



WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Annual Improvement Report

Snowdonia National Park Authority

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About the Auditor General for Wales

The Auditor General is independent of government and is appointed by Her Majesty the Queen. He leads the Wales Audit Office and is held accountable by the Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly for the Wales Audit Office's work.

The Auditor General is the external auditor of the Welsh Government and its sponsored and related public bodies, the Assembly Commission and National Health Service bodies in Wales. He also appoints the external auditors of Welsh local government bodies, including unitary authorities, police, probation, fire and rescue authorities, national parks and community councils. The Auditor General's appointed auditors are responsible for the annual audit of nearly £5.5 billion of funding that is passed by the Welsh Government to local government in the form of general and specific grants. Local government, in turn, raises a further £2.1 billion through council tax and business rates.

As well as carrying out financial audit, the Auditor General's role is to examine how public bodies manage and spend public money, including achieving value in the delivery of public services. The Wales Audit Office aims to make public money count, by promoting improvement, so that people in Wales benefit from accountable, well-managed public services that offer the best possible value for money. It is also committed to identifying and spreading good practice across the Welsh public sector.

This Annual Improvement Report has been prepared on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales by John Roberts under the direction of Jane Holownia.

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Summary report

- 1 Each year, the Auditor General must report on how well Welsh councils, fire and rescue authorities, and national parks are planning for improvement and delivering their services. Drawing on the work of the relevant Welsh inspectorates, as well as work undertaken on his behalf by the Wales Audit Office, this report presents a picture of improvement over the last year. The report covers the Authority's delivery and evaluation of services in relation to 2011-12, and its planning of improvement for 2012-13.
- 2 Overall the Auditor General has concluded that the Authority has made good progress in how it is managing and delivering improvement and has the potential to make significant advances in future years.
- 3 We found that, during 2011-12, the Authority delivered a range of activities to support improvement and established a number of useful baseline measures for aspects of its performance, although a more comprehensive self-assessment of improvement will not, however, be possible until 2012-13.
- 4 We also found that the Authority's ability to assess its progress has more strengths than weaknesses, although there is more the Authority can do to evaluate its governance arrangements.
- 5 Finally, the report sets out our views on how well the Authority is planning for, and making arrangements to support, improvement. We concluded that the Authority's plans for improvement for 2012-13 remain focused on the improvement objectives and measures of success first agreed in 2011-12 and, while improvements in the way it measures success are therefore limited, supporting arrangements should continue to progress.

Recommendations

- 6 We have not made any statutory recommendations in this report.

Detailed report

Introduction

- 7 Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure), the Auditor General must report each year on how well Welsh councils, fire and rescue authorities, and national parks are planning for improvement and delivering their services. **Appendix 1** provides more information about the Auditor General's powers and duties under the Measure. With help from other inspectorates where appropriate, we have brought together a picture of what each council or authority in Wales is trying to achieve and how it is going about it. This report also sets out the progress the Authority has made since the Auditor General published his last annual improvement report, drawing on the Authority's own self-assessment of its performance for 2011-12.
- 8 We do not undertake a comprehensive annual review of all Authority arrangements or services. The conclusions in this report are based on our cumulative and shared knowledge and the findings of prioritised work undertaken this year.
- 9 Given the wide range of services provided and the challenges facing the Authority, it would be unusual if we did not find things that can be improved. The Auditor General is able to:
- recommend to Ministers of the Welsh Government that they intervene in some way;
 - conduct a special inspection and publish the report with detailed recommendations;
 - make formal recommendations for improvement – if a formal recommendation is made the Authority must respond to that recommendation publicly within 30 days; and
 - make proposals for improvement – if we make proposals to the Authority, we would expect them to do something about them and we will follow up what happens.
- 10 We want to find out if this report gives you the information you need and whether it is easy to understand. You can let us know your views by e-mailing us at info@wao.gov.uk or writing to us at 24 Cathedral Road, Cardiff CF11 9LJ.

The Authority has made good progress in how it is managing and delivering improvement and has the potential to make significant advances in future years

During 2011-12, the Authority delivered a range of activities to support improvement and established a number of useful baseline measures for aspects of its performance, although a more comprehensive self-assessment of improvement will not, however, be possible until 2012-13

- 11 This section of the report looks at the Authority's performance in the period between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012. In this report, we have focused on those areas that the Authority had identified as improvement objectives under the Local Government Measure and on the available evidence that could demonstrate whether these objectives had been delivered.
- 12 In 2011-12, the Authority placed special emphasis on its performance management arrangements and their effectiveness. Some of the information was collected for the very first time during 2011-12 so comparisons with previous years were not possible. However, the results set a useful baseline against which to check progress in future years. Surveys carried out by the Authority produced the following results:

- over 88 per cent of the Authority's members considered the reports they received on progress on improvement objectives as being timely and effective;
- nearly 90 per cent of staff and members understood how what they do contributes to the delivery of the Authority's service priorities and improvement objectives; and
- over 73 per cent of staff agreed that they had opportunities to develop their skills.

- 13 These are encouraging results but the Authority accepts that there is more work to do. One area that the Authority reported as being less positive was that only just over 33 per cent of staff were very satisfied with the level of guidance and support they received from their line managers. However, an additional 53 per cent of staff were satisfied with this aspect. Nevertheless, the Authority plans to improve this situation by ensuring that line managers explain the Authority's performance management framework during annual staff appraisals. Given the delays encountered in delivering staff appraisals to all staff during 2011-12, it will be an important part of delivering improvement in this area to ensure that appraisals are carried out in a timely manner for all staff.

- 14 The Authority recognises the important role of modern technology in the delivery of its services and, in 2011-12, took steps to improve the experience for both staff and stakeholders when interacting with the Authority electronically. The Authority reviewed the way it carried out business transactions and put in place a programme for increasing the ability for payments to be made electronically. In recognising the difficulties for people in remote areas to have a credit card option for using the Authority's ticket machines, it successfully worked with others to extend broadband into one area of the Park.
- 15 Once again, the Authority tried to gauge the impact of this and other work in this area and to establish some baseline measurements. Of 126 respondents to a survey conducted by the Authority, 36 per cent thought the quality and range of electronically provided services were excellent and 49 per cent rated those services as good. Seventeen people reported technical problems. These are useful baseline figures which will allow the Authority to assess improvements in these areas over future years.
- 16 Although the number of unique visitors to the Authority's website increased during 2011-12 by nearly 59,000 to 392,000, the number of page views decreased by over 344,000 to nearly 1,616,000. This reduction is probably a result of the Authority's work on simplifying navigation around its website.
- 17 Planning continues to be a significant part of any National Park Authority's responsibilities and the Authority has an ongoing aim of resolving cases of unauthorised development more quickly. While there was a significant improvement in this area during 2010-11, the number of cases resolved within 12 weeks fell from 59 per cent to 53 per cent in 2011-12¹. The Authority puts this down primarily to staff absences within its compliance team. An additional compliance officer post has been approved and filled and staff are now up to full complement. A review of procedures undertaken in 2011-12 led to the development of software that can simplify the process of recording and monitoring compliance cases.
- 18 Planning decisions at all planning authorities sometimes give rise to a certain amount of controversy. Much of this can be because of insufficient understanding about why and how planning and enforcement decisions are taken. The Authority aimed to ensure that people had a better understanding of why and when enforcement action is taken and of the planning policies in its Local Development Plan. In 2011-12 the Authority established a baseline for these levels of understanding, sometimes after running specific workshops or training sessions, and the results are set out below in relation to the number of respondents:

¹ This placed the Authority as 16th out of the 23 planning authorities in Wales for 2011-12.

- 42.9 per cent of people who had dealings with planning enforcement had a good understanding of why and when enforcement action is taken;
 - 80 per cent of users of the planning service have a better understanding of planning policies;
 - 93 per cent of planning agents and community council members reported a better understanding of planning policies; and
 - 100 per cent of members reported an improved understanding of the work of the planning service.
- 19 The feedback from our own informal enquiries with some local planning agents and community councils was very positive about the work of the Authority and the value of the meetings organised by the Authority.
- 20 One of the outcomes of better understanding of planning issues should be a higher proportion of first time planning applications being completed correctly. The Authority's baseline figure, based on an analysis of first time applications during 2011-12, assessed this proportion as being just over 58 per cent during that period. Additional supplementary guidance produced by the Authority during 2011-12 is designed to help increase this proportion in future years, as is the web page specifically aimed at highlighting the Authority's planning service performance.
- 21 Continuing its focus on assessing the impact of some of its work on stakeholders, in 2011-12 the Authority tried to establish baseline figures for the level of understanding about what the Authority does and the special qualities of the Park amongst disabled people, people from minority ethnic groups and people from community first areas neighbouring the Park. Although we have expressed concerns to the Authority about the robustness and relevance of the raw data collected, 70 per cent of people from these groups who attended events organised by the Authority said that they had a good understanding of what the Authority does. Despite our reservations about this data, the following examples demonstrate the Authority's commitment to making access and enjoyment of the Park as inclusive as possible:
- establishing monthly walks for people who are visually impaired;
 - regularly organising walks and events for the Centre for Independent Living, based in Porthmadog and for the Hafal drop-in centre for people with severe mental health illness;
 - Organising Disability Equality Forum meetings twice a year; and
 - appointing a part time MOSAIC² officer.

² A project working with black and ethnic minority communities to introduce new people to the landscapes of national parks.

- 22 Although we only made limited contact with groups that would benefit from the type of activities listed above, the feedback we received was very positive.
- 23 The Authority's information centres are an important part of helping people enjoy and understand the Park. A survey carried out by the Authority in 2011-12, showed that over 72 per cent of visitors to their centres were very satisfied with the choice and quality of goods on offer, with the information available and with the standard of customer service. No complaints were received by the Authority about any aspect of its information centres. The total number of visitors to its information centres increased by over 5,500 to over 303,300, although the Aberdyfi and Beddgelert centres experienced a drop in visitor numbers. Not only did total visitor numbers increase but so did the average spend per visitor – from 40.8 pence in 2010-11 to 44.4 pence in 2011-12, an increase higher than would be expected as a result of inflation alone.

The Authority's ability to assess its progress has more strengths than weaknesses, although there is more the Authority can do to evaluate its governance arrangements

24 In November 2012 we wrote to the Authority's Chief Executive to advise him that the Authority had discharged its improvement reporting duties under the Measure and had acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance. We reached this conclusion because:

- the Authority published its *Annual Report and Improvement Plan for 2011-12* (Annual Report) in advance of the statutory deadline of 31 October 2012 in a format that was much clearer than in previous years about the extent to which the Authority had met its improvement objectives; and
- the Annual Report included performance indicators for a number of areas and, where appropriate and available, compared its performance with its performance in the previous year and with the performance of other national park authorities.

25 In that same letter we noted that the Authority's increasing focus on providing a balanced self assessment of the achievement of priorities risked being undermined by shortcomings in the data for some of the local performance indicators that it had developed.

26 The Authority's self evaluation of its performance in 2011-12 was more self critical about its progress and had a greater focus on the impact of its activities. The Authority responded positively to our earlier proposals for improvement concerning ways to improve its self assessment of progress towards achieving its objectives. For example, quarterly reports to the

Authority's Performance and Resources Committee are now structured around its improvement objectives for that year, rather than on reporting by service area. This helps to provide more effective scrutiny and monitoring of progress throughout the year. The Authority's Annual Report included a brief overall assessment of how successful it judged itself to have been in delivering each improvement objective. These overall assessments give citizens a clear understanding of the Authority's view of the significance of the more detailed information within the rest of the Annual Report. These assessments recognise where there has only been partial success and where there is more work to do.

27 However, although there had been regular reporting on performance to members, some of the local performance indicators used to inform the Authority's self-assessment were based on unreliable data. The Authority developed its own local performance indicators, with a view to collecting information which could better inform a self assessment of progress towards achieving its improvement priorities. Some of that information was collected for the first time during 2011-12 in order to act as baseline measures against which further progress could be measured.

28 We had concerns about two of the eight sample performance indicators that we looked at in detail. These concerns related to the validity of the method used to collect the data and to an error in interpreting and reporting the data. Both the performance indicators where we found problems were designed to provide evidence in relation to demonstrating progress towards achieving

the Authority's objective of improving understanding of what the Authority does and the special qualities of the Park.

29 Only a sample of performance indicators was audited as part of our work. While we have no significant concerns about the majority of those sampled, our findings with regard to others suggest that there are risks for the Authority in forming judgements based on performance indicators without carrying out its own checks on their validity.

30 While, in line with the requirements of the Measure, the Authority's improvement objectives are agreed annually, those adopted for 2011-12 were rolled over into 2012-13, with the performance indicators for 2011-12 forming baselines from which progress in 2012-13 could be measured. As such, and based on our findings, the Authority has tightened up its approach to collecting and reporting performance indicators. However the Authority acknowledges that any weaknesses inherent in any of the measures that formed a baseline for 2011-12 will need to be recognised when forming judgements on progress in 2012-13. The Authority also appreciates the need to take a more robust approach to developing local performance indicators in future years.

31 The production of an Annual Governance Statement is a relatively new requirement for local authorities. An effective Statement should evaluate the arrangements an authority has in place, not just describe them. In evaluating its arrangements, an Authority is much better placed to identify weaknesses and to take steps to make appropriate improvements. As with many other Statements produced by local authorities across Wales, the Authority reported limited evaluation. However, the officers and members we spoke to recognised that omission and, in response to their request, we subsequently made available to the Authority further information on how evaluation could be incorporated in future. Many of these pointers are currently being used to improve the Authority's Statement 2012-13 and we plan to deliver a workshop for all three National Park Authorities in the near future that can help support the production of more useful Statements in future years.

32 The auditor appointed by the Auditor General gave his opinion on the Authority's accounts on 27 September 2012 and based on this the Appointed Auditor's view is that the financial statements were generally satisfactory. [Appendix 3](#) gives more detail.

The Authority's plans for improvement for 2012-13 remain focused on the improvement objectives and measures of success first agreed in 2011-12 and, while improvements to the way it measures success are therefore limited, supporting arrangements should continue to progress

- 33 We also wrote to the Authority's Chief Executive in October 2012 to advise him of our views about the arrangements the Authority had put in place to secure improvements during 2012-13. Our opinion was that the Authority had discharged its improvement planning duties under the Measure and had acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance. In addition, based on, and limited to, work carried out up to August 2012, we believe that the Authority is likely to comply with the requirement to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement during the 2012-13 financial year.
- 34 We reached these conclusions for a number of reasons, including:
- the Authority's improvement objectives for 2012-13 were developed in the context of consultation with stakeholders that was at an appropriate level for a relatively small organisation and involved independent consultants, members and staff and were generally focused more on outcomes, rather than actions;
 - the Authority's improvement plan for 2012-13 uses a format that sets out how it proposes to achieve its objectives and how it will know whether it has succeeded and includes measures and targets, where appropriate, for its improvement objectives; and
 - the Authority has updated its corporate work programme, which sets out the day to day activities that staff will deliver throughout the year that are designed to achieve its 2012-13 improvement objectives.
- 35 The Authority's 2012-13 improvement objectives are a continuation of those it approved for 2011-12. The Authority reviewed its 2011-12 objectives in the context of the feedback it received from its consultation and concluded that the same improvement objectives should be adopted for 2012-13. The measures of success adopted for 2011-12 remain in place for 2012-13, and possibly beyond, allowing much of the information to provide a baseline from which to assess progress. However, in order to make such comparisons, the same data must be collected in the same way each year. This limits the Authority's ability to make improvements to the measures of success it uses to demonstrate progress.
- 36 The Authority has made progress in responding to some of the outstanding proposals for improvement we made. For example:
- there is much more clarity within the Authority's self assessment about the extent to which it has met its improvement objectives, rather than just assessing the success of the individual projects that supported their delivery;
 - the Authority's risk management arrangements now include service risks and a single individual is assigned to take responsibility for monitoring each identified risk;
 - an electronic services panel has been established to take forward implementation of the Authority's information and communications technology (ICT) strategy; and

- a commitment to include performance on the 'measures of success' set out in the Authority's Human Resources Strategy within its next annual report to members³.
- 37 The Authority has not yet considered whether or not to develop an Information Management strategy and an Information Centres strategy has not been prepared as planned. Other priorities and staff absences have meant that this will not now be drafted until the 2013-14 financial year. However a draft Snowdonia National Park Recreation Strategy covering the period 2012 to 2017 has been approved and will be subject to consultation before being finally approved.
- 38 Although quarterly reporting to the performance and resources committee on the Authority's corporate work plan is now structured around its improvement objectives, there is no overall assessment on the extent to which progress is being made towards achieving each improvement objective. However, the chief executive does have formal arrangements with directors to meet and discuss progress on objectives and, as recently as March 2013, presented a report to the Authority's Performance and Resources Committee outlining progress on 2012-13 improvement objectives and outcomes to date.
- 39 Local government elections held in May 2012, led to the election of seven new members out of the 18 members that make up the Authority. This represented a major change to the Authority's membership and, as well as requiring training input, the changes had the potential to significantly influence the direction of travel that the previous administration had set out. However, some of these new members had been members of the Authority in earlier years and some continuity was maintained with, for example, the re-appointment of the Chairs of the Authority and its Performance and Resources Committee.
- 40 To date, the Authority has not been subject to any major changes in terms of its planned approach to delivering improvement. Extensive training and induction has been provided to fully brief members on the Authority's arrangements and new members were generally content with the Authority's approach. Although turnout for the earlier sessions had been disappointing, with only about half of new members having attended induction training, the Authority now reports every six months on the attendance of members. Personal development interviews for members are also scheduled over the coming months.
- 41 The Authority attempted to measure the quality of its Welsh language service by conducting a public opinion survey of the implementation of the Welsh language scheme, but it received a very low response. Therefore, the Welsh Language Commissioner recommended that the survey should be conducted again while taking action to draw it to users' attention. The Authority conducted an impact assessment, including the Welsh language, on every new or revised policy adopted during the year. The Authority has succeeded in appointing Welsh speakers to all frontline jobs, and the contracts established during the year complied with the requirements of the language scheme.

³ Scheduled to be reported to the Authority's Performance and Resources Committee in July 2013.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Status of this report

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) requires the Auditor General to undertake an annual improvement assessment, and to publish an annual improvement report, for each improvement authority in Wales. This requirement covers local councils, national parks, and fire and rescue authorities.

This report has been produced by the Wales Audit Office on behalf of the Auditor General to discharge his duties under section 24 of the Measure. The report also discharges his duties under section 19 to issue a report certifying that he has carried out an improvement assessment under section 18 and stating whether, as a result of his improvement plan audit under section 17, he believes that the authority has discharged its improvement planning duties under section 15.

Improvement authorities are under a general duty to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of [their] functions'. Improvement authorities are defined as local councils, national parks, and fire and rescue authorities.

The annual improvement assessment is the main piece of work that enables the Auditor General to fulfil his duties. The improvement assessment is informed by a forward-looking assessment of an authority's likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. It also includes a retrospective assessment of whether an authority has achieved its planned improvements in order to inform a view as to the authority's track record of improvement. This report also summarises the Auditor General's conclusions on the authority's self-assessment of its performance.

The Auditor General may also in some circumstances carry out special inspections (under section 21), which will be reported to the relevant authorities and Ministers, and which he may publish (under section 22). This published Annual Improvement Report summarises audit and assessment reports including any special inspections (under section 24).

An important ancillary activity for the Wales Audit Office is the co-ordination of assessment and regulatory work (required by section 23), which takes into consideration the overall programme of work of all relevant regulators at an improvement authority. The Auditor General may also take account of information shared by relevant regulators (under section 33) in his assessments.

Appendix 2

Useful information about Snowdonia National Park and the Authority

The Snowdonia National Park Authority

The Authority spends approximately £7.3 million per year (2012-13). This equates to about £284 per resident. In the same year, the Authority also spent £1.5 million on capital items.

The Authority is made up of 18 members. Twelve are elected members appointed by local councils that fall either fully or partly within the Authority's area and six appointees are made by the Welsh Government. These members make decisions about priorities and use of resources.

The make-up of the Authority is as follows:

- Nine appointed by Gwynedd Council
- Three appointed by Conwy County Borough Council
- Six appointed by the Welsh Government

The Authority's Chief Executive is Aneurin Phillips. Iwan Jones is the Director of Corporate Services. Aled Sturkey is the Director of Planning and Cultural Heritage and the Director of Land Management is Emyr Williams.

For more information see the Authority's own website at www.eryri-npa.gov.uk or contact the Authority at Snowdonia National Park Authority, National Park Office, Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd LL48 6LF.

Appendix 3

Appointed Auditor's Annual Audit Letter

Mr A Phillips
Chief Executive
Snowdonia National Park Authority
National Park Office
Penrhyndeudraeth
Gwynedd
LL48 6LF

Dear Mr Phillips

Annual Audit Letter

This letter summarises the key messages arising from my statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 as the Appointed Auditor and my reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice.

The Parks Authority complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and its use of resources

It is the Authority's responsibility to:

- put systems of internal control in place to ensure the regularity and lawfulness of transactions and to ensure that its assets are secure;
- maintain proper accounting records;
- prepare a Statement of Accounts in accordance with relevant requirements; and
- establish and keep under review appropriate arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 requires me to:

- provide an audit opinion on the accounting statements;
- review the Authority's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources; and
- issue a certificate confirming that I have completed the audit of the accounts.

Authorities in Wales prepare their accounting statements in accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. This Code is based on International Financial Reporting Standards.

I issued an unqualified audit opinion on 27 September 2012 on the accounting statements confirming that they presented a true and fair view of the Authority's financial position and transactions. My report is contained within the Statement of Accounts. The key matters arising from the accounts audit were reported to members at the Full Authority meeting on the 26 September 2012 in my Audit of Financial Statements (ISA260) report. The Main issues arising were as follows:

- There were no 'uncorrected misstatements' and only a small number of 'corrected misstatements' ranging in value from £7,730 to £185,340.
- I highlighted some concerns about the qualitative aspects of your accounting practices and financial reporting. Whilst working papers provided for audit were comprehensive and to a high standard, there were a significant number of amendments made to the accounts during the audit which resulted in many adjustments to values and supporting notes. As a result we needed to spend additional time in agreeing and reconciling these amendments. In our view, there is scope to improve this for future years.
- We received information in a timely and helpful manner and were not restricted in our work. The effective working arrangements previously established with finance staff have continued for this year.

I issued a certificate confirming that the audit of the accounts has been completed on 27 September 2012. During the course of the year there have been no formal challenge or objection issues that I have had to deal with. The final fee will be in line with that set out in my Annual Audit Outline.

My consideration of the Authority's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness has been based on the audit work undertaken on the accounts as well as placing reliance on the work completed as part of the Improvement Assessment under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. Overall, I am satisfied that the Authority has appropriate arrangements in place. The Auditor General will highlight areas where the effectiveness of these arrangements has yet to be demonstrated or where improvements could be made when he publishes his Annual Improvement Report.

I would like to express my appreciation to all the Authority staff that have assisted with the completion of my audit.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Barrett
Appointed Auditor

26 November 2012

Local electors and others have a right to look at the Authority's accounts. When the Authority has finalised its accounts for the previous financial year, usually around June or July, it must advertise that they are available for people to look at. You can get copies of the accounts from the Authority; you can also inspect all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating to them for 20 working days after they are made available. You can ask the auditor questions about the accounts for the year that they are auditing. For example, you can simply tell the auditor if you think that something is wrong with the accounts or about waste and inefficiency in the way the Authority runs its services. For more information see the Wales Audit Office leaflet, *Council accounts: your rights*, on our website at www.wao.gov.uk or by writing to us at the address on the back of this report.

Appendix 4

Snowdonia National Park Authority's improvement objectives and self-assessment

The Authority's improvement objectives

The Authority is required by the Welsh Government to make plans to improve its functions and the services it provides. Each year it must publish these plans along with specific 'improvement objectives' that set out the key things that the Authority intends to do to improve. The Authority must do this as soon as possible after 1 April each year.

The Authority published its improvement objectives for 2012-13 in its *Business and Improvement Plan 2012/13* which can be found on the Authority website at www.eryri-npa.gov.uk. They are:

Improvement Objectives for 2011-12 and 2012-13
People will have a better understanding of why and when enforcement action is taken.
Cases of alleged unauthorised development will take less time to be resolved.
Community councils and our key stakeholders will have a better understanding of what the Authority does and the special qualities of the Park.
The performance management arrangements will be more effective to ensure we maintain service standards during a period of diminishing resources.
Staff and members will have a better understanding of how their work contributes to the delivery of the Authority's service priorities and improvement objectives.
Most visitors to the Information Centres will be very satisfied with what the centres offer in terms of choice and quality of goods, information and customer service.
The range and type of services available electronically is in line with the needs of the public.
More users of the electronic service will be very satisfied with their experience.
People will have a better understanding of the planning policies in the Local Development Plan.

The Authority's self-assessment of performance

The Authority's self-assessment of its performance during 2011-12 can be found at www.eryri-npa.gov.uk/park-authority/publications/corporate and is called the *Annual Report and Improvement Plan for 2011/12*.

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