

Mynyddoedd Cambrian Mountains: Dyfodol Cambrian Futures

Statws Tirwedd i Fynyddoedd Cambrian- astudiaeth ddichonoldeb Landscape Status for the Cambrian Mountains- a feasibility study

Cynnig ar gyfer trafodaeth Proposal for discussion

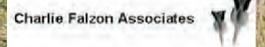
ar gyfer/for

Menter Mynyddoedd Cambrian
Cambrian Mountains Initiative

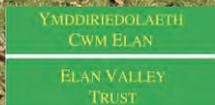
Medi/September 2019



in conjunction with



RSK ADAS Ltd



**Mynyddoedd Cambrian Mountains: Dyfodol Cambrian Futures –
Statws Tirwedd i Fynyddoedd Cambrian –
astudiaeth ddichonoldeb
Landscape Status for the Cambrian Mountains –
a feasibility Study**

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Proposal for Discussion**

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Menter Mynyddoedd Cambrian
Cambrian Mountains Initiative

Medi/September 2019

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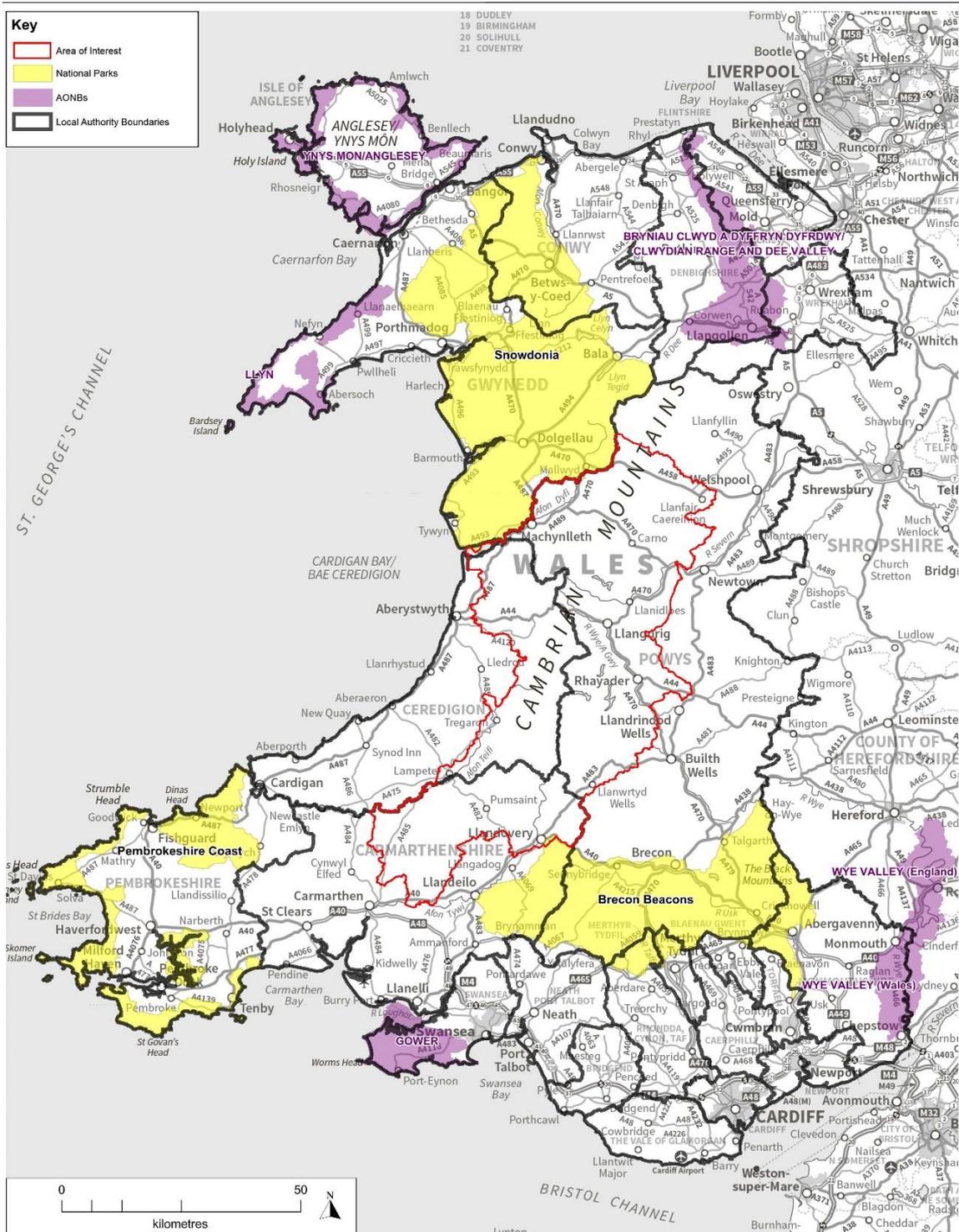
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Figure 1 - Cambrian Mountains location



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Project: Landscape Status for the Cambrian Mountains - a feasibility study
Client: Cambrian Mountains Initiative
Date: 18 February 2019
Status: Draft

1 The Brief



1. The Brief

- 1.1. The intent is to raise the profile of the Cambrian Mountains as a national standard for sustainable rural enterprise and innovation. To achieve this requires a managed approach to the treatment of the 'natural wealth' of the region. This means the matching of actions across existing administrative boundaries.

Outputs

- 1.2. There are two reports:
 - A **Technical Report** that presents a detailed description of the processes followed, the data collected, its analysis and source. The intent of this report is to inform debate by providing a comprehensive review.
 - A **Proposal for Discussion** (this document) that introduces a model for the co-ordination and development of regeneration and sustainability management in the area. The purpose of this document is to stimulate debate, based on the Technical Report.

2 The Cambrian Mountains in context



2. The Cambrian Mountains in context

(A précis of the detailed analysis set out in the Technical Report)

Headline characteristics

- 2.1. We have looked at the area covered by community councils within and abutting the Cambrian Mountains as defined by the 'Area of Interest' provided by the Cambrian Mountains Initiative (**Figure 1**). This area covers 1,968km² spanning three local authorities (Powys, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire) and 54 community councils. It is home to around 37,000 people. This gives a population density of 0.2 people per hectare, amongst the lowest in Wales (Wales average is 1.49 people per hectare). The local economy relies on agriculture and tourism. This reflects the deeply rural nature of the area. There is migration of younger adults out of region and of older working age and retired adults into the area. As one of the most isolated areas in Wales, the area highlights the issues facing the uplands.
- 2.2. The Cambrian Mountains forms the upland backbone of Wales. It runs from the borders of the Snowdonia National Park and Machynlleth in the north, to the Brechfa Forest and the Brecon Beacons National Park in the south. This is an area of exceptional unspoilt upland landscapes. It is an extensive upland plateau cut by deep valleys running east and west, some forming the headwaters of Wales's major rivers, such as the Severn, Tywi and the Wye, as well as feeding into the Dyfi. The area supports valued habitats and species; and ways of farming that have roots stretching back to the Middle Ages. Commercial forest plantations cover very large blocks of land, primarily upland, but also large parts of some valleys. The remains of past mineral exploitation are still visible at a few locations. Few roads cross from east to west, and the cultural character between eastern and western fringes is quite different.

Strengths:

- a high-quality environment;
- a high quality of life;
- rich cultural traditions flourish;
- the Welsh language is strong;
- provision of valuable natural goods and services;
- a very high level of tranquillity and feeling of wildness;
- dark night skies;
- the most important areas of hill land for nature conservation in Wales;
- a substantial number of features of historic and cultural interest;
- extensive recreational and tourism opportunities;
- tourism generates around £40,000,000 pa in the Cambrian Mountains;
- a significant source of water for national consumption; and
- a significant source of renewable energy.

Weaknesses:

- a lack of consensus on how to define and manage the area;
- a lack of integration and co-ordination;
- an area reliant on short-term external funding;
- the West Wales and Valleys Region is one of the poorer in Europe;
- lowest household incomes in Wales;
- population is underemployed or employed in more than one low paid occupation;
- a greater proportion of 'sole traders' than the Welsh average;
- an ageing workforce;
- the workforce is not highly qualified;
- there is low productivity;
- declining agricultural incomes;
- reliance on agricultural support payments to maintain farms;
- lack of investment;
- poor infrastructure network;
- poor or no mobile phone networks;
- difficult access to markets and services; and
- lack of recreational infrastructure.

Threats:

- low profitability and uncertainty about the future;
- changing land management policies;
- shrinking farm population;
- a slow decrease in the proportion of people able to speak Welsh;
- loss of young people diminishing the ability, drive and enthusiasm to deliver new projects;
- loss of traditional skills;
- climate change; and
- arrival of new pathogens and diseases.

Opportunities:

- consolidation of action to deliver agreed priorities;
- strengthened working between the three Counties;
- the new Welsh Sustainable Farming Scheme;
- Growing Mid-Wales Partnership call for recognition for the Cambrian Mountains; and
- Growing Mid-Wales Partnership call for a major indoor tourism attraction in Cambrian Mountains.

What people ask for

- 2.3. We spoke with many people, either one-to-one or in small groups, using structured questions as the basis for the discussion. Dyfodol Cambrian Futures also engaged locally and undertook a survey as part of a broader set of 'drop in'

sessions for the tourism and community sector.

2.4. We found eight themes that can inform the type of organisation people are asking for. Listing in alphabetical order, they are:

- Bureaucratic – there are some who feel that excessive regulation stifles local enterprise. But the local economy does need external support. How do you empower local people to deliver the national ambition?
- Communication – there is confusion about who is doing what and why in the Cambrian Mountains. Some people felt that their voice is not heard. What is the best way to collate and broadcast information?
- Co-ordination – closely linked to communication, there is some concern that the policy framework across the Cambrian Mountains is inconsistent in design and application; that projects come and go with no inherited knowledge or resources; and that there is duplication of effort and lost opportunities. What is the best way to deliver an integrated approach across the area?
- Definition – there is agreement that the Cambrian Mountains is an entity but there is uncertainty about its extent. Where should the boundary lie?
- Designation – there is wide spread distrust of formal designations, particularly ‘National Park’, less so for ‘Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty’. Can designations be light-touch, enabling and value for money?
- Flexibility - are the governance and means of working fixed or can they be adapted to meet local needs?
- Identity – there is agreement that the Cambrian Mountains has a valued farmed landscape with extensive quiet wilderness. How can you raise the profile of the area without degrading its special qualities?
- Representation – there are some who feel threatened when ‘outsiders’ or ‘experts’ believe that they know best (‘environmental colonialism’). Who speaks for the Cambrian Mountains and with what authority? How can you create an inclusive body that is efficient and effective?

2.5. And four specific topics emerge as requiring more administrative harmonisation:

- access and rights of way, especially in applying a consistency to signage, footpath work, erosion management and enforcement;
- community resilience, especially improving the health and well-being of the area’s population. There are difficulties with access, low levels of service provision, isolation, higher costs and lack of choice or quality.
- development planning, especially in applying consistent regulation across the area; and
- land management, especially in the sphere of farmer support through agri-environment payments and payments for ecosystem services.

Our conclusions

- 2.6. The Cambrian Mountains are one of the heartlands of Welsh language and culture; the communities and way of life are bound to land use and management. But:
- there is no management of the Cambrian Mountains as a single and united geographical area;
 - administrative boundaries divide the area; and
 - to date, funding streams have set the agenda.
- 2.7. The people of the Cambrian Mountains agree about the need to co-ordinate the many projects, activities and groups active in the area and they:
- accept that this needs an organisation with kudos;
 - know that resourcing such a body is challenging; and
 - want the area to set its own clear agenda and then seek the funding to deliver it.

2.8. We present a Proposal for Discussion. The Technical Report includes an Action Plan to achieve this. We show an outline of that plan in Table 1.

Table 1: OUTLINE OF ACTION PLAN

Confirm intent

- Formal agreement on CMI's stance
- Outline vision for the area
- Position statements on CMI's role and intention



Engage

- A strategy for engagement
- Two active community engagement staff
- Effective communications platform
- Evidence of consensus for the proposal
- Record of findings



Consult

- Agreed programme for consultation
- Evidence of wide support for the proposal[s]
- Feasibility review report
- Well-attended conference
- Wide endorsement of the proposal
- Agreed lead body
- Conference report



Implement

- Charter / Management Strategy published
- Objectives, activities and constitution of new body agreed
- Budget in place
- New body created with core staff
- Joint committee of the three County Councils established
- Protocols with Welsh Government, NRW and public bodies in place

3 Proposal for discussion



3. Proposal for Discussion

Introduction

- 3.1. Following a review of management models and structures in use in the UK and Europe, we propose that the local communities create their own definition for the Cambrian Mountains and its necklace of surrounding communities. This is to be a status without statutory obligations. (see Land Use Consultants, Cole et al. 2012)
- This will be a social definition with an emphasis on enabling communities and enterprise rather than constraint.
 - Its aim is to deliver integrated / sustainable rural development and associated natural capital by maintaining high environmental quality.
 - The name of this definition is open to debate but we advise that the communities choose something that clearly reflects their ambition for the area. As a working title, we use '**Cambrian Mountains, an area of national significance**' until the communities agree a name.
 - We suggest a binary approach to both the boundary and governance.

Boundaries

- 3.2. We are aware that any proposals for the future management of this area may require boundaries different from the one used for this study. Finding those boundaries will be easier when it is clear what mechanism will be in place to secure the long-term management of the area. However, within the study area it is possible to identify an area of wild upland, largely under grazing or forestry, lying within a wider area of lowland and scattered settlements. We do not define this 'core area' but we believe that there are challenges in the uplands that are distinct from those of the wider area.¹
- 3.3. Within the study area, there are opportunities to:
- Promote the necklace of towns as gateways to the area
 - Support the development of cultural and local produce enterprises
 - Promote traditional cultural activities
 - Bring communities together – encourage a sense of place
 - Encourage participation in community / town council activities
 - Build council partnerships towards a representative body for the area

¹ At some future date, this core area may contain a formal landscape designation, such as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, should Natural Resources Wales decide to follow such a course. Our model can accommodate such a designation but it is not dependent upon it.

- Act as a focus for awareness of climate change and responses at local level

3.4. The core area offers additional opportunities:

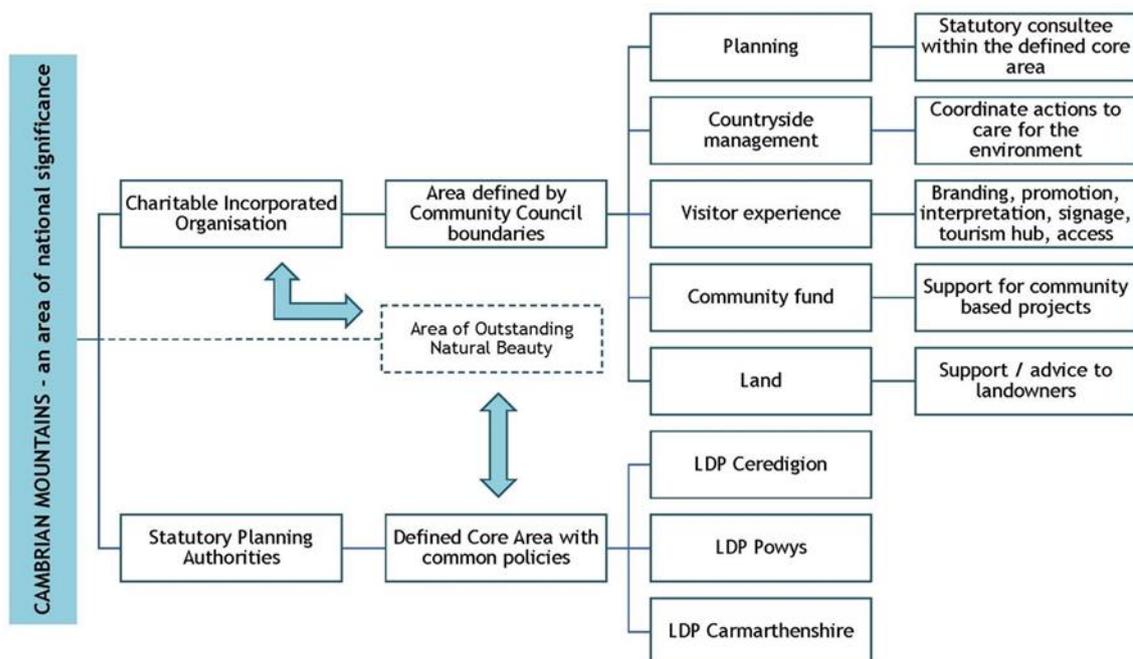
- Conserve and enhance natural capital
- Mitigate climate effects on the surrounding settlements
- Develop strategic land management planning
- Develop consistent land use policies
- Present a high-quality landscape to visitors
- Build a strong sense of place
- Manage tourism / recreation for high reward and low impact

Governance

3.5. We wish to empower community direction through a significant partnership of interests operating as a Charitable Trust supported by focussed public sector actions. This reverses the more usual models where the public sector invites other interests to support its initiatives. But the management of statutory actions will require leadership by the public sector. The actions of the Trust and the public sector need to be in harmony.

3.6. For consultation purposes, we present a diagram that illustrates our points (Figure 2). There should be no presumption that this is the definitive model. Our intent is to help people clarify their own ideas.

Figure 2: Indicative structure



Building the definition

3.7. Both the Welsh Government, through Our Valleys, and the Cambrian Mountains Initiative find the French Regional Natural Park model to be effective and informative. However, this is a model dependent upon on a uniquely French

cultural and political approach, it cannot apply in Wales without new legislation. But it is possible to identify the elements we like and apply them to our Trust model. These elements are:

- Taking a bottom-up approach, with the boundary of the area agreed by the Community Councils.
 - Individual Community Councils deciding whether they wish to opt in or out of the model (the French model allows for 'holes' within it).
 - Community Councils and other stakeholders declaring, through a Charter signed by all those participating, to secure the purposes and objectives of the 'definition' (the French use a 'pledge' for all to sign).
 - Allowing a review of the Charter on a regular basis (say every 15 years) to allow for changed circumstances and new stakeholders, with the option of changing the boundary or ending the agreement.
- 3.8. For the Cambrian Mountains, it will not be a statutory designation imposed by Government but a declaration by communities of their pride in the area in which they live, work and relax. Nonetheless, the definition does require a Charter.
- 3.9. The French Regional Natural Parks have a formal role in the planning system. Our model leaves all the planning powers with the Welsh Government and the three county councils. But we do propose the coordinated management of development planning for the core area:
- One way of achieving this is for the three local authorities to agree common planning policies. This is dependent upon the review timetable of the three Local Development Plans.
 - Another way is for the three authorities to set up a single Joint Committee to consider development policies and decisions within the core area.
 - And the Trust should be a consultee on planning matters that affect the area, initially by local agreement but in time as a statutory consultee (this will be subject to approval by the Welsh Government).

Preparing a Charter

- 3.10. A Charter is an agreement to bring about a desired future. Within the Charter there must be a management strategy for the defined area and a commitment to deliver that strategy. Natural Resources Wales and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) present excellent guidance on how to prepare a management strategy (see Countryside Council for Wales 2007 & 2009 and Phillips A. 2002).

The management strategy contains:

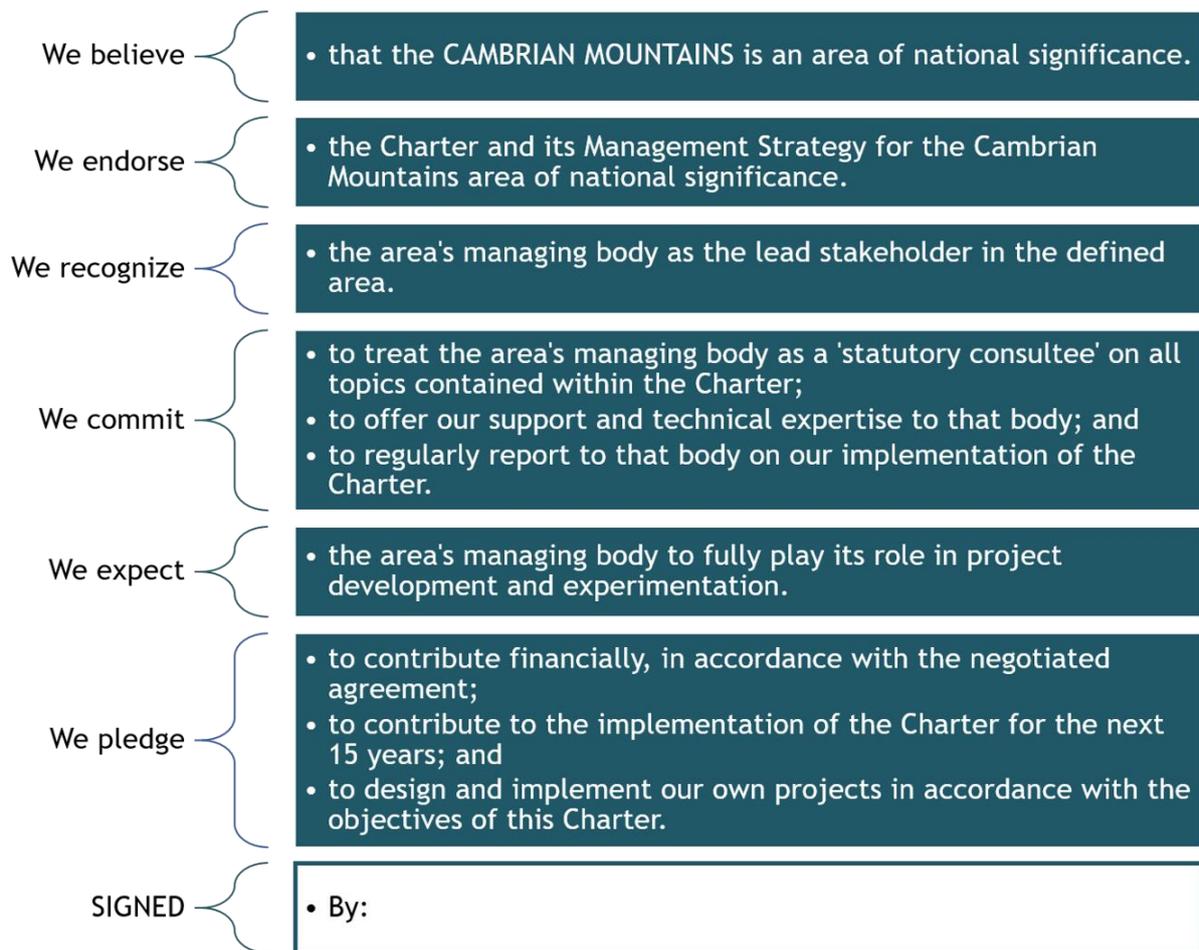
- A vision-statement
- A definition of the area's special qualities

- A statement of the condition of the area’s communities, economy and environment
- A statement of the forces for change and associated issues
- A set of strategies and policies for a set period (15 years?)
- A monitoring framework with indicators

The commitment to deliver contains:

- A pledge to deliver the management strategy (**see Figure 3**)
- A list of signatories
- A funding plan
- An action plan showing who does what

Figure 3: Draft ‘Pledge’ for the Cambrian Mountains



Purpose of the Definition

3.11. The purpose of a Regional Natural Park is to protect and promote the natural resources, human resources and cultural heritage by implementing an innovative and environmentally-friendly policy of land-use planning and economic, social and cultural development. For the Cambrian Mountains, this might translate into the following:

- To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area through innovative approaches to the sustainable management of natural assets and the countryside;
- To ensure consistent and sustainable spatial planning across the area;
- To support economic, social and cultural development to improve the quality of life, health and well-being of all people and communities;
- To raise awareness of the Cambrian Mountains as a distinct region of Wales and encourage the enjoyment of the area by the public;
- To enable innovative projects and research programs;
- To encourage the integration of projects, programmes and events carried out by the partners within the area.

Managing the definition

3.12. We propose a charitable trust to be the lead for the definition. We expect it to:

- Lead on identifying priorities and opportunities;
- Identify and take forward funding opportunities;
- Provide an integrating, enabling and facilitating function across boundaries and over long and medium terms;
- Promote the cultural and natural heritage of the area;
- Promote economic development in ways that support the purposes of the Cambrian Mountains area of national significance;
- Provide a web-based hub for disseminating and sharing information on projects and on community-led initiatives;
- Lead on brand guidelines, marketing for the Cambrian Mountains area of national significance;
- Lead on destination management planning; and
- Provide advice and support to landowners and managers.

3.13. Some charitable trusts can be complicated to establish but there is a new, relatively simple form of corporate body, a **Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)**.

- Early legal advice on drawing up the terms of reference is essential.
- You must register the CIO with and report to the Charity Commission.
- There is no requirement to register with Companies House. This means the reporting requirements are simpler for CIOs than for charitable companies.
- A CIO can enter into contracts, buy or lease property, and employ people.

- Any debts or obligations belong to the organisation, rather than to the individuals running it.
- Registration of a new CIO takes up to 40 days. You must use one of the two model constitutions approved by the Charity Commission², and apply online via their website to register your organisation³.

The two types of CIO are:

- Association Model (membership organisations with elections)
- Foundation Model (run by a small group of appointed trustees)

Vision for the definition

3.14. It is for the local communities to agree the vision for this definition:

- A vision statement is the anchor point for any strategic planning.
- It is an aspirational description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the long-term.
- It should be short, simple, specific to your activities, leave nothing open to interpretation, and it should have ambition.

3.15. Several organisations already promote a vision for the area (in whole or in part). Some examples are set out in **Appendix 1**.

The benefits delivered

3.16. The Cambrian Mountains is a valued place and, through the definition, it is possible to reach out beyond traditional audiences and engage a more diverse cross section of Welsh society. The definition can achieve the opportunities identified paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4.

3.17. Importantly, the definition can provide opportunities:

- The definition will deliver resilient environments by enhancing the value of nature and reversing the decline in biodiversity.
- Being community led, it will support resilient communities by creating local social and economic opportunities.
- A strong partnership is a catalyst for action and funding – collaboration will maximise the benefits and tackle the challenges facing one of the most deprived areas of Wales.

3.18. Furthermore, it can provide a focus:

- Creating the definition ensures a strategic look at the needs of the area across administrative and sectorial interests.

² [gov.uk/government/publications/setting-up-a-charity-model-governing-documents](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-up-a-charity-model-governing-documents)

³ [gov.uk/guidance/how-to-register-your-charity-cc21b#how-to-apply-to-register-a-charity](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-register-your-charity-cc21b#how-to-apply-to-register-a-charity)

- Creating the partnership will focus action and provide continuity.
 - Promoting the definition can attract businesses and investment; it secures an attractive place to live and work.
 - Formality commits the parties; it empowers a lead player/co-ordinator to focus on the area's needs.
- 3.19. However, creating a definition does not automatically result in a range of economic, social or environmental benefits. This depends on the willingness of parties to engage, on the energy and commitment of partners, and on adequate resourcing.

Achieving Welsh Government priorities

- 3.20. The Welsh Government has several national priorities that the definition will help to address. These include the seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015, the four headline natural resource opportunities associated with the Welsh Government's 2017 Natural Resources Policy 2017.
- 3.21. The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 puts in place seven well-being goals; to achieve them, the definition will:

A prosperous Wales

Increase capacity to develop small scale innovative enterprises.
 Optimise opportunities to generate payment for providing public goods; increases visitor interest in the area.
 Work with others to maximise the local economy;
 Promote quality products associated with the area to improve returns to producers.

A resilient Wales

Promote the natural resources of the area and their conservation.
 Promote partnerships to enhance ecological buffers and corridors.
 Co-ordinate and integrate efforts to protect biodiversity and to benefit from its sustainable management.

A healthier Wales

Work in partnership to promote the area for appropriate forms of exercise and recreation.
 Highlight the links between an attractive location, access to nature and mental and physical wellbeing.

A more equal Wales

Promote participation in achieving the vision.
 Provide opportunities for young people to work locally and to benefit from the opportunities that arise.

A Wales of cohesive communities

Secure economic security through optimising opportunities for increasing revenue.

Promote participation, a voice and the role of communities in contributing to management of the area.

Reinforce a sense of place and a shared identity.

A Wales of vibrant culture and Welsh language

Sustain the area's strong agricultural-based culture through education, interpretation and the promotion of local traditions.

Highlight the cultural contrasts across the area, including the linguistic tradition associated with the western side of the Cambrian Mountains.

Promote the gateway settlements as a focus for the arts and cultural events.

A globally responsible Wales

Promote the area as a model for the sustainable management of natural resources.

Manage land in a way that minimises its ecological footprint and greenhouse gas emission.

- 3.22. The Welsh Government's Natural Resources Policy identifies four headline opportunities associated with the natural resources; to achieve them, the definition will:

1 Supporting successful, sustainable communities

Develop local jobs for local people

Help for agricultural and forestry sectors

Promote sustainable tourism

2 Promoting green growth and innovation to create sustainable jobs

Explore nature-based solutions

Encourage renewable energy initiatives

Market local products

3 Supporting a more resource efficient economy

Ensure an integrated and regional approach

Seek new and sustainable use of local resources

Encourage research and innovation

4 Maintaining healthy, active and connected communities

Develop enhanced access and recreation facilities

Encourage community action and volunteering

Reasons to support the proposal

- 3.23. The Cambrian Mountains is an area of national significance; a bedrock of Welsh culture; a valuable source of social, economic and social capital; and a significant resource for addressing climate change and sustainable development.

Welsh Government

- To develop the potential of the area to deliver national priorities

- To develop a 'Made in Wales' model for sustainable / resilient development
- To achieve carbon reduction targets
- To achieve nature / biodiversity targets
- To secure the economic development of deep rural areas

Natural Resources Wales

- To promote a model for Natural Resource Management
- To create net gains for landscape quality and biodiversity
- To support and develop natural capital and land management priorities
- To develop the NRW Estate in the area for the benefit of the public

Local Authorities

- To foster the well-being of local people and communities
- To increase the profile of the area and its standing with the Welsh Government
- To secure inward investors and local business development
- To promote the area as a significant tourism destination
- To secure a consistent planning framework
- To present consistent access and rights of way programmes across the area
- To secure the efficiencies and savings through integration and partnerships

Community and Town Councils

- To strengthen the area's Welsh heritage
- To foster community activities
- To empower community activism
- To secure resources for local priorities

How to secure the proposal

Welsh Government

- Recognise the potential that the definition might provide
- Respond to the opportunity
- Consider the statutory context
- Provide support and advice to the trust

- Champion the concept and consider its application to other areas
- Support the three local authorities in bringing their policies for the area together
- Review in the light of the Welsh Valleys Regional Park proposal
- Provide funding to facilitate the process

Natural Resources Wales

- Recognise the opportunity to deliver on the Mid Wales Area Statement
- Establish the Cambrian Mountains as a pilot area for Natural Resource Management
- Provide advice and funding to the new body
- Commend the proposal as a testbed to the Welsh Government
- Consider the option of AONB status for the core

Local Authorities

- Coordinate planning policy, land management priorities and recreation
- Engage with the Welsh Government and NRW on the best approaches
- Bring together thematic authority working groups

Community and Town Councils

- Work with others to secure the ambitions of the definition
- Identify and support the key priorities of the Cambrian Mountains area of national significance

Cambrian Mountains Initiative

- Endorse this report
- Lobby the Welsh Government and NRW for a positive response
- Seek funds to develop the proposal further by broadening engagement/consultation
- At the appropriate time, bring together the relevant representatives in a series of workshops/briefings to work through the proposals
- Elicit political support
- Build alliances with community councils, NGOs and representative bodies
- Seek legal advice on creating a CIO
- Seek advice from other initiatives e.g. Pennine Prospects, landscape partnerships

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Appendices

Rhiannon

CANOLFAN CYNLLUN CREFFT CYMRU

CRAFT DESIGN CENTRE WALES



Appendix 1: Examples of vision statements

For the Cambrian Mountains

Cambrian Mountains Initiative

Self-sustaining, resilient and environmentally sustainable businesses and communities enjoying a high quality of life and proud of their place within the Cambrian Mountains. With a high quality environment adapted to the effects of climate change delivering vital ecosystem services of value to the nation. And a region that is nationally and internationally recognised as a distinct tourism destination and producer of high-quality foods and other products that reflect their mountain provenance.

Cambrian Mountains Society

The landscape is widely recognised as being of outstanding value, and is protected by national, European and international designations.

There is a community-inclusive strategic approach to development across the whole area, aimed at sustaining the unique landscape, environment, heritage, communities, and culture.

The special qualities and features of the area are well-managed, to ensure that the distinctive character of the area is maintained and where possible enhanced. The remote, open and extensive character of the core area of the Cambrian Mountains has been safeguarded. Action has been taken to ameliorate or reverse past damage, and to maximise biodiversity.

The communities of the Cambrian Mountains are economically viable and confident, and young people can see that there are worthwhile careers for them locally, and wish to stay and work after finishing school. Well-designed affordable housing is available, and local services and facilities are excellent. The Welsh language is widely used.

Farming and other land-based activities are valued for their contribution to sustaining the area's special qualities, and to the area's economic well-being.

Residents are proud of where they live, and of being able to help others to appreciate and enjoy the special qualities of the area. They strongly support measures which sustain the landscape, environment and archaeology of the Cambrian Mountains, and many gain their livelihoods from enterprises such as tourism which are founded on the reputation the area enjoys for its high-quality environment and landscape.

“Cambrian Mountains” is a distinctive and effective marketing brand for quality products, available both within and beyond the area.

Dyfi Biosphere

The Dyfi Biosphere will be recognised and respected internationally, nationally and locally for the diversity of its natural beauty, heritage and wildlife, and for its people's efforts to make a positive contribution to a more sustainable world. It will be a self-confident, healthy, caring and bilingual community, supported by a strong locally-based economy.

Pentir Pumlumon Vision – Upland Regeneration

The community vision for the Uplands area is to focus on the natural unspoilt landscape to attract visitors to the area, utilising the outdoor activities and heritage sites.

Elan Valley

To safeguard the unique and varied heritage of Elan while significantly enhancing outcomes for people, communities and heritage for the long term.

For the County Councils

Ceredigion County Council

From the Cambrian Mountains to Cardigan Bay, Ceredigion will remain a scenic and biodiversity rich county, committed to maintaining, enhancing and benefiting from its beautiful coastline, uplands and river valleys.

It will be home to a vibrant network of engaged and bilingual communities, both urban and rural, whose residents enjoy good health and wellbeing. These communities will celebrate their cultural heritage, and influence and embrace change to meet 21st Century challenges, including climate change. By supporting and enhancing the County's urban and rural service centres, their inter-relationship will be strengthened, the necessity to travel will be reduced and access to local and sustainable facilities will be enhanced and secured.

Through sustainable development and protection of its resources, Ceredigion will also be recognised for its enhanced environment and will provide and ensure appropriate and high -quality housing and a strong, diverse and progressive economy.

Carmarthenshire County Council

Carmarthenshire will be a prosperous and sustainable County of contrasts. It will have distinctive rural, urban and coastal communities, a unique culture, a high-quality environment and a vibrant and diverse economy.

The County will offer a high quality of life within safe, accessible and inclusive communities. Everyone will have access to good quality employment, a suitable mix of housing and to community and recreational facilities – all within a clean and green environment.

In spatial terms the County will be characterised by:

- Sustainable socially inclusive communities and efficient local economies centred upon the County's market towns and larger villages.
- Vibrant rural communities as living, working environments.
- A countryside that is valued and enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Powys County Council

Powys is a county of considerable variety extending from the South Wales Valleys to the Berwyn Mountains in the north, and from the Cambrian Mountains in the west to the English border in the east.

As the 'green heart of Wales', Powys will be a place of vibrant and resilient communities providing sustainable development and economic opportunities set in a healthy, safe environment, whilst celebrating, protecting, enhancing and sustainably managing its natural resources, native wildlife and habitats, heritage, outstanding landscapes and distinctive characteristics.

Powys' towns and larger villages will be vibrant and accessible service centres. They will be the focus for integrating housing, economic and service development to meet their own needs and those of their surrounding communities.

Powys' rural areas will be a working countryside of sustainable communities

supported by a thriving and diverse rural economy of small businesses.

Valleys Regional Park

The Valleys Regional Park vision is of a high quality, sustainable network of greenspace offering outstanding recreational opportunities which will change the image and perception of the Valleys for ever, improve the quality of life, health and wellbeing for local people, generate pride in their area, create an environment that stimulates inward investment and becomes an attractive destination for visitors.