



Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru
Natural Resources Wales



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Natur a Ni
Nature and Us

Nature and Us Citizens' Assembly Process Report

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Executive Summary

The Nature and Us Citizens' Assembly was commissioned by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to support the development of a vision for the future of the natural environment in Wales. Natural Resources Wales is a Welsh Government sponsored body which acts as the principal adviser to the Welsh Government around issues relating to the Welsh environment. Since 2021, they have been delivering the Nature and Us¹ programme, which seeks to involve and hear from people across Wales about their views, concerns and hopes for the future of the natural environment.

The first phase of this programme carried out by Freshwater and OB3 Research in early 2022 generated a wealth of evidence on peoples' perceptions of the natural environment, its impact on their lives, and their hopes for the future. It highlighted the need for further engagement with people across Wales on this issue, for which the Nature and Us Citizens' Assembly was commissioned. A citizens' assembly brings together a representative sample of a population to consider evidence, learn, and deliberate together², making it a useful tool to consider the evidence generated within the Nature and Us programme and feed into a vision for the future of the natural environment in Wales.

The Centre for Deliberative Research³ at the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), a registered charity and the largest independent and not-for-profit social research organisation in the UK, were commissioned to deliver this work. Datblygiadau Egni Gwledig (DEG)⁴, a social enterprise focussed on the development of zero carbon, localised economies across north Wales, supported this process as Welsh language facilitators. The Sortition Foundation⁵ carried out the recruitment for the Nature and Us Citizens' Assembly to ensure a representative sample of people from across Wales.

To support this work, an advisory panel was convened by NRW to help create the core questions for the assembly, shape the evidence list, and guide session design. The NatCen team facilitated this 16 person panel through three two hour co-design workshops to achieve this. The final core assembly questions were:

- What does the future look like when people and nature thrive together?
- What benefits would we see if this happened?
- What needs to be different from today?
- What steps do we in Wales need to take to reach a thriving future?

¹ <https://freshwater.eventscase.com/EN/Natureandus>

² <https://involve.org.uk/resources/methods/citizens-assembly>

³ <https://natcen.ac.uk/s/centre-deliberative-research>

⁴ <https://www.deg.wales>

⁵ <https://www.sortitionfoundation.org>



The Nature and Us Citizens' Assembly invited 52 members of the public, of which 40 attended all sessions, to participate in 13 hours of deliberation across three sessions.

Typically, a citizens' assembly would involve upwards of 40 hours of deliberation as recommended by the OECD⁶, however in this instance due to the scope of the work, its role in the wider programme, available resources, and time scale, we have adapted this feature. The assembly retained the other core features, including a representative sample by lottery and the consideration of evidence over multiple days, which resulted in concrete outcomes. Two of these sessions took place online and one was face to face (participants were split into groups of 20 to meet in Swansea and Wrexham). Across assembly sessions, participants considered a range of evidence related to Wales and the natural environment which supported them to form a view on what Natural Resources Wales should prioritise in their future vision for Wales. The final workshop concluded with consensus building exercises to identify shared priorities for this vision.

This report details the process of delivering this assembly, including design considerations, participant demographics, an overview of assembly sessions, evidence shared, and participant feedback. It sits alongside the Findings Report which shares key themes from the deliberations in response to the core questions, and a draft vision.

To take the vision forward, Natural Resources Wales commissioned NatCen to run a series of online group discussions with assembly members to review and agree the draft vision statements. All assembly members were invited to participate in these discussions and in total nineteen took part across four online sessions, each consisting of four or five participants. Prior to attending these discussions draft vision statements were shared with participants and they were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree that the statements reflect the priorities of the assembly members. Then during the discussions statements were reviewed and where necessary amended to ensure they captured the assembly priorities. A short report of the outputs of these discussions is included in the appendices.

⁶ <https://www.oecd.org/gov/innovative-citizen-participation-and-new-democratic-institutions-339306da-en.htm>



1. Introduction

1.1 Nature and Us

Nature and Us is an initiative established to build a shared vision for the future of the natural environment in Wales for 2050. The programme is facilitated and funded by Natural Resources Wales, a Welsh Government sponsored body which acts as the principal adviser to the Welsh Government around issues relating to the Welsh environment. At the core of this programme is a commitment to hearing from people across Wales to support the development of a vision which can be jointly taken forward by the people, organisations and Government in Wales.

In 2022, a national conversation on the future of the natural environment was launched as the first phase of the Nature and Us programme. It was facilitated by Natural Resources Wales and supported by Welsh Government. This national conversation engaged over 3,000 citizens through a combination of surveys, focus groups, workshops and webinars. This conversation highlighted the importance of the future of the natural environment for people across Wales, and generated a rich evidence base of their stories, insights and hopes for it.

To build upon these insights, the Nature and Us Advisory Group recommended convening a citizens' assembly as the next phase of the programme. This assembly should consider the evidence gathered so far and work towards the creation of a vision for the future of the natural environment in Wales. The Centre for Deliberative Research (CDR) at the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) was commissioned by Natural Resources Wales to design and facilitate this citizens' assembly. Datblygiadau Egni Gwledig (DEG)⁷, a social enterprise specialising in the development of zero carbon, localised economies across north Wales, supported this process as Welsh language facilitators. The Sortition Foundation⁸ carried out the recruitment for the Nature and Us Citizens' Assembly to ensure a representative sample of people from across Wales.

This report outlines the process of delivering this assembly including recruitment and design. It sits alongside the Findings Report which details the outcomes of the assembly and vision for 2050.

1.2 Governance and oversight

The work of the wider Nature and Us programme is overseen by an advisory group that was first convened in 2021. This advisory group was invited by Natural Resources Wales to oversee the citizens' assembly, but they advised that it would be best to establish a separate citizens' assembly advisory panel who could dedicate more time and resource to provide oversight. This panel was then convened to guide the design and delivery for the

⁷ <https://www.deg.wales>

⁸ <https://www.sortitionfoundation.org>



citizens' assembly, including creating core questions, guiding design, and selecting evidence.

The Citizens' Assembly Advisory Panel consisted of 17 members from a range of professional backgrounds (government, academia, charities and representative organisations) with relevant expertise in both climate, nature and involvement. These members included individuals⁹ from: Dwr Cymru Welsh Water, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), The Food Farming & Countryside Commission, Welsh Government, the Wales Federation of Young Farmers Clubs, FGO, the Welsh Local Government Association, One Voice Wales, Natural Resources Wales, Public Health Wales, the University of Liverpool, Futures Literacy through Narrative (FLINT), Cardiff University, and Oasis Cardiff.

1.3 Assembly Objectives

The aim of the citizens' assembly, set by the Nature and Us Advisory Group, was to identify the priorities shared by people across Wales for the future of the natural environment. The Advisory Group also emphasized the importance of ensuring that a diversity of views from across Welsh communities were heard in the process of deliberation. To achieve this, three specific objectives were set:

- To consider the evidence on the climate and nature emergencies, and the public views that we have captured to date through Nature and Us.
- To agree a shared vision for the natural environment for Wales
- To recommend actions that the public can take now, and how other organisations (including national and local government, NRW, public bodies and businesses) can support this action.

To ensure a diversity of views were heard, a nationally representative group (see Section 3.2) of 52 citizens was recruited by the Sortition Foundation¹⁰, a not-for-profit organisation that specialises in recruiting people by lottery in a way that is broadly representative of a given population.

These citizens participated in 13 hours of deliberation across two and a half days, spread over three weekends. Three workshops took place both online and in-person and included learning, deliberation and vision-making stages where participants were provided with the information that could support them to create a vision for nature for 2050.

⁹ See Appendix XX for full list of members

¹⁰ <https://www.sortitionfoundation.org>



2. Methodology

This section includes details of the sampling and recruitment of participants, the principles of deliberation and citizens' assemblies, the co-design process with the Advisory Panel and the design choices for the assembly.

2.1 Participant Recruitment

The Sortition Foundation were commissioned by Natural Resources Wales to recruit a total of 52 citizens (to ensure 50 participated) that represented the Welsh population. Natural Resources Wales followed best practice when choosing this sample size to ensure a sufficiently large representative sample but one which remains in line with the scale of this programme¹¹. They followed a recruitment process called sortition, which involves selecting a random group of people from a given area by lottery and then creating a stratified selection of participants to achieve a representative sample¹².

To do this, the Sortition Foundation randomly selected 15,000 addresses from the Royal Mail Database across Wales (300 addresses for every one of the needed 52 assembly members). Each of these addresses received a letter in the post inviting residents to sign up as potential members of the citizens' assembly. Based on learning from past work, the Sortition Foundation identified that those that live in more deprived areas tend to be less likely to respond to invitations of this kind, hence the random selection was weighted as follows: 80% of the addresses were chosen from the whole of Wales; 20% of the addresses were chosen specifically from more deprived areas of Wales¹³. Citizens who had received the invitation letter were then able to contact the Sortition Foundation to indicate their interest. Participants were told they would receive £260 in recognition of their time, as well as reimbursement for any travel costs for in-person sessions. They were also offered support to attend sessions, such as being provided with a device to attend online, a dongle for Wi-Fi, or support for carers to attend in person sessions.

To ensure the final sample of 52 was representative of the population, the Sortition Foundation set sampling criteria with Natural Resources Wales using data from the Office for National Statistics to set quotas for selection. (further detailed in section 2.3).

To help make these selections, all citizens who had indicated interest were required to share their address, date of birth, gender, ethnicity, and information about their occupation when registering online or by phone. The Sortition Foundation also collected data on whether participants described themselves as having a disability and how often they spent time in nature. The invitation package that was mailed out by the Sortition Foundation is included in appendix one.

¹¹ <https://involve.org.uk/resources/knowledge-base/how-do-i-setup-citizens-assembly/3-representative>

¹² <https://www.sortitionfoundation.org/how>

¹³ As determined by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)



The Sortition Foundation then used this information to create a "sortition algorithm" that was used to randomly select the 52 assembly members from the pool of eligible participants to achieve a representative sample.

2.2 Participant Demographics

Overall, 52 participants were recruited to take part in the assemblies to improve the likelihood that the target of 50 started the sessions. In total, 45 completed the first workshop, 41 completed the second and 40 completed all three workshops. Table 1. shows a full breakdown of the demographics of the 52 invited to participate, and those that attended each session alongside the original targets and Welsh population data upon which the targets are based.

The table shows that the 52 people invited to take part were representative of the Welsh population across key demographics. The twelve participants that dropped out of the process reflected a mix of age, gender, ethnicity and location so the final group of 40 participants remained broadly representative of the Welsh population.

To ensure a mix of socio-economic backgrounds, participants were asked their occupation as a proxy, which was grouped in four economically active categories as well as two economically inactive categories. Half of the twelve that dropped out of the process were not in the labour force, so the final 40 participants slightly over-represents employed people.

To ensure a mix of participants from different parts of Wales, quotas were set for six different Welsh regions. Those who dropped out of the process lived across these regions so the final 40 who completed the whole process represented a good regional mix.

Participants were also asked how much time they spent in green space. To select a sample in this regard, management information derived from an upcoming statistic from the People and Nature Survey (PaNs) was used to help benchmark and validate the composition of the citizen assembly.



Table 1. Sample Demographics

	Population %	Original target		Invited	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3
Gender							
Male	49.30%	26	50.00%	25	23	21	20
Female	50.70%	26	50.00%	27	22	20	20
Ethnicity							
White, White Welsh or White British	93.70%	45	86.50%	44	40	36	35
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	2.90%	3	5.80%	3	2	2	2
Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African	0.90%	1	1.90%	2	1	1	1
Mixed or multiple ethnic group	1.60%	2	3.80%	2	1	1	1
Other ethnic group	0.90%	1	1.90%	1	1	1	1
Age							
16-24	13.07%	7	13.10%	6	4	4	5
25-34	15.30%	8	15.30%	8	7	7	5
35-44	15.00%	8	15.00%	8	8	8	8
45-64	31.35%	16	31.40%	16	15	13	13
65+	25.28%	13	25.30%	14	11	9	9
Disability							
Yes	22.70%	12	22.70%	11	8	7	7
No	77.30%	40	77.30%	41	37	34	33
Geography							
Rural	38.00%	20	38.00%	19	16	15	15
Urban	62.00%	32	62.00%	33	28	25	24
No Response						1	1
Occupation							
Not in the labour force (other)	17.00%	9	17.00%	9	6	6	6
Manager/ director/ professional	26.00%	14	26.00%	14	13	12	12
Caring/ leisure/ service/ sales	9.60%	5	9.60%	9	8	7	7
Not in the labour force (retired)	25.90%	13	25.90%	13	10	8	8
Administrative/ secretarial/ skilled trade	11.70%	6	11.70%	6	7	7	6
Plant or machine operative/ elementary	9.80%	5	9.80%	1	1	1	1
Geography							
LL/CH	34%	18	34.0%	17	15	14	13
SY	6%	3	6.0%	4	4	4	4
LD/HR	6%	3	6.0%	3	3	2	2
SA	18%	9	18.0%	8	8	7	7
CF	24%	12	24.0%	13	11	10	10
NP/GL	12%	6	12.0%	7	4	4	4



2.3 Public Deliberation

Deliberation provides participants with the time, information and discursive conditions needed to engage in depth with a topic, typically taking place over extended periods of time and in multiple workshops. Material on a given topic (in this case the natural environment in Wales), selected for its balance and impartiality, is provided to ensure that all participants have access to the same information to inform their views. Trained facilitators support participants to debate and deliberate this information in small groups to ultimately form a view on a complex policy. These methods yield insights into people's considered views on complex, value-driven issues that often require trade-offs for resolution.

For this deliberation, a citizens' assembly was chosen as the most appropriate method due to the importance of ensuring a representative group and identifying areas of agreement as well as contestation, and support consensus forming on key priorities for the natural environment for people across Wales.

A citizens' assembly is a process of public participation that enables decision makers to understand peoples' informed and considered preferences on complex issues¹⁴. Citizens' assemblies on climate and nature themes typically take anywhere from 2.5 to 14 days¹⁵ with consideration given to the scope of the task, and the expectations of output, and vary in size from around 40-150 participants¹⁶. Given this assembly's consideration of the natural environment, we drew on the design principles of climate assemblies, a form of a citizens' assembly focused on the climate crisis, as outlined by the Knowledge Network on Climate Assemblies (KNOCA).

Assemblies typically take a three-stage approach outlined in Figure 1. The first stage is focused on learning where a range of evidence is presented to the assembly to ensure all participants can discuss with equal access to knowledge that is impartial, balanced and clearly communicated. The second stage is deliberation where participants are supported through facilitated discussion to develop their opinions and understand each other's experiences. Finally, assemblies conclude with some form of shared outcome – typically guided by the core questions which then feed into further outputs taken forward by the commissioning body such as recommendations, policy proposals, and visions.

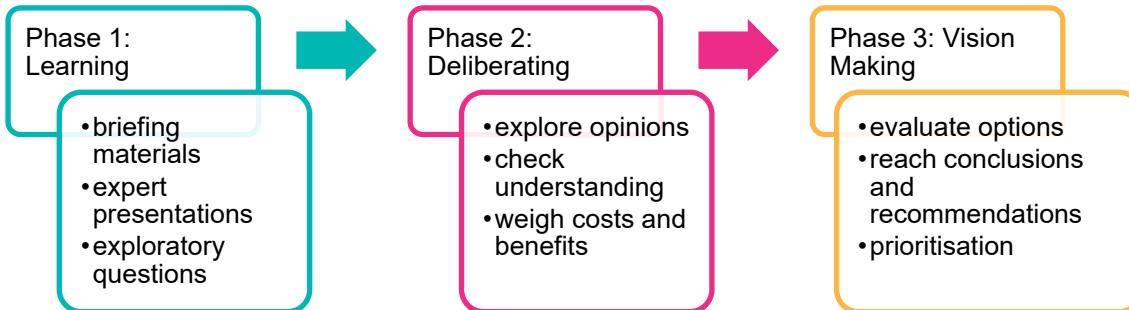
¹⁴ <https://www.climateassembly.uk/about/citizens-assemblies/>

¹⁵ <https://knoca.eu/key-features-of-climate-assemblies/>

¹⁶ <https://knoca.eu/key-features-of-climate-assemblies/>



Figure 1. Three-stage approach to citizens'



2.4 Advisory Panel Co-Design

Co-design refers to a way of working, where everybody in a group works together on an equal basis (sharing of power) to come to a decision which works for all¹⁷.

In line with best practice¹⁸, a programme-specific advisory panel (detailed in section 1.2) was established with a term of reference (see Appendix two) to ensure this work will not be owned by NRW alone, but a wider group of those with a shared commitment to supporting the outcomes. These members were recruited by Natural Resources Wales.

To agree core questions, feedback on session plans and to identify the right range of evidence for the citizen's assembly, NatCen used the tools of co-design to work with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the Citizens' Assembly Advisory Panel. We worked together over three two-hour facilitated sessions on Zoom.

Stages of the co-design process

- **Session 1: Core questions**
- **Session 2: Shaping Evidence**
- **Session 3: Session Design**

Each session involved a mix of plenary and facilitated breakout rooms of up to 5 people. The first session focused on establishing terms of reference for the group¹⁹ and the creation of the core questions; the second session on considering and agreeing what evidence to share and present during the assembly sessions; and the third to test and give feedback on session design.

¹⁷ <https://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/co-production-in-commissioning-tool/co-production/In-more-detail/what-is-co-production/>

¹⁸ <https://knoca.eu/guidance/>

¹⁹ See Appendix two



These sessions were facilitated by NatCen who used Miro²⁰, an online collaboration tool to aid the discussions through activities and to capture data. Members who were unable to attend were supported to contribute to the Miro board asynchronously, sharing reflections over email and participating in separate one-to-one catch-up calls. In between the sessions, the NatCen team shared drafts of the core questions and evidence list for input and feedback, which was then reviewed at the start of the following session.

The process and impact of the Citizens' Assembly Advisory Panel is reflected throughout the design and delivery of the citizens' assembly, detailed in sections 2.5 (Assembly Design), 3.1 (Core Questions) and 3.4 (Evidence List).

2.5 Citizens' Assembly Design

The Nature and Us Citizen's Assembly consisted of three sessions. These included two sessions focused on learning and deliberation, before a third and final session aimed at revisiting contributions from assembly members during the first two sessions to arrive at priorities for the future vision. The first and third sessions were online, and the second session took place in-person across two locations (Swansea and Wrexham). Full details of the session plans are provided in Section 3.

The design of the session plans was developed by the NatCen team with input from the Nature and Us Senior Specialist Advisor on the basis of the core questions and evidence list designed by the Nature and Us Advisory Panel. Tools and activities proposed for the final citizens' assembly plan were tested throughout the Advisory Panel sessions. Advisory Panel members fed back on this experience, as well as on the assembly design in the final advisory panel session.

Figure 2 provides an overview of the citizens' assembly's design.

²⁰ <https://miro.com>

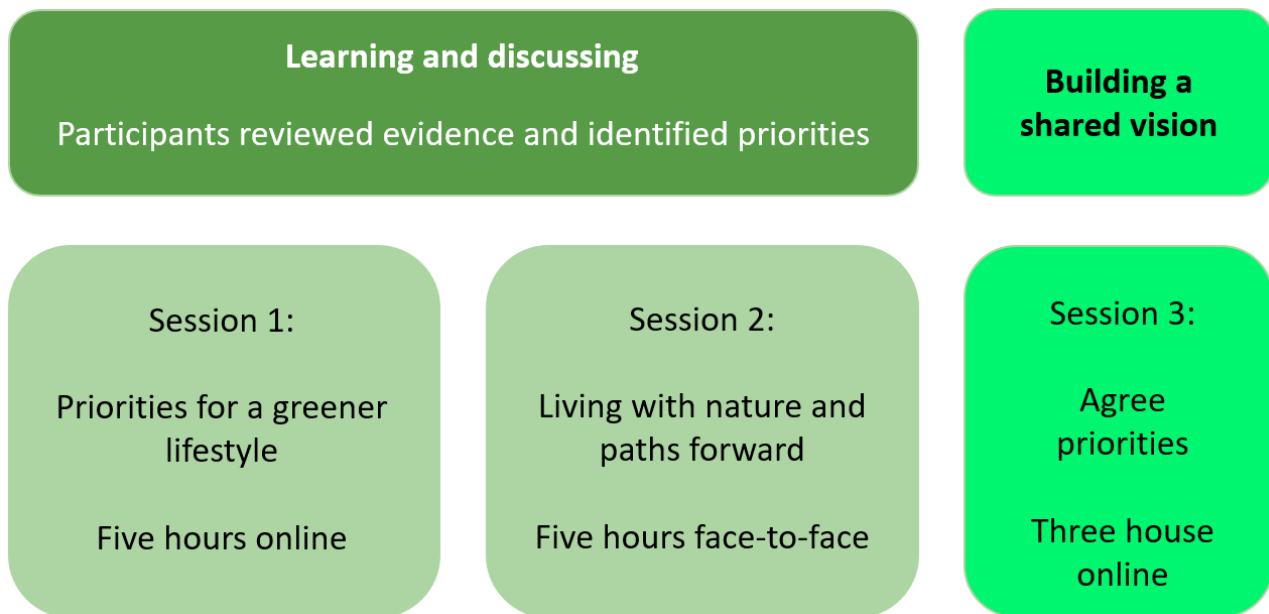


Figure 2 Overview of assembly design

To maximise participant engagement, we designed an active process alternating between plenary learning where evidence was shared through speakers and case studies and small group discussions (of no more than 8 participants in each), supported by facilitators. To ensure high quality deliberative discussions, our facilitators focused on creating the conditions of exploratory dialogue in a respectful context. This meant using clear, simple language to provide guidance, open questions to support participants to explain their perspectives more deeply and creating a safe space for all to contribute. At the core of deliberation is facilitation which put participants in the lead, ensuring equitable contributions and prompting reflection.

NatCen used both traditional notetaking and visual notetaking tools to facilitate the bilingual nature of the sessions and increase accessibility for language, as well as to ensure creative and traditional outputs. The visual notetaker developed a visual for each session, which are shared in Appendix three. After each session, the NatCen team reviewed the answers to the core questions so far, evaluated participants' understanding of key materials, and ensured insights were gathered to identify key areas to build upon.

2.6 Analysis and Reporting

NatCen has produced two reports during this project: this process report outlining the assembly's objectives, method and delivery; and a findings report that details outputs of the assembly and includes the final vision statements created through the analysis of these outputs.



This process report draws on evidence from meeting minutes, agendas and Miro boards from both the Advisory Panel and Citizens' Assembly, the finalised outputs of the Advisory Panel, and the notes from facilitators across the sessions.

The findings report draws on data captured via Miro and facilitator notes during the assembly. NatCen's approach to analysis was designed to identify common themes to form the basis of a shared vision. To achieve this the NatCen team analysed the priorities that participants created on Miro through a three stage process:

1. Assign each priority to the four core questions in order to build a picture of what participants want to change, the benefits of that change and then the immediate next steps.
2. Apply an inductive coding approach to thematically analyse these data, whereby each response was assigned a 'code' that describes the main theme of the response. For example, 'health' or 'transport'.
3. Conduct a clustering exercise to consolidate the codes into overarching categories (of which there were 6). This enabled NatCen researchers to identify the cross-cutting themes that were present in responses to all of the core questions.

The findings report outlines these themes and concludes with sharing the final vision generated through the analysis of the core questions.



Participants split into two groups on Zoom for five minutes and reviewed the questions, recording their amendments on Miro. All panel members re-convened in plenary to feedback the additional ideas each group came up with and suggest the necessary changes to be made to the final questions. The session concluded with all agreeing that further work needed to be done to core questions.

The core questions created following the second co-design session were:

What does the future look like when communities and nature thrive together?

- Why does it feel important to you to reach this future? or What benefits do you see when nature and communities thrive together?
- What needs to be different from today?
- What steps do we need to take to reach a thriving future together? or How can we all work together for nature?

These were discussed again in the final session and then edited according to feedback before being shared with the Advisory Panel via email for final agreement.

The final agreed core questions were:

- **What does the future look like when society and nature thrive together?**
 - What needs to be different from today?
 - What benefits would we see if this happened?
 - What steps do we in Wales need to take to reach a thriving future?

3.3 Citizen Assembly Sessions

Participants were invited to take part in three workshops spanning across five weeks. These sessions involved a combination of absorbing expert evidence in plenary to ensure all participants heard the same information, and then discussing this evidence in smaller groups of six to eight people. During each workshop, facilitators from NatCen's Centre for Deliberative Research and DEG worked through a series of exercises with participants to generate key concerns and priorities for the future of nature in Wales. Facilitators also collected questions which were then shared with speakers and answered between sessions, alongside two Q&As with speakers in sessions.

The assembly was delivered by a team of eight experienced facilitators, made up of six from the Centre for Deliberative Research, and two bilingual facilitators from DEG Cymru. Underscoring the facilitation approach across the sessions was a focus on ensuring participants were able and confident to participate in discussion, including providing Welsh-speaking facilitators and all written materials in Welsh.



The first and third workshops took place online through Zoom, whilst the second workshop was held in-person with participants opting to attend in either Swansea or Wrexham. Over the three workshops, participants heard from a range of speakers and considered a variety of evidence on the existing state of nature in Wales, its challenges, and how things can change in the future, detailed in section 3.4. Finally, participants were invited to build a shared vision of how they thought Wales could move forward as a country while limiting the ongoing degradation of its natural environment. This section outlines in detail the exercises and structure of each session.

Workshop 1

The first workshop focused on nature and society. It aimed to establish a shared understanding of how the natural environment affects people's lives in Wales. To begin, the agenda and aims for the session and wider assembly were introduced, followed by an activity which supported participants to connect with the concept from a personal perspective.

Following this, participants entered into a series of evidence sessions. Prior to hearing from speakers, a video was shared capturing the findings from Nature and Us Phase 1. Next, participants were presented with information about the importance of nature in everyday life, the policy tools available for future change, life scenarios of Welsh citizens living in an imagined future Wales (generated by the Future Generations Commissioner's Office and Public Health Wales), key concerns on the challenges facing Wales' natural environment, and the state of natural resources in Wales. They also heard about the key systems of food, energy and transport and their relationship to the environment, and the impact of the natural environment on public health.

In between each of the evidence sessions, participants met in small facilitated breakout rooms to raise questions and discuss what they had heard. They also had a Q&A session with a representative from NRW.

In the final discussion of the day, participants were presented with an exercise wherein they reflected on the information heard during the workshop and explained their thoughts about the potential options for Wales moving forward. Participants were then brought back into the plenary session where the workshop ended with a video in which a range of Welsh citizens shared their views about the climate emergency. This helped to create a sense of shared purpose among participants, and was followed by one final opportunity for clarification questions.

Workshop 2

The second, in-person, workshop focused on exploring the connections participants had with their natural environments and how the environment impacts life in Wales. It was for this reason that it took place in-situ, being held in the participants' local areas of either Swansea (for participants from Mid and South Wales) or Wrexham (for participants from Mid and North Wales).



The workshops began with a recap of the key priorities that emerged from the first workshop through reviewing graphics which had been produced by the visual note-taker. To support participants to move into a space of thinking about the future, a collaborative drawing exercise was undertaken. Participants were then invited to share key elements a future Wales should have, before discussing with one another evidence in their communities of progress towards this better future.

The second part of the session focused on developing participants' connection to nature, and the role it plays in their lives in order to imagine what role it might play in their future. To do this, we first engaged in a centring activity by gathering in a circle outdoors and asking each person to share reflections on their local environment. Following this, participants found a spot either outside or inside with their small groups to participate in a storytelling circle, each taking turns to tell the story of their relationship with nature before each person had their story reflected back to them by another person in the group. As a collective, this highlighted the wide variety of experiences and feelings and supported participants to appreciate the difference in one another's experiences and priorities.

The third part of the workshop began with a plenary exploration into what an alternative future, achieved through reforms, might look like. Then participants watched videos capturing five different case studies of people living with the natural environment in Wales to understand the different futures they were imagining. To close, participants listened to five audio recordings in each group, nine overall, of people from across Wales sharing their visions of the future. These recordings were a core outcome of the first phase of Nature and Us and highlighted the key themes that made up the findings of the national conversation.

Workshop 3

The final, online, workshop focused on identifying priorities that could form the basis of a future vision for Wales's natural environment. At the start, participants reflected themes from the first two workshops where they were asked, in the context of an alternative future, what they would leave in the past, what they would take forward into the future, what information during the workshops had made them think, and what, during the workshops, they had enjoyed most. Following this, participants re-considered in small groups the priorities that had been generated in the previous sessions to discuss whether they still accurately reflected the feelings and beliefs of the group.

Following this, participants were re-introduced to the life scenarios of Welsh citizens living in an imagined future Wales (generated by the Future Generations Commissioner's Office and Public Health Wales) from the first workshop to prompt participants to ask themselves what, in an ideal future, would be achieved, who would benefit from action taken now, and what outcomes would matter most to the future citizens of Wales. After sharing in plenary the discussions held within the breakout groups, participants returned to their groups where they were invited to share the ideas that they liked the most about their collective imagined futures.



In the third and final part of the workshop, participants were asked to think about how their visions of a more sustainable Wales could impact behaviour today. They were first invited to think about this independently, before bringing their thoughts into a discussion with a partner, followed by discussing their thoughts in groups of four, and then finally with their whole breakout group (the 1-2-4 technique described earlier). This allowed participants to develop ideas of how this future vision could be communicated to others and thereby promote behaviour change in the present through a reimagined future.

3.4 Evidence List

The following section lists the evidence presented to participants within each of the three workshops. Modes of evidence included live and pre-recorded presentations from expert speakers, videos, data graphs, and audio clips. No new evidence was presented in workshop 3, as this workshop focused on bringing together what had already been discussed in the previous workshops so that participants could identify priorities for a future vision upon that basis. However, Jane Davidson, Minister for the Environment in the Welsh Government from 2007-2011 and instrumental in the Wales Future Generations Act, did speak in the third workshop to highlight the importance of the work and other initiatives happening in Wales that this work would inform.

The evidence list was shaped by the Citizens' Assembly Advisory Panel through three co-design sessions (detailed in section 2.4). To facilitate this, the NatCen team shared examples of evidence from past climate assemblies, as well as priorities that had emerged from discussions across Wales in Phase 1 of Nature and Us. Building on the evidence shared, the NatCen team facilitated small group discussions where panel members identified useful evidence sources, potential presenters, and case studies to be used as part of the assembly process. Following the session, the NatCen team shared a collaborative Excel document with evidence suggestions so far for advisory panel members to add to. The list was then reviewed in the third and final advisory session where members were asked to agree a list of evidence that reflected the right balance across the assembly process. Following the final session NatCen circulated a final list that was agreed via email.



Workshop 1

Table 2. Evidence presented in workshop 1

Mode of Evidence	Evidence Source	Objective
Live presentation	Steve Ormerod, Cardiff University	To understand the importance of nature for our everyday lives and our connection to it
Live presentation	Marie Brousseau-Navarro, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales	To understand the policy tools for the future
Pre-recorded presentation	Sharon Thompson, RSPB	To understand the current challenges facing Wales and the state of nature today
Live presentation	Alex Ioannou, NRW	To understand the interactions between our lives and the three core systems of food, energy and transport
Live presentation	Nerys Edmonds, Public Health Wales	To revisit the impacts of nature on day-to-day life through the lens of public health to generate an understanding of wider impacts and inequalities
Video	Nature and Us project Phase 1	To share with participants the view of other people across Wales and create a shared sense of purpose for Session 2

Workshop 2

Table 3. Evidence presented in workshop 2

Mode of Evidence	Evidence Source	Objective
Graph	P 13, Global Biodiversity Outlook 5, 'Summary for Policymakers' (secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2020)	To emphasise the interconnected nature of the issue, and the variety of actions needed
Video	Ellen MacArthur Foundation	To introduce the idea of positive future alternatives through the concept of circular economies
Video	Food Sense Wales	To provide a case study of alternative solutions in Wales
Video	Green Squirrel	To provide a case study of alternative solutions in Wales
Video	Cwmpas	To provide a case study of alternative solutions in Wales
Video (part 1) Video (part 2)	Sustrans	To provide a case study of alternative solutions in Wales



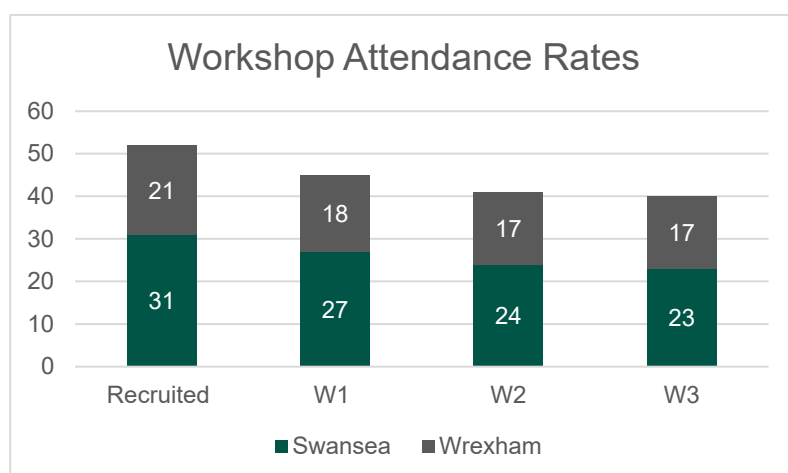
Video	Jason Lewis	To provide a case study of alternative solutions in Wales
Audio Clips	Nature and Us Phase 1 Findings	To begin preparing for the third visioning session

3.5 Participation

Workshop Attendance

In total, 52 participants were recruited (an over recruitment of 2) to participate in this project, of which 45 attended the first workshop overall. Of these 45 participants, 27 attended the first South Wales session and 18 attended the first North Wales session. We experienced attrition between sessions one and two, with 24 attending the second South Wales session and 17 attending the second North Wales session. 40 participants (23 in the South Wales session and 17 in the North Wales session) attended the final, third workshop. (See Fig. 3)

Figure 3. Workshops attendance rates



Participant Feedback

A post-workshop survey²¹ provided participants with the opportunity to feedback on their experience of taking part in the assembly. In total just under half of participants (21) completed this survey and the feedback provided was positive. In terms of overall experience the majority (90%) enjoyed the assemblies and respondents felt comfortable in their breakout groups (86%). All respondents agreed that the information provided during the assemblies was clear and easy to understand and 86% of respondents understood the objectives of the project with 81% feeling informed about the state of nature in wellbeing and its connection to people and their wellbeing after taking part.

Through open text responses, some participants reported that they would have liked more time for discussion within their breakout rooms. From a few members, there was feedback

²¹ See Appendix three



that as English speakers they found bilingual conversation difficult, while there was also feedback from one Welsh speaker that it would have been better to have more presentations in Welsh. Facilitators were on hand to guide participants through the exercises and this was reflected in feedback reporting that the workshop had been well run.

4. Conclusions and next steps

The Nature and Us Citizens' Assembly brought together 40 people from across Wales to identify priorities for a vision for the future of the natural environment. These citizens took part in 13 hours of deliberation in a citizens' assembly format across two online and one face-to-face workshops. Natural Resources Wales convened a range of stakeholders into an advisory panel to work on the shape and content of these workshops through three co-design sessions. The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) were commissioned to work with this advisory panel and design and deliver the citizens' assembly.

During the assembly, participants were provided with information about the natural environment in Wales, and were supported by NatCen facilitators to provide views on the question of what the future looks like when people and nature thrive together. This included a series of different exercises where participants prioritised what they thought needs to change, the benefits of that change and what immediate next steps need to take place in Wales to reach a thriving future.

This process report has detailed the recruitment, design and delivery of this assembly. A separate findings report outlines the outputs of the assembly, including a final vision. This draft vision will be reviewed and agreed by assembly members through a series of small group discussions that are scheduled to take place in June 2023. NatCen has been commissioned to deliver these group discussions and will revise the draft vision in response to assembly member feedback.

Once the vision has been agreed by assembly members, Natural Resources Wales will begin the work of implementing the vision to work towards a future where people and nature work together. A key part of this will be continuing to involve assembly members and the wider Welsh public in this vision.