Marine Plan

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Environment (Wales) Act 2016
Introduction

The seas around Wales are becoming increasingly crowded. There are competing demands for space and use of our natural resources. There is huge potential for our seas and we want to manage them in a more joined-up and planned way. This will mean doing things differently, encouraging greater integration between different uses and organisations as well as introducing a more forward-looking, proactive and spatial approach.

Establishing a new plan-led marine planning system is a complex task as it covers so many different interests and activities. It requires sustained participation with a wide range of people and organisations. We want to maintain positive and productive engagement with all those interested or involved in the seas around Wales and developing our approach through consultation and engagement is a key part of this. This will help ensure the plan developed in Wales is fit for purpose and provides benefits to society, the economy and the environment.

The Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) (S 51(1)) sets out the requirement to produce a marine plan for each marine plan region. The Welsh Ministers are the planning authority for the Welsh inshore and offshore regions (see map). To provide a consistent and simple approach, the Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP) will be a single document containing plans and policies for both the inshore and/or offshore regions. We are aiming to have a draft WNMP ready for consultation during 2017.

In accordance with the MCAA, all four UK administrations adopted the Marine Policy Statement (MPS)\(^1\) in March 2011. The MPS provides the high level policy context, within which Marine Plans will be developed, implemented, monitored and amended.

Due to the current devolution settlement, UK Government has some retained powers, which means the marine plan prepared by Welsh Ministers in the offshore region will need the agreement of the Secretary of State in Defra. Similarly, if the inshore marine plan includes reference to policy areas in respect of which the Secretary of State retains functions, these will also need the agreement of the Secretary of State. The Welsh Government is working closely with the UK Government on plan development.

The marine planning system will need to integrate with terrestrial and other planning systems. The planning process will help to achieve this by taking account of all relevant plans including local authority; National Parks, River Basin Management, Shoreline Management and Flood Risk Management as well as any other plans prepared by a public or local authority in connection with the management or use of the sea or the coast.

A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), will be integrated with the plan-making process and will ensure full account is taken of the potential social, economic and environmental implications of the plan. There will also be other assessments carried out on the impact of the Plan, for example Habitats Regulation Assessment, Welsh Language standards, on the rights of our citizens, children and young people and on the need to be widely inclusive.

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The Purpose of the Statement of Public Participation

We recognise it is essential to take account of the views and interests of many different people and organisations in the marine planning process. The publication of this SPP, in line with requirements under the MCAA, emphasises our commitment to achieving meaningful and sustained engagement. This statement briefly describes how stakeholders can expect to engage with us and what we will do with the outcomes of the views and opinions we receive.

The SPP is not a static document. We will keep it under review and, if appropriate, update it as the marine planning process for Wales evolves.

The Scope of the Welsh National Marine Planning system

Marine plans facilitate opportunities to manage marine activities in a sustainable way, taking into account economic, social and environmental considerations. The Welsh National Marine Plan will inform and direct decisions on the activities happening in our marine area. This will help to realise the potential of our seas to contribute positively to the well-being of future generations in Wales.

The plan will be supported by all available evidence. The main sources of information are Wales’ Marine Evidence Report (formerly the Strategic Scoping Exercise) and an online Marine Planning Evidence Portal.

Wales’ Marine Evidence Report addresses our marine natural resources, the use we make of them and future opportunities. It is a comprehensive evidence base, consulted upon widely, to inform marine planning.

The Marine Planning Evidence Portal is an online tool to offer users layered data-sets from a variety of sources in a spatial format. These will be available, with other relevant evidence, on the Marine Planning pages of the Welsh Government website.

In particular, amongst other relevant authorisations with the potential to affect the plan area, the WNMP will support and inform the marine licensing system and other decisions needing to be taken on the use of our marine area. It will do this by:

• clarifying marine objectives and priorities;
• directing decision-makers and users towards more consistent, evidence-based decisions for the sustainable use of marine resources in the Welsh inshore and offshore regions.

The Marine Policy Statement provided the initial framework of the considerations to be taken in to account in marine plans. The objectives and the policies identified in the plan, address the key activities which happen in the marine area.

The responses to the consultation held in 2014 on the structure of the plan have informed development. Welsh Government proposes the WNMP will include:

• An Introduction, which will help set the context of the plan.
• General, cross-cutting policies which have relevance to many activities and decisions. The general policies will identify how we can act in such a way to promote sustainability for the economy, the environment and for our communities in Wales.

2 http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/marineandfisheries/marine-planning/?lang=en
Sector specific policies will support the general, over-arching policies. These sector specific policies will include, for example, policies relating to Aquaculture; Aggregates; Defence; Dredging and Disposal; Energy; Fisheries; Ports and Shipping, Tourism and Recreation.

(This list is not intended to be a final or complete list of all the areas of policy to be covered by the plan.)

We are committed to working with all those with an interest in developing a marine plan for Wales. We will continue to work through our communication networks and improve on our approaches as the plan evolves towards formal adoption.

Marine Planning for Wales – progress to date

The UK Marine Policy Statement (MPS), as was agreed by all four UK government administrations, acts as the framework for marine plans and provides for consistency in marine planning across the UK marine area. If public authorities make decisions which may affect a marine area, the decision must be made in accordance with relevant marine plans. The direction contained in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and the Environment (Wales) Act, on the need to manage activity in our seas, to secure meaningful engagement, integration and long term environmental and environment sustainability aligns with the MPS.

In 2011, Welsh Government consulted on the approach to marine planning for Wales. The consultation, ‘Sustainable development for Welsh seas: Our approach to marine planning in Wales’, sought views on how we intended developing marine planning in Wales in line with our powers and responsibilities. The consultation explained our intention to develop a national plan for the Welsh inshore area and a national plan for the Welsh offshore area. It also set out options for and asked questions on how we should plan on a sub-national level. We received 47 formal responses to this consultation.

The main messages received from our consultation on the approach included: support for a national plan with spatial priorities; uncertainty regarding the level of subnational planning needed; the need for early engagement in the marine planning process; the need to consider the land-sea interface; the need to link marine planning with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the resources needed to establish marine planning.

At the start of marine planning, following consultation on our approach, we published the first Statement of Public Participation for the WNMP. In 2014, we conducted a further 12 week consultation on a proposed structure and the Vision and Objectives of the WNMP. This consultation included the proposed Scope of the Sustainability Appraisal. At the same time, we made available for comment the draft report of the Strategic Scoping Exercise (SSE) and an early version of the Marine Planning Evidence Portal.

We received 52 formal responses to the consultation. Most of these supported the proposals, with suggestions to sharpen the Vision and add a more Welsh focus to the Objectives. All responses have been considered during the development of the plan. The consultation document and a summary of responses document was published on 31 March 2015.

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Progress has continued with an initial draft of the plan being shared for comment, supported by public engagement workshops held around Wales, in November 2015. Formal consultation and adoption process will follow in 2017.

**Welsh Government approach to participation in marine planning**

We recognise the need for sustained and meaningful engagement. We continue to engage in a timely manner with people and organisations throughout Wales and beyond. Those representing wider environmental interests, as well as statutory consultees under the SEA regulations, are encouraged to participate in the marine planning process to ensure the Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the SEA) will take into account all potential environmental effects.

Marine planning is a new concept and involvement of all those with an interest is crucial to achieving a useful and robust planning system. The Welsh Government strongly encourages all individuals or groups likely to be interested in, or affected by, the policies or proposals contained within marine plans, to engage directly with the marine planning system so we can achieve the maximum benefit for the people of Wales.

We already work with many marine and coastal stakeholders but we are always looking to build on these relationships. The Wales Coastal Directory (WCD) provides a good starting point for our engagement with a wide range of stakeholders on marine planning. The Directory has been refreshed and is available on the Welsh Government website pages or via the online Marine Planning Evidence Portal.

If your group does not appear in the directory and you would like it to, please send your detail to us.

We also encourage engagement which happens informally as well as through our formal consultation exercises, our established advisory groups and across our existing networks. We also want our local communities to send us their views. We are keen to understand what works and what doesn't work, so we can encourage people to get involved appropriately, and at the right level, as we develop the first marine plan for Wales. We continue to share updates and documents on the Marine Planning pages of the Welsh Government website as part of the development process. A Marine Planning specific mailbox is available to allow feedback at any point in time: marineplanning@wales.gsi.gov.uk
How we will engage?

- We will make documents available on our website for comment, as they develop.
- We will seek your views and comments through consultations, public events and workshops.
- We will carefully consider any comments received on any aspect of marine planning. When we are consulting or seeking representations at certain stages of the development of the WNMP, we will clearly explain how long you have to make your views known and how to do so.

Throughout the marine planning process we will also use, as appropriate:

- Email updates;
- Presentations at events, conferences, etc;
- Awareness raising;
- One-to-one meetings, workshops and drop-in sessions;
- Web updates;
- Focus groups on specific issues to gain insight, information and views; and
- Social media will be used when considered appropriate.

Advisory groups

Welsh Government regularly engages with a wide variety of people and organisations on marine planning through formal consultation, meetings and more informal networking and liaison. We have established advisory groups comprising representatives from a wide range of interests. We will continue to build on this and will engage as widely as possible with as many people as possible on plan development.

We will work through the advisory groups to share progress and seek the views of a range of representatives, including working with the Welsh Marine Strategic Advisory Group (WMSAG).
Members of WMSAG include:

- British Marine Aggregates Producers Association
- British Association for Shooting & Conservation
- British Marine Federation
- Chair of WMFAG (representing fisheries stakeholder structures)
- Cragen Llyn a Mon
- Dwr Cymru
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee
- Marine Conservation Society
- National Parks
- National Trust
- Natural Resources Wales
- One Voice Wales
- Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum
- Pwllheli Partnership
- Renewable UK Wales
- Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales
- RSPB
- Seabed Users and Developers Group
- Severn Estuary Partnership
- The Crown Estate
- Visit Wales
- Wales Environment Link
- Welsh Aquaculture/MPAC
- Welsh Association of Sub Aqua Clubs
- Welsh Federation of Sea Anglers
- Welsh Fishermen’s Association
- Welsh Ports Group
- Welsh Yachting Association
- Wildlife Trust Wales
- WLGA (delegating to LA’s as appropriate)
- WWF

We have also established a Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group with whom we will continue to work closely, to share early thinking and to provide feedback on our developing approach to marine planning.

The group includes representatives from:

- British Marine Aggregate Producers Association
- British Marine Federation
- Deepdock Mussels
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)
- Marine Management Association (MMO)
- National Trust
- Natural Resources Wales
- Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum
- Royal Yachting Association
- Seabed User and Developer Group SUDG
- SEACAMS
- Seafish
- Severn Estuary Partnership
- The Crown Estate
- UK Chamber of Shipping
- UK Renewables
- Wales Environmental Link
- Welsh Fisherman’s Association
- Welsh Ports Group
- WLGA
- World Wildlife Fund
When will we engage?

We intend to keep stakeholders informed and share developments for comments as they emerge.

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<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Initial meetings to consult stakeholders on the approach to a National Marine Plan for Wales</td>
<td>December 2010 – February 2011 COMPLETED</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Prepare consultation on the Welsh approach to marine planning</td>
<td>January – February 2011 COMPLETED</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Consult on an approach to marine planning in Wales (12 weeks)</td>
<td>February 2011 – May 2011 COMPLETED</td>
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<td>4. Consider the responses to the marine planning consultation</td>
<td>May 2011 – November 2012 COMPLETED</td>
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<td>5. Prepare and consult on the Statement of Public Participation</td>
<td>September 2013 – Spring 2014 COMPLETED</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Develop and consult on plan scope, vision and objectives</td>
<td>Summer/Autumn 2014 COMPLETED</td>
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**Stages 7 – 10 (Please note – all future timings are subject to change)**

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<th>Stage</th>
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<td>7. Informal and widespread discussions on the initial draft WNMP and revision of the Plan in light of points raised</td>
<td>COMPLETED</td>
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<td>8. Formal Consultation on the revised draft of the WNMP</td>
<td>Summer 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Final consideration, adoption and introduction of the WNMP and associated documents</td>
<td>Late 2017, early 2018 depending upon changes needed following consultation</td>
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<td>10. Implement and evaluate the WNMP</td>
<td>2018 onwards</td>
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The table above sets out what we see as the key stages and indicative timetable for marine planning. Further details of activity are outlined below:

**Stage 1: Initial meetings to consult stakeholders on the approach to a National Marine Plan for Wales: December 2010 – February 2011**

Welsh Government facilitated a workshop at the Wales Coastal Maritime Partnership (WCMP) conference in March 2010 to consider initial approaches to marine planning in Wales. The workshop built on advice provided to the Welsh Government by the partnership. This informed early thinking for the most appropriate approach to be taken for developing the first marine plan for Wales.

Welsh Government invited the WCMP to form a marine planning sub-group to provide strategic advice on the marine planning consultation. Members of the group were:

- British Marine Aggregates Producers Association
- British Marine Federation
- Countryside Council for Wales
- Environment Agency Wales
- Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum
- Professor Lynda Warren WCMP (Chair)
- Renewables UK
- Royal Yachting Association
- The Crown Estate
- The National Trust
- The Severn Estuary Partnership
- Wales Environment Link
- Wales Landscape Partnership
- Welsh Ports Group

Stage 3: Consult on an approach to marine planning in Wales (12 weeks): February 2011 – May 2011

The consultation entitled ‘Sustainable Development for Welsh Seas: Our Approach to Marine Planning in Wales’ sought views on marine planning in Wales. The consultation invited views on how the Welsh Government intended developing marine planning in Wales in line with our powers and responsibilities under the MCAA. It also set out our intention to develop a single national plan covering both the inshore and offshore marine regions. Lastly, it set out options for, and asked questions on, planning on a sub-national level. The consultation ended 11 May 2011. In total 47 responses were received.

Welsh Government held a consultation workshop at the WCMP conference 2011. A full copy of all the consultation responses was published on the Welsh Government website along with a consultation response summary document.

Stage 4: Consider the responses to the marine planning consultation: May 2011 – November 2012

During this stage Welsh Government reviewed and considered the responses to the consultation. The information contained in the responses to the consultation has continued to inform our approach to marine planning throughout this process. During this period, Welsh Government officials attended successive meetings of the WCMP to provide an update on current thinking and to informally test reactions to Welsh Government ideas.

Stage 5: Prepare and consult on the Statement of Public Participation September 2013 – Spring 2014

Welsh Government held informal discussions with stakeholders on the draft SPP before its publication for formal consultation began in February 2014.

The consultation ran for 8 weeks, during which time Welsh Government held a workshop for national stakeholders and four public engagement ‘drop-in’ events around the Welsh coast.

The consultation date and details of the events and workshop were published on the Welsh Government website. The consultation, national stakeholder workshop and public engagement events provided an update on and background to marine planning, and sought initial sector views and information on matters to be included in the marine plan.
We published the revised SPP in May 2014 alongside the Welsh Government summary of consultation responses and each of the written responses received.

**Stage 6: Develop and consult on the scope, vision and plan objectives**  
**– Summer / Autumn 2014**

Following the publication of the Statement of Public Participation, a formal consultation was undertaken on a draft Vision and Objectives, the proposed outline of the Welsh National Marine Plan, as well as the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal to support development of the plan. A series of public meetings and a national stakeholder event were held across Wales, to facilitate engagement and gain feedback during the consultation period.

The consultation documents were also made available on the Welsh Government’s internet pages. At the same time, Welsh Government made available and invited technical comments on the evidence base, collated to inform the WNMP – Wales’ Marine Evidence Report (based on the Strategic Scoping Exercise) and an online Evidence Portal which presents various data-sets from a variety of sources in a spatial way. These inform the marine planning system:


**Stage 7: Draft and engage informally on the initial draft framework marine plan**  
**Autumn 2015**

The objective of this stage is to receive feedback on the draft plan. Open public engagement meetings were held to support the informal sharing of the initial draft plan.

All views and comments received have been used to inform the latest development of the Plan. There will be further engagement invited on developing the draft plan as necessary. The emerging draft will then inform the SA process.

**Stage 8: Progressing towards the final Welsh National Marine Plan**

The SA process will be integrated with the marine planning process. The Draft WNMP will be the subject of a formal consultation exercise lasting at least 12 weeks. Engagement events will be organised to take place at locations across Wales during the consultation period. Details of these will be published on the Welsh Government website.

The Welsh Government will consider any representations made during the consultation process. All responses will be used to inform the Plan documents. Informal engagement will be ongoing throughout this period. The revised Plan will require the approval of Welsh Government Ministers and for certain non-devolved matters the Secretary of State at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), in Westminster.

The Welsh Ministers could appoint an independent person to investigate the draft and report back to them if they think it necessary. This would be done prior to the final draft being submitted for agreement at both Welsh and UK Government level. The decision to carry out an independent investigation is a matter for Welsh Ministers, as the marine planning authority, depending on the extent to which matters raised by representatives have not been resolved.
Stage 9: Final considerations, adoption and publication of the WNMP and associated documents – 2017/18

Once the plan has been tested, subject to formal consultation and all necessary approvals have been secured, the WNMP will be considered to be adopted and will be published as promptly as possible. A post-adoption statement and statement of environmental particulars showing how the WNMP has been amended in light of the responses received and how the environment has been taken into account will also be published.

Stage 10: Implement and evaluate the WNMP 2018 onwards

Any review and amendments to a published WNMP will follow the same detailed consultation, investigation and parliamentary process as the original plan and will be outlined and published in a further SPP. The WNMP will be reported on in line with the requirements of the MCAA.

If you have any comments on this document or would like more information on marine planning for Wales please contact:

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Or access the Marine Planning pages of the Welsh Government website at:
http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/marineandfisheries/marine-planning/?lang=en