



## ANGLESEY: A SENSE OF PLACE

October 2018

With a foreword by Coun. Llinos Medi, Council Leader and endorsed by Anglesey County Council's Executive.

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## Context

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This report has been prepared to inform the Isle of Anglesey County Council's (the "Council") consideration of applications being made by Horizon Nuclear Power Limited and National Grid Electricity Transmission plc for Development Consent Orders ("DCO") for development proposals on the Isle of Anglesey. In particular, it has been prepared to inform considerations of the likely impacts of those DCO proposals on the well-being of Anglesey residents and that of visitors to the Island.

As part of the DCO process, the Council will submit Local Impact Reports to the Planning Inspectorate to inform its consideration of the DCO applications. Those Local Impact Reports will provide a detailed technical assessment of the schemes' likely impacts on the Island. This report adopts a more qualitative, approach to the Island's sense of place to inform those assessments, and others.

The report sets out what makes Anglesey such a unique and special place to live, work and visit in the views of:-

- our communities - expressed through community consultation and well-being assessments (undertaken in 2017 as part of developing the Well-being Plan required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015), and also by groups representing young people;
- our civic leaders; and
- visitors to the Island (through various visitor surveys).

A foreword to the report has been prepared by the Council Leader, CllrLlinos Medi. The report has also been endorsed by the Council's Executive on the 22nd October, 2018 as representing their collective, corporate view on what gives Anglesey its unique character and special sense of place. (The Executive is a group of 10 elected members, comprising of the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader and other elected members who have been appointed by the Leader to hold responsibility for all of the Council's various specific service delivery areas).

# Foreword



**Llinos Medi**  
Leader of the Isle of  
Anglesey  
County Council

Anglesey truly is unique. It is also a very special place to live, work and visit. To be able to live, work and raise my children in such an area and such an environment is an honour and a pleasure.

First and foremost – Anglesey is an Island. It has strong, clear, finite, natural boundaries - and those boundaries define and unite centuries of unique history, community, culture and tradition. It is an Island which instils a deep sense of pride, of place and of belonging in its people. It is also somewhere that visitors come to that, to them, is very special – it is 'off the mainland' – it is different in ways that can be difficult to define.

Our Welsh language, culture and heritage are of paramount importance. More than three-quarters of our children and more than half the adults living on Anglesey can speak Welsh. Anglesey remains one of the strongholds of the Welsh language. The Welsh language is a natural element of everyday life, of social cohesion and of well-being on the Island. Safeguarding and enhancing the language is, therefore, of the highest priority.

Alongside our language, culture and very strong sense of community spirit, our natural environment is second to none. Areas displaying spectacular coastal and rural vistas, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty circling most of our coastline, alongside the stretches of Heritage Coast, support habitats for wildlife which are of national and international significance. Tranquil, rural landscapes have been carved out by centuries of agriculture – farming families, making the most of the Island's precious natural resources, having tended the same land for many generations.

All of these come together to create a very special place to live, work and visit where well-being and quality of life is at its very highest. As a result, Anglesey was ranked 1st in Wales for 'overall life satisfaction' in a recent Annual Population Survey undertaken by the Office for National Statistics along with being one of the 'happiest' and 'safest' places in Wales.

Given the above, the Island and its communities have a lot at stake and much to lose if change is not properly managed and controlled. Whilst welcoming investment, development on the Island cannot, therefore, come at any cost.

Our Corporate Plan for the period 2017 to 2022 recognises this and its key ambition is to work 'towards an Anglesey that is healthy, thriving and prosperous'. Through our Corporate Plan we are striving 'to create the conditions where everyone can achieve their long-term potential' and 'communities can cope effectively with change and development whilst protecting what is unique and special about the Island'.

But Anglesey is also very outward looking, always ready to seize opportunities to improve the economic prospects of its inhabitants and help to keep our young people living and working locally within their communities. For very many years, Anglesey has been known as 'Gwlad y Medra' – the 'Land of I Can', open to change and ready to make the most of opportunities which have come its way.

The Council is committed to working proactively, supportively and in partnership with any developer who can help in delivering the 'healthy, thriving and prosperous Island' which the Council Corporate Plan seeks to secure. In so doing, however, there must be a presumption that the Island's very unique character and very special sense of place is offered the respect it truly deserves.

# I. Introduction - Anglesey: A unique and special place



*“Anglesey is an Island... Its history is an Island history, it is the history of the sea around it and the influence that this has had on its inhabitants over the centuries. Its natural beauty, its culture and its heritage has great value. Communities with a vibrant and lively Welsh language. Seafaring and agricultural communities with a long and lively history.”*

(Cllr Margaret M Roberts, Lligwy Ward)



*“One of only two Counties in the whole of the world where the majority of the population use the Welsh language.”*

(Cllr Vaughan Hughes, Lligwy Ward)



- 1.1 Ynys Môn, or Anglesey to give it its anglicised, Viking name, is internationally significant for its geology, archaeology, history, wildlife and its living, cultural landscape. The Island is treasured for the significant role it has played in the spiritual, political and industrial life of the Wales throughout history – from prehistory to the present day.
- 1.2 First and foremost – Anglesey is an Island – it is the Isle of Anglesey. It has strong, clear, finite, irrefutable natural boundaries - and those boundaries define and unite centuries of very special, unique history, community, culture and tradition. It is an Island which instils a huge sense of pride, of place and of belonging in its people. It is also somewhere that visitors come to that, to them, is very special – it is 'off the mainland' – it is different in ways that can be difficult to define.
- 1.3 Apart from the obvious fact that Anglesey is physically set apart from mainland Wales, it is considered by those who live here or who visit to have a particular beauty and tranquillity which makes it different to anywhere else in the UK. For hundreds of years, these special qualities have attracted and inspired artists, musicians and writers. Some of these, like Sir Kyffin Williams KBE, RA and Charles Frederick Tunnicliffe, OBE, RA have achieved international renown spending their working lives living and painting on Anglesey. These and others like them have inspired later generations. Tunnicliffe's work, for example, drawn on Anglesey and once appearing on Brook Bond Picture Cards, inspired TV presenter Chris Packham as a child, according to his 2016 autobiography, 'Fingers in the Sparkle Jar', to a career as a naturalist. Many others have made huge contributions to the creative community of the Island which remains extremely vibrant today. Sir John Betjeman's poem, "A Bay in Anglesey" sums up some of the Island's most special and distinctive qualities:

The sleepy sound of a tea-time tide  
Slaps at the rocks the sun has dried

Too lazy, almost, to sink and lift  
Round low peninsulas pink with thrift.

The water, enlarging shells and sand,  
Grows greener emerald out from land

And brown over shadowy shelves below  
The waving forests of seaweed show.

Here at my feet in the short cliff grass  
Are shells, dried bladderwrack, broken glass

Pale blue squills and yellow rock roses.  
The next low ridge that we climb discloses

One more field for the sheep to graze  
While, scarcely seen on this hottest of days,

Far to the eastward over there,  
Snowdon rises in pearl-grey air.

Multiple lark-song, whispering bents,  
The thomy, turf-y and salty scents

And filling in, brimming in sparkling and free  
The sweet susurration of incoming sea.

1.4 Anglesey's gently undulating landscape, with spectacular beaches, coastal scenery and dark-skies, makes the Island a hugely popular tourism destination. The Island is multi-faceted so that as well as being a haven for recreational walkers, bird watchers and history and water-sports enthusiasts it also attracts those who relish the opportunity to relax in the peace and quiet that is in abundance here. Its natural, cultural and historic assets now underpin a still growing tourism industry currently worth over £300million annually to the Island's economy<sup>1</sup>.

1.5 From its traditional agricultural base, being known as 'Môn Mam Cymru' ('Anglesey Mother of Wales') during the Middle Ages - its fertile fields formed a 'breadbasket', considered capable of providing sufficient food to feed the whole of Wales. Môn Mam Cymru can be seen on welcoming signs when arriving onto the Island (Fig 1), and is very much an integral part of the Island's identity



Figure 1: Môn Mam Cymru sign at Menai Bridge

1.6 Agriculture continues to play a very significant part in the Island's economy and way of life. Anglesey retains, to this day, something of its reputation as a 'granary' for Wales being the base for a number of award winning food producers. A gastronomic tour of the Island should include Menai Oysters and Mussels, seasoned with Halen Môn (Anglesey Sea Salt - which has EU Protected Designation of Origin status, making it as important and regionally distinctive as Champagne, Parma ham or Cornish pasties), accompanied by fresh bread made from organic Llynnon Mill wholemeal flour and washed down with local Ty Croes wine. Perhaps most distinctive of all are Berffro Cakes, traditional biscuits taking their name from the royal Llys (or court), at Aberffraw. The probable origin of Berffro Cakes goes back to the 13th Century, linked to the pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostela and a Romanesque style church, reputedly built in Aberffraw, reflecting similar churches built along the Camino de Santiago pilgrim route.

1.7 There is hardly a cove or hilltop in Anglesey that does not have a story. It has been a sacred landscape for millennia - the sacred Isle of prehistoric shamans, Druids and early Christian saints. It has been the seat of great warrior princes and their courageous wives, the cauldron of witches, the blight of Rome, the wrecking place of great ships and the resting place of giantesses and ancient gods of the British Isles. They are all remembered in the names of fields, burial sites, lakes, woodland groves and rivers. One of the most notable is Bryn Celli Ddu (literally "the mound in the dark grove") - a late Neolithic burial chamber and a rare example of one which is aligned (like Stonehenge), to coincide with the rising sun on the summer solstice (Fig 2).



Figure 2: Bryn Celli Ddu

<sup>2</sup> *Liz Riley Jones, 2015. Hiraeth. A Mark – Marc. Troubador Publishing, 28.01.15. ISBN: 9781784621315il.*

1.8 Despite, but also partly because of all those who have come and gone, invaded, departed or stayed, Anglesey retains its own quiet and very special sense of place - its own Island serenity - its special light and brilliant sunsets. It remains a home to very many indigenous Welsh-speaking families (some who can trace their history back through many generations and across many centuries on this Island), as well as to newcomers who fall in love with the Island and never leave.

1.9 Adding to its uniqueness is the strong, resilient, local population, willing to make the most of opportunities that come their way. It was the home, in the 18th Century, of the largest copper mine in the world (Fig 3). The port of Holyhead (Fig 4) has seen over 200 years of internationally trading. From a generation of smelting of aluminium from Jamaica and Australia (in one of the UK's largest primary aluminium smelters), shipbuilding and aircraft assembly at Llanfaes to embracing the new Magnox nuclear power technology at Wylfa Head during the late 1960's / early 1970's, Anglesey has always been known and referred to as 'Gwlad y Medra'. To quote a passage from Liz Riley Jones's 2015 novel, *Hiraeth*<sup>2</sup>, (one of a trilogy inspired by the ancient Celtic texts of the Mabinogion, where the central character is compelled to spend time amid the Welsh speaking community on Anglesey) :-

"Alun held his glass high. "Gwlad y Medra," he called out, and his compatriots returned the toast with gusto.

"What does that mean?" Liz asked, intrigued.

"It's a toast to our homeland, to Ynys Môn. There's a saying about the people of the Island: that if ever asked, the answer is always Medra – I can".

"So the translation is – 'The Land of I Can'?"

"Yes, I suppose it is" Ceri agreed".

<sup>3</sup> *Wylfa Newydd Supplementary Planning Guidance Topic Paper 4: Economic Development. <http://www.anglesey.gov.uk/Journals/clyq/Top-ic-Paper-4-Economic-Development.pdf>*

1.10 As a result of the above, tourism is flourishing on the Island. Tourism and tourism related business account for a higher proportion of businesses on Anglesey than for North Wales or Wales as a whole<sup>3</sup>, emphasising the importance of tourism to the local economy. In recent years, the Island has also become an increasingly popular location for filming by the television and film industry.



Figure 3: Parys Mountain



Figure 4: The port of Holyhead

*“The port of Holyhead is a living entity which provides a livelihood for many people who, in return, give to it a lifetime of service”*

(Cllr John Arwel Roberts, Ynys Gybi)

## 2. Preserving Sense of Place: The Well-being of Anglesey's Future Generations

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- 2.1 Sense of place, as a concept, is long recognised. It has been defined in a number of different ways and can mean different things to different people. All, however, chime strongly with our view of our Island. To some, it is predominantly something physical - the geography and the built and natural environment of a place. To others, it is more about the perception, the emotion and the feeling of a place that is held by people - rather than being 'of the place' itself.
- 2.2 'Sense of place' and 'sense of identity' have, over the years, become interchangeable, with localities that have a strong sense of place being described as also having a strong identity – one that is deeply felt by inhabitants and visitors. Anglesey and its people undoubtedly feel that strong sense of shared identity going back over many centuries – further reinforced in many communities by the predominant and continued use of a shared language - Welsh.
- 2.3 Sense of place is also closely linked to human well-being. In their 2008 book 'Sense of Place - Health and Quality of Life', Lily DeMiglio and Alison Williams (in a chapter on 'A Sense of Place: A Sense of Wellbeing'), recognise that certain places also give us a "certain indefinable sense of well-being ... to which we want to return time and again". Sense of place has also been shown to influence emotional and physical health. Furthermore, it is not just something individual, but is also something that can be experienced by, and shared by groups. Additionally, it is not only experienced by residents of a place but also by visitors to an area. A clear and accepted link exists between safeguarding place and safeguarding well-being.
- 2.4 The safeguarding of both 'place' and the well-being of our future generations is a primary theme running through current Welsh Government policy and legislation. Clearly, therefore, the linkage between place and sense of place on the Island, and its protection and preservation for future generations, go hand-in-hand with meeting Welsh Government well-being goals and objectives. The Well-being Commissioner's office has published a framework for formally assessing major proposals in the context of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The remainder of this paper highlights some of the principal factors recognised as contributing to Anglesey's unique character and very special sense of place, particularly as they may relate to the well-being of our future generations.

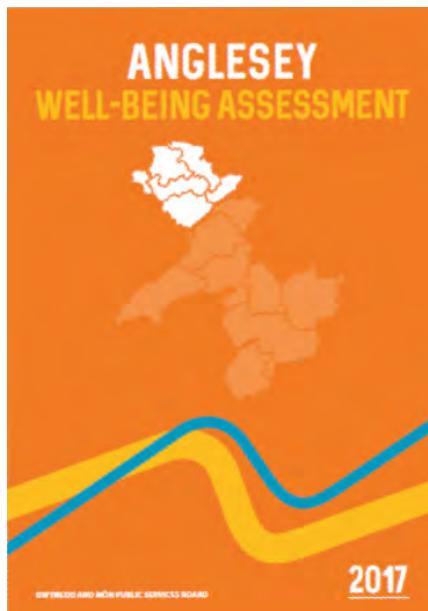
### 3. Defining Anglesey's Special and Unique Sense of Place

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.anglesey.gov.uk/business/energy-island/energy-island-news/new-nuclear-build-at-wylfa-supplementary-planning-guidance/123426.article>

- 3.1 Topic Papers in support of the Wylfa Newydd Supplementary Planning Guidance (2018)<sup>4</sup> provide a detailed technical and quantitative overview and definition of many of the important assets which contribute to Anglesey's special sense of place.
- 3.2 Alongside that technical baseline, this report also takes into account what, in the view of the Island's community, makes Anglesey:-
  - (i) a special place to live; and
  - (ii) contributes most to sense of well-being and quality of life on the Island.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 established a statutory Public Service Board (a Joint Board for Gwynedd and Môn), which is required to prepare and publish a Local Well-being Plan.

The Board must 'consult widely in the preparation of the plan' and this exercise, undertaken during 2017, yielded a substantial amount of up to date information, contemporary views and key messages from the community (summary below – detail in Appendix A).



#### WHAT MAKES YOUR AREA A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE?

- The natural environment including the beaches
- Community spirit and good neighbours
- Peace and quiet
- Local facilities
- Low crime rates and feeling safe

#### WHAT IMPROVES WELL-BEING IN YOUR AREA AND CONTRIBUTES TOWARDS YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE?

- Natural environment
- Community spirit
- Outdoor activities
- Family/ Friends/ Neighbours
- Peace and quiet

3.3 Young people whose views were sought reaffirmed and reiterated the above. Participants in Llais Ni (an initiative working with young people aged up to 25 aimed at developing 'participation'), and year 11 secondary school pupils highlighted the following:-

- a strong sense of community – knowing everyone and having your family close by;
- pride in living in a Welsh speaking community;
- tranquillity and the beauty of nature;
- great views, beautiful beaches and just living by the sea.

3.4 Given also the importance of sense of place to visitors, the results of various tourism studies undertaken on the Island<sup>5 6 7 8 9</sup> exploring principal reasons for visiting Anglesey align well with the views of the local population and provide an excellent insight into what elements of 'place' drive the local tourism economy.

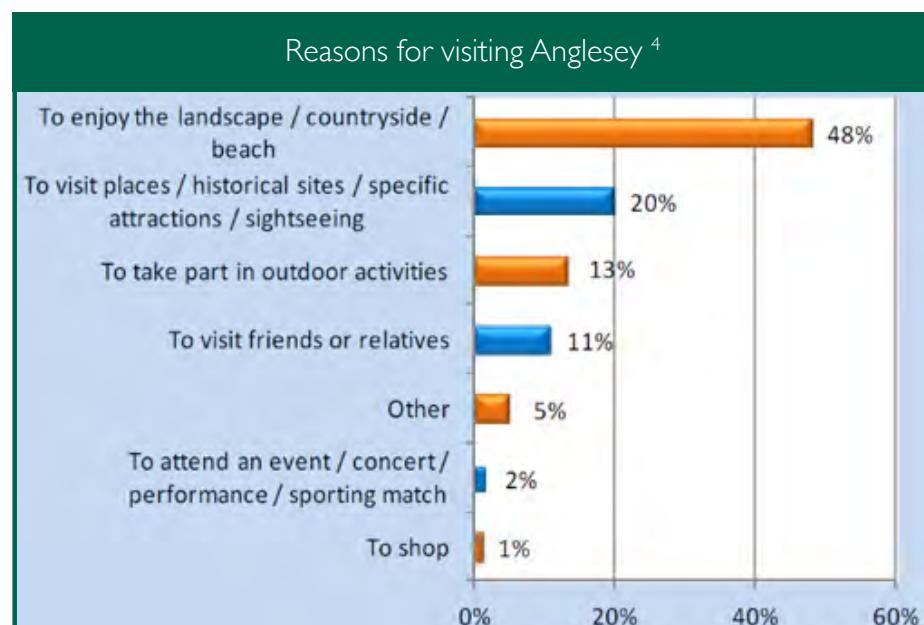
<sup>5</sup> Anglesey Visitor Survey 2012, Beaufort Research.

<sup>6</sup> Anglesey Visitor Perception Study 2013, Beaufort Research.

<sup>7</sup> Anglesey Visitor Survey 2013, Strategic Marketing

<sup>8</sup> Wales Visitor Survey 2016: Holyhead Ferry Terminal & Railway Station Report.

<sup>9</sup> Isle of Anglesey County Council Visitor Survey 2017, Strategic Research & Insight.





3.5 Finally, the views of the elected representatives of the people of Anglesey (our local politicians), on what makes the Island a special and unique place to the people they represent and serve are also presented within the remainder of this report.

3.6 Taking into account all of the above, there is clear convergence and alignment between:-

- the themes identified by the local community and its representatives as making Anglesey a unique and special place; and
- those highlighted by our visitors to the Island as their motivations for wanting to visit and stay on the Island.

These common themes, which are reviewed in greater detail in Section 4, are:-

- The Welsh Language
- Strong Communities
- Landscape
- The Natural Environment
- Rurality, Peace and Tranquillity
- The Coast
- History and Heritage
- Outdoor Activities

## 4. Emerging Common Themes

### 4.1 The Welsh Language

- 4.1.1 The Welsh language and culture is a golden thread which runs throughout society on Anglesey. It binds the strong sense of community and is inherently linked to history, defining the area and its inhabitants. Following the enactment of the Welsh Language Act 1993 Anglesey County Council adopted the principle of treating Welsh and English on the basis that they have equal status.
- 4.1.2 Anglesey is regarded as one of the strongholds of the Welsh language. It is a natural element of everyday life on the Island, our children are raised and schooled through the medium of Welsh and through the Welsh traditions and culture. The future and sustainability of the Welsh language on Anglesey is fuelled through ample educational, cultural and social opportunities to use the language daily, through the education system, language classes, various associations, organisations and clubs (IACC Welsh Language strategy 2016-21). The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 recognises the importance of sustaining this position and way of life with 'a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language' being one of the seven well-being goals – this being achieved within 'a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation'.
- 4.1.3 In 1951, some 76% of Anglesey's population were Welsh speakers (38,433 of a population of 50,600). In terms of absolute numbers, this has remained relatively constant (38,568 in 2011 - very slightly higher than 1951). By the 2011 Census, however, this represented only some 57.2% of the Island's population. Anglesey's Strategic Plan 2017-2020 aims to have 'every pupil who goes through Anglesey's education system completely bilingual by the time they reach 16 years of age', confident in speaking both languages in a work, a cultural and a social setting. Whilst the 2011 census showed that this 57.2% of people speaking Welsh is significantly higher than the national average (19%), it is declining more quickly than the national average. Nevertheless, Anglesey has the second highest rate of Welsh speakers of all counties in Wales.
- 4.1.4 The strength of the language is recognised by local people and visitors alike as being vital to Anglesey's unique and special sense of place.

**“The vibrant Welsh language and culture runs through our communities like a golden thread”**  
(Cllr Dylan Rees, Canolbarth Môn Ward)

**“The threat to our language is real....”**  
(Cllr Carwyn Elias Jones, Seiriol Ward)

**“The crowning glory is our Welsh language.”**  
(Cllr Vaughan Hughes, Lligwy Ward)

**“our language and cultural heritage all need to be protected and preserved for the benefit of future generations”**  
(Cllr Robin Williams, Aethwy Ward)

**“The language is the Island’s backbone - and must also be in any new development.”**  
(Cllr Carwyn Elias Jones, Seiriol Ward)

**“It’s vital that precious assets are protected.... strong Welsh speaking communities will come under threat if there is a large influx of non-Welsh speakers.”**  
(Cllr Dylan Rees, Canolbarth Môn Ward)

**“I don’t think I class Anglesey as North Wales.... it seems to be a bit further out and I don’t know why.... it’s more Welsh.”**  
(Visitor, Anglesey Visitor Perception Study, 2012)

**“One of only two Counties in the whole of the world where the majority of the population use the Welsh language.”**  
(Cllr Vaughan Hughes, Lligwy Ward)

**“We must protect the factors that make our Island unique – not just the natural beauty, but also our language and our culture.”**  
(Cllr Margaret M Roberts, Lligwy Ward)

<sup>10</sup> Isle of Anglesey  
County Council  
Welsh Language  
Strategy  
2016-2021  
<http://www.anglesey.gov.uk/journals/bt1r/Welsh-Language-Strategy-2016-2021.pdf>

4.1.5 Isle of Anglesey County Council continues to work diligently to meet its corporate goal<sup>10</sup> of increasing the proportion of Welsh speakers on the Island, back to the 60.1% enumerated in the 2001 Census, through its own direct actions and through working in partnership and in collaboration with other stakeholders.

## 4.2 Strong Communities

4.2.1 “Community spirit and good neighbours” was one of the key facets of Anglesey life deemed by respondents to the 2017 Wellbeing Assessment surveys as making the Island a special place to live – coming almost top of the list in all the 6 geographic focus group areas (Appendix A).

4.2.2 Strong community enterprises exist. The Iorwerth Arms in Bryngwran, for example, is run by villagers determined not to lose their community hub – run on a voluntary basis by the local community as a non-profit enterprise, it is now a valuable asset. Similarly, Caffi Siop Mechell is a successful community venture in Llanfechell which includes a café and a changing series of exhibitions by local artists.

4.2.3 The British Women’s Institute was founded on Anglesey, in Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, to revitalise rural communities and encourage women to become more involved in food production during WWI. Merched y Wawr, a national organisation in Wales, has 19 branches on Anglesey alone and was set up to support culture, education and the arts. It is a primarily Welsh organisation, for Welsh speakers and learners, providing women the chance to socialise monthly, build new skills and develop educationally through a variety of activities such as meetings, concerts, trips, cooking, crafts and quizzes.

4.2.4 Older people are also well supported on the Island with a network of Age Well centres playing a key part in promoting wellbeing and social gathering opportunities for those over 50 in an accessible community venue run by local volunteers.

  
“Our strong Welsh communities and traditions stretch back over the years.... which need to be sustained to support a strong and healthy community spirit”

(Cllr R Meirion Jones, Aethwy Ward)



  
“A healthy community spirit still exists here with ample evidence to be seen the length and breadth of the Island.... without a doubt, the Welsh language remains most important with community activities and events, community councils, school governing bodies all being conducted using the language.... in all communities, there are families who can trace their genealogy back for generations.”

(Cllr Gwilym O Jones, Llifon Ward)



“

*“It’s where I feel I belong”*

(Year 11 Pupil, Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones - Amlwch)

”

“

*“a warm welcome - a great place to be”*

(Visitor, Anglesey Visitor Survey, 2013)

”

“

*“there’s the Welsh welcome that awaits you.... be that into the bosom of Welsh speakers or non-welsh speakers, the welcome is always warm, genuine and heartfelt. The long established, strong Welsh speaking communities, some of which have families who have lived here for generations give the Island its own unique sound and vibe, one which cannot really be appreciated without being here and immersing oneself in the daily life of Ynys Môn”*

(Cllr Robin Williams, Aethwy Ward)

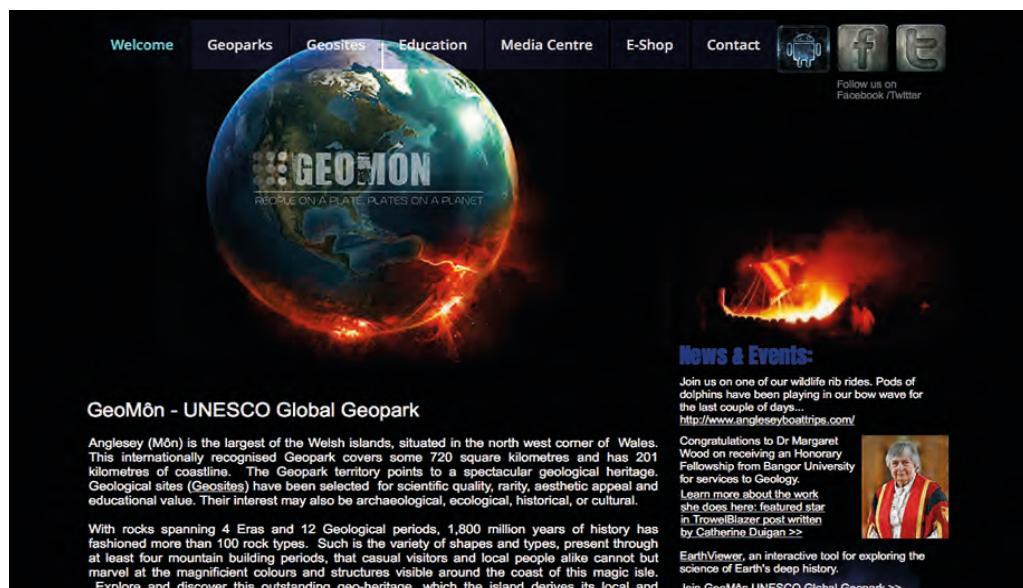
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### 4.3 Landscape

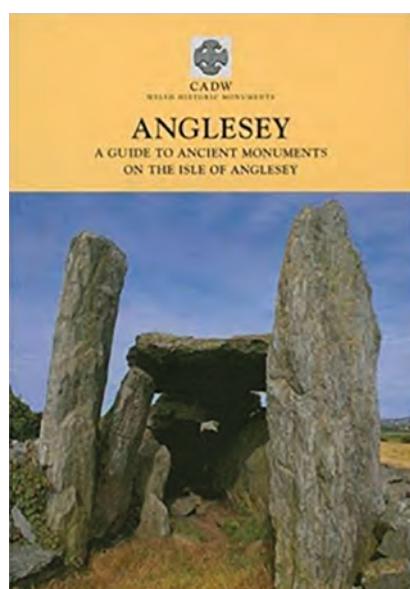
- 4.3.1 During the last Ice Age 20,000 years ago, glaciers from Snowdonia and the North of England flowed across Anglesey carving out two distinct valleys – one along what is now the Menai Straits; the other being the area of low land between Red Wharf Bay and Malltraeth. With the melting of the ice and rising sea level Anglesey was, by 5,000 years ago, an Island.
- 4.3.2 The earliest settlers arrived around 8,000 years ago to a landscape that was one of oak, elm, hazel and birch forest amongst which people hunted and gathered food. Early settlers built increasingly impressive ritual and burial structures, the landscape becoming (and remaining) dotted with standing stones, burial mounds and passage-tombs. Later settlers brought agricultural techniques and began to gradually cut down the forests and clear the land for farming.
- 4.3.3 As a result of the scouring by ice, the topography of the Island is generally subdued with a rolling, undulating pattern interspersed by harder, rocky outcrops such as Holy Island, Mynydd Parys, Mynydd Bodafon and Mynydd Llwydiarth. The landform falls east to west, with a number of low lying areas along the western coast including Aberffraw, Malltraeth Marsh and Newborough Warren. This landform pattern reflects the north east – south west alignment of the island's main rivers.

4.3.4 This general character belies a complex underlying geology. The Island contains some of the oldest rocks in Wales and Britain as a whole. The Island's geology has been, and is frequently, the subject of study by geologists and students the world over. Under the name GeoMôn<sup>11</sup> and in recognition of the Island's extraordinary geological heritage, the Island was awarded membership of the Global Geoparks Network in 2010.

<sup>11</sup> Screenshot – GeoMôn Website.  
<http://www.geomon.co.uk/>



4.3.5 Extensive tree cover is now generally scarce, although ancient semi-natural woodlands are still found along the Menai Strait, and extensive plantations can be found around Mynydd Llwydiarth and Newborough Warren. The landscape is very clearly influenced by the rich cultural history with evidence of man's actions extending over some 8,000 years.



4.3.6 There are over 200 Scheduled Ancient Monuments ranging from Bronze Age burial chambers to later medieval features. More recent landscape features include the planned landscapes of large estates, such as Plas Newydd, major transportation routes, industrial features including nuclear power and windfarms. The rich variation and quality in the coastal landscape is reflected in its designation of the Anglesey Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

4.3.7 The Isle of Anglesey Council Landscape Character Update, 2011, identifies 18 Landscape Character Areas across the Island, developed using former Countryside Council for Wales's national landscape character classification, LANDMAP. Significant proportions of each are rated being 'high' and / or 'outstanding' in terms of this national classification (photomontages giving a flavour of the Island's spectacular landscape, from across the Island Landscape Character Areas, are included in Appendix B). Two areas are listed in the Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales: Amlwch and Parys Mountain (already depicted in Fig 3) and Penmon (Figs 5 & 6 below).



Figure 5: Penmon headland



Figure 6: Penmon Priory

4.3.8 "Landscape" and "views of the coast and countryside" figured very prominently amongst answers given by Ynys Môn residents who responded to the question "what makes Anglesey a good place to live" in the studies and focus groups conducted for the 2017 Anglesey Wellbeing Assessments (see 3.2). Across the six local area assessments undertaken to underpin the County's Wellbeing Plan, landscape generally figured in the top two most important factors identified by the County's residents. It was regarded as important in both improving well-being and also in needing to be safeguarding and protecting.

4.3.9 Similarly for visitors to the Island, Beaufort Research reported in the 2012 'Anglesey Visitor Survey' that "the importance of the natural landscape as a motivator to visiting being by far the most-mentioned reason across the sample as a whole." Within this subgroup, 'scenery, countryside and visiting the beach' was mentioned by 88% of respondents. Strategic Marketing's 2013 Anglesey Visitor Survey provides the most comprehensive narrative with respect to why visitors come to the Island. Again, "landscape attributes are the number one reason" for visiting with four in every five respondent (79%), stating that their trip was "to enjoy the landscape / countryside / beach" – much higher than the all of Wales result (57%). Nearly all (90%) of UK staying visitors cited this as one of the principal reasons for their trip. This was reaffirmed in the 2017 'Isle of Anglesey County Council Visitor Survey' undertaken by Strategic Research & Insight stating that "as expected, Anglesey's major draw remains its natural environment – the views, the peace and quiet, and the beaches. This is consistent with other visitor surveys on Anglesey".

4.3.10 The landscape, scenery and countryside is invariably highlighted by visitors in every tourism survey undertaken, particular reference being made to the unspoilt nature of the environment and its quietness. To many, purely the fact that it is an Island has great meaning. To others, the strength of the language contributes to its unique character and very special sense of place.

 "I feel as if Anglesey's a place on its own... It's as if you're going to another area altogether.... It's distinctive from other places."  
(Female Visitor; Anglesey Visitor Perception Study, 2012) 

 "I think that you feel as if you're really getting away from it and crossing water is always exciting anyway, no matter what age you are."  
(Female Visitor; Anglesey Visitor Perception Study, 2012) 

**“That's part of the charm of it... because it's a little Island...  
I think it's because you've got to go over the bridge.”**  
(Female Visitor; Anglesey Visitor Perception Study, 2012)

**“Stunning scenery.... unspoilt areas.... friendly too”**  
(Visitor; Anglesey Visitor Survey, 2013)

**“Fantastic beaches, fantastic scenery, warm welcome -  
a great place to be”**  
(Visitor; Anglesey Visitor Survey, 2013)

4.3.11 From many places on Anglesey, The Snowdonia National Park forms a spectacular backdrop providing vast views and vistas which can be seen from many of the beaches and hills. (Some of the most spectacular, uninterrupted views of the Snowdonia National Park are, in fact, seen from vantage points on Anglesey - Figs 7 & 8).



Figure 7: Snowdonia from Beaumaris



Figure 8: Snowdonia from Llanfairpwllgwyngyll

4.3.12 From the perspective of our elected representatives also, landscape plays an important part in the identity of the Island – and safeguarding and protecting it for future generations is vital.

*“My late grandmother who was raised in Llanddona often spoke of the pleasure she and her brother would get from the spectacular landscape around them, playing in and learning about the Island’s Nature.... It is vital to protect the nature and the beauty of the Island for generations to come....”*

(Cllr Carwyn Elias Jones Seiriol Ward)

*“We are blessed to have such wonderful natural landscapes all around us on Ynys Môn. From the rugged coastline of the north, to the gentler sloping coastline further south, Ynys Môn offers a unique natural environment for residents and visitors alike. The landscape, the biodiversity of the Island, our areas of outstanding natural beauty, our language and cultural heritage all need to be protected and preserved for the benefit of future generations. After all, these are all crucial elements in what makes Ynys Môn so wonderful and unique in the first place”*

(Cllr Robin Williams, Aethwy Ward)

*“tourism plays a huge part in the island’s economy and visitors are attracted by the beautiful scenery.... Developments such as over-ground pylons across the island must be resisted as they will visually damage the landscape and significantly damage the tourist economy.”*

(Cllr Dylan Rees, Canolbarth Môn Ward)

<sup>12</sup> Natural Resources Wales 2014. National Landscape Character. Anglesey Coast.

<sup>13</sup> Natural Resources Wales 2014. National Landscape Character. Central Anglesey

4.3.13 To conclude, the visual and sensory significance of Anglesey’s landscape is very well and very aptly summarised in Natural Resources Wales (NRW’s), 2014 National Landscape Classification reports<sup>12 13</sup> which state that "the area’s strong identity comes from the varying expression of the relationship of the sea to the land, through cliffs, beaches, estuaries and coastal levels and dunes, lagoons and ports...The landscape is one of large skies, which often reinforce the exposed nature of the island as clouds scurry across....Views to the distant mountains of Eryri (Snowdonia) create a dramatic south eastern backdrop to much of Anglesey. Closer to, these mountains become more impressive and engaging, and when viewed across a foreground setting of the Menai Strait around Beaumaris, they engender a sense of scale and drama more commonly associated with the sea lochs of the west of Scotland....At the other end of the Strait, the extent of the dunes, beaches and Caernarfon bay provide a spectacular setting for views of the Llŷn peninsula, which from Ynys Llanddwyn, offer one of the most enduring and distinctive broad-scale vistas in Wales."

## 4.4 The Natural Environment

4.4.1 On Anglesey, it is possible to come across wildlife that is no longer commonplace on the mainland such as hares and red admiral butterflies. In recent years, Anglesey has successfully eradicated the grey squirrel population that drove out the native red squirrel. These smaller, rare squirrels have been reintroduced and are now thriving on the Island in, for example, the arboretum at Plas Newydd and at Newborough Warren Nature Reserve, although they are now found in any wooded part of the Island, particularly in the Dingle Nature Reserve in Llangefni. There cannot be many other towns in the UK where it is possible to walk after work and see red squirrels. (Fig 9).



Figure 9: Red squirrel at Dingle Nature Reserve Llangefni

4.4.2 Anglesey has an important and valuable natural environment. Sites of European importance are designated to conserve natural habitats and species of wildlife which are rare, endangered or vulnerable across the European Community as a whole. Anglesey hosts 8 European Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), 3 Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and 1 Ramsar site. Anglesey has 4 National Nature Reserves :-

- Cors Erddreiniog - the largest of the Anglesey fens;
- Cors Goch - one of several lowland fens on Anglesey;
- Cors Bodeilio - a unique mire, which lies in a shallow limestone valley; and
- Newborough Warren & Ynys Llanddwyn – an extensive sand dune system also containing important Precambrian geological features;

as well as 64 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). It has a number of 'Priority Habitats' including Lowland and Coastal Heath, Reed beds, Fens, Broadleaved Woodlands, Ancient and Species Rich Hedgerows, Ponds and Flower-rich Road Verges. Anglesey also has some of the most extensive Sand Dunes systems in Wales. Rare and protected species on Anglesey include the Great Crested Newt, Red Squirrel, Otter, Water Vole and Chough.

- 4.4.3 The Newborough Forest was planted between 1947 and 1965 to protect the village from wind-blown sand. It is an important area for wildlife, hosting one of the largest raven roosts in the world and is one of a restricted number of sites in the UK where colonies of red squirrels are found.
- 4.4.4 Llanddwyn, a magical island rich in heritage, which lies off the coast of Newborough beach, accessible by foot during low tide, provides much to see with its famous lighthouse and ancient church dedicated to the Welsh Saint Valentine, Dwynwen. This makes it an extremely popular spot for locals, tourists, photographers and artists.
- 4.4.5 The residents of Anglesey placed great weight on the importance of the natural environment in the Anglesey Well-being Assessment. It featured at the top of the lists of factors which 'made Anglesey a good place to live' and which 'contributed most to 'improving well-being in the area and contributing to quality of life'.
- 4.4.6 In the same way as the natural environment is valued by residents – visitors to the Island have, over the years, found it truly inspirational. On a recent BBC Radio 4 Tweet for the Day (March 2018), a veterinary surgeon from Cheshire recounted (transcript in Appendix C), how sighting a Peregrine falcon on the steps to South Stack Lighthouse, as a young primary school pupil visiting Anglesey, inspired him to a career in avian veterinary medicine. General comments made during various tourism surveys also highlight the value attributed to the Island's natural environment.

 “Natural beauty and not commercialised....”  
(Visitor, Anglesey Visitor Survey, 2012)  


 “Natural things, left as they are”  
(Visitor, Anglesey Visitor Survey, 2012)  


#### 4.4.7 Similarly for our local authority members

*The beauty of the natural environment around us makes Anglesey an attractive, peaceful and unique place to live, all encompassed by the coast and sea.... our natural environment is one of the main reasons for living on and visiting the Island”*  
(Cllr Carwyn Elias Jones, Seiriol Ward)

*“I first came to live on the island in 1984.... 34 years have given me a unique insight into this very special island. I choose the word “special” very carefully.... there are so many factors that make this island special.... the beautiful landscape, the unspoilt beaches and the tranquil woodlands..... the unique geology and the “Geopark” status.... the wonderful habitats for our wildlife e.g. the Red Squirrel Conservation Project and the tern colonies at Cemlyn”*  
(Cllr Dylan Rees, Canolbarth Môn Ward)

<sup>14</sup> Natural Byrne, R.J. 1996. (Published on 2007). *Field Boundaries in Anglesey. Landscape Research*, 21:2, 189-194

## 4.5 Rurality, Peace and Tranquillity

4.5.1 'Rurality' is a key feature in defining Anglesey's sense of place, particularly in central parts of the Island. Rurality and Anglesey's agricultural economy go hand in hand. Anglesey is predominantly an agricultural area and the results of centuries of farming, in very traditional ways, has led to a dispersed, rural population. The legacy of traditional agricultural practices, by generations of farming families, has resulted in the preservation of rural character with small, intimate field patterns and rocky outcrops being typical of rural Anglesey (Fig 10). Alongside these, undisturbed 'cloddiau', (traditional stone and earth hedgerows - some of the best examples of which are found on Anglesey<sup>14</sup>), are typical of Anglesey's rural character.

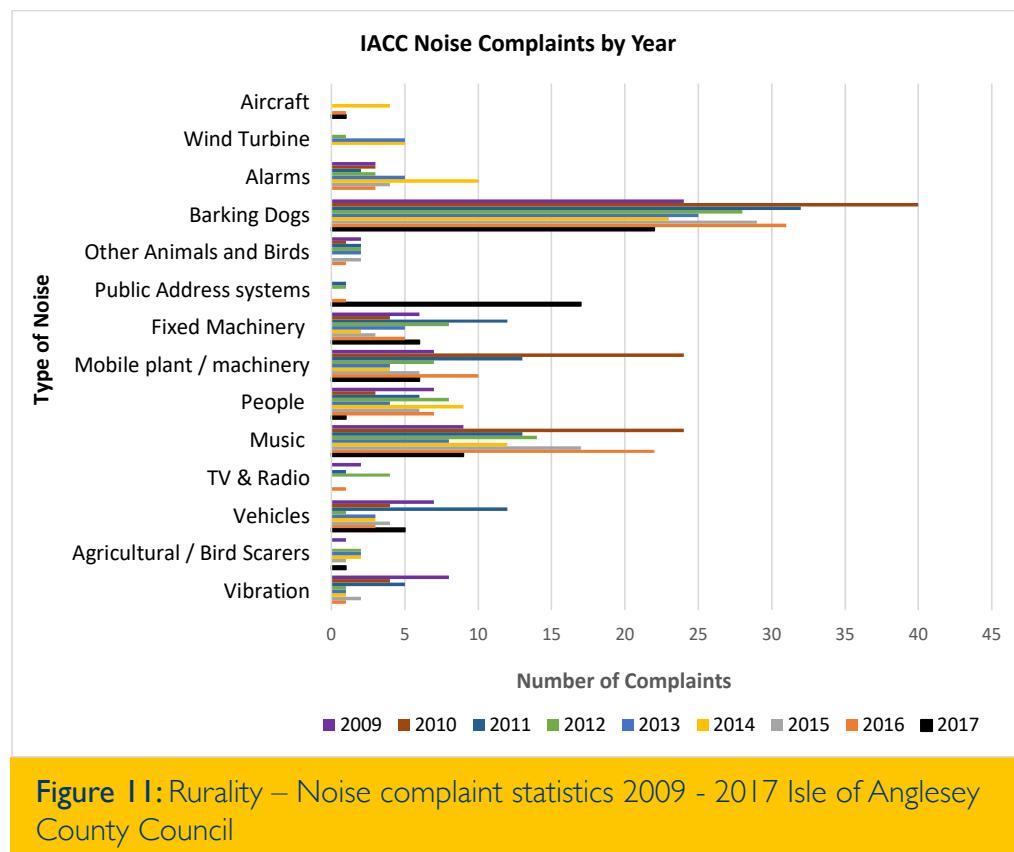


Figure 10: Rurality – Mynydd Bodafon – a typical vista across rural Anglesey

<sup>15</sup> Tranquillity: Welsh Government Definition. <https://gov.wales/topics/environment-countryside/epql/noiseandnuisance/environmentalnoise/tranquillity/?lang=en>

4.5.2 The Welsh government in 2012 <sup>15</sup>, defined tranquillity as “an untroubled state which is peaceful, calm and free from unwanted disturbances .... A state of mind or a particular environment.”

The importance attributed to peace, quiet and tranquillity is supported by the Islands noise complaint statistics for the period 2009 – 2017 (Fig 11). Complaints about noise from most sources are, year on year, often in low single figures. Anglesey really is a very peaceful, quiet and tranquil place!



**Figure 11:** Rurality – Noise complaint statistics 2009 - 2017 Isle of Anglesey County Council

<sup>16</sup> Police.UK Compare your Area: North Wales <https://www.police.uk/north-wales/YMW27/> performance/compare-your-area/

4.5.3 Crime rates on Anglesey per 1000 head of population (59 crimes)<sup>16</sup> for the year ending June 2018 are below the average for the North Wales Police force area (78 crimes) and the other five North Wales Counties.

4.5.4 The feeling of peace, quiet, tranquillity and of escaping the 'mainland' into rural Anglesey is shared by residents and visitors alike. 'Peace and quiet' was one of the headline reasons for Anglesey being a special place to live given by residents participating in the 2017 Well-being Assessment - it was also high up in their list of what contributed most to their well-being. The importance of the rurality and tranquillity is a sentiment also reflected by elected representatives and as one of the driving factors that bring visitors to the Island.

**“It’s beautiful, peaceful and largely unpolluted”**  
(Visitor, Anglesey Visitor Survey, 2013)

**“The rural landscape is unique.... and must be protected”**  
(Cllr Richard Dew, Llifon Ward)

**“Ynys Môn is a truly magical place to live, work and to nurture families. They say that living on an Island gives a person a different perspective on life and although we lie only a few hundred yards away from the mainland, I consider this to be as true about Ynys Môn as any other Island around the globe.... there’s that feeling that when you arrive here that you have “escaped” from the hustle and bustle of life on the mainland, to the peace and tranquillity of Ynys Môn.”**  
(Cllr Robin Williams, Aethwy Ward)

## 4.6 The Coast

4.6.1 The Island, connected to the mainland by two bridges, boasts one of the most varied coastal landscapes in the British Isles - from low cliffs with coves and pebble beaches to sheer limestone cliffs, sandy beaches and also stretches of sand dunes. In addition to the main Island, there are a number of other islands off the coast. The main port in Holyhead stands on Holy Island (joined to the mainland at two points, Four Mile Bridge and Stanley embankment), off which lies yet another smaller island, the home of the dramatic lighthouse at South Stack (Fig 12). Other Islands include, Llanddwyn Island (Fig 13 & 14), the Skerries, Ynys Moelfre, Ynys Seiriol, Ynys Cwyfan and Ynys Dulas.



Figure 12: South Stack



Figure 13: Llanddwyn Island



Figure 14 Llanddwyn Island and beach with views to Snowdonia beyond

4.6.2 This varied coastal area supports a broad diversity of flora and wildlife. Not surprising then that Anglesey boasts two RSPB Reserves. RSPB South Stack provides a protected lime habitat for choughs, guillemots, razorbills and puffins amongst others while RSPB Valley Wetlands is a great place to spot waterfowl and black-headed gulls, as well as beautiful spotted orchids and dazzling dragonflies.

4.6.3 The Anglesey AONB has a significant coastal element covering most of Anglesey's 201 kilometre (km) coastline with a total coverage of approximately 221 sq km (21,500 hectares). The designation reflects the variety of fine coastal landscapes. Varied habitats, from marine heaths to mud-flats, also gives the AONB a high level of marine, botanical and ornithological interest. The AONB coincides with stretches of Heritage Coast, designated to protect the areas of undeveloped coastline from development and also make them accessible to the public for recreation and enjoyment. The Anglesey coastline provides important nursery grounds for bass and flatfish species. There are important local populations of migratory salmonids. Sea fishing from beach and cliff is a popular pastime for locals and visitors alike.

4.6.4 With eleven Keep Wales Tidy 'Blue Flag' or 'Seaside Award' beaches, Anglesey's expansive sandy beaches are a mainstay of the summertime tourism economy.



*"The coastal areas are untouched - it's not touristy....  
it's like Cornwall fifty years ago"*  
(Visitor, Anglesey Visitor Survey, 2013)



*"Fantastic beaches, fantastic scenery, warm welcome -  
a great place to be"*  
(Visitor, Anglesey Visitor Survey, 2013)



### Keep Wales Tidy Blue Flag Anglesey:

- Beaumaris - Seaside Award
- Benllech - Beach Blue Flag
- Church Bay / Porth Swtan - Beach Blue Flag
- Llanddona - Beach Blue Flag
- Llanddwyn - Beach Blue Flag
- Porth Dafarch - Beach Blue Flag
- Porth Eilian - Seaside Award
- Silver Bay - Seaside Award
- St. David's Red Wharf Bay - Seaside Award
- Traeth Crigyll - Seaside Award
- Trearddur Bay - Beach Blue Flag

## 4.7 History and Heritage

4.7.1 As well as being the largest Island off the Welsh and English coasts, Anglesey is considered amongst the most sacred. Its 276 square miles have seen countless waves of peoples, technologies and beliefs, many leaving lasting marks upon the landscape. Alongside Orkney and the Salisbury Plain, it is one of the richest prehistoric landscapes anywhere in the United Kingdom, and is an archaeological treasure.

4.7.2 Settlers, from early Mesolithic hunter-gatherers to their later Neolithic descendants who began to farm here, found the Island fruitful. They began to create special places on the land, identifying them as perhaps special or holy. It was the early Neolithic farmers, who, gathering communities together, erected impressive burial chambers and formed earthworks in seemingly meaningful alignments to other monuments and natural landscape features. They have left important monuments that are of worldwide interest, including the archaeologically significant henge site at Castell Bryn Gwyn and the burial chambers of Bryn Celli Ddu and Barcโลdiad y Gawres to name but a few. 143 Scheduled Ancient Monuments are distributed across the Island<sup>17</sup> (Fig 15).

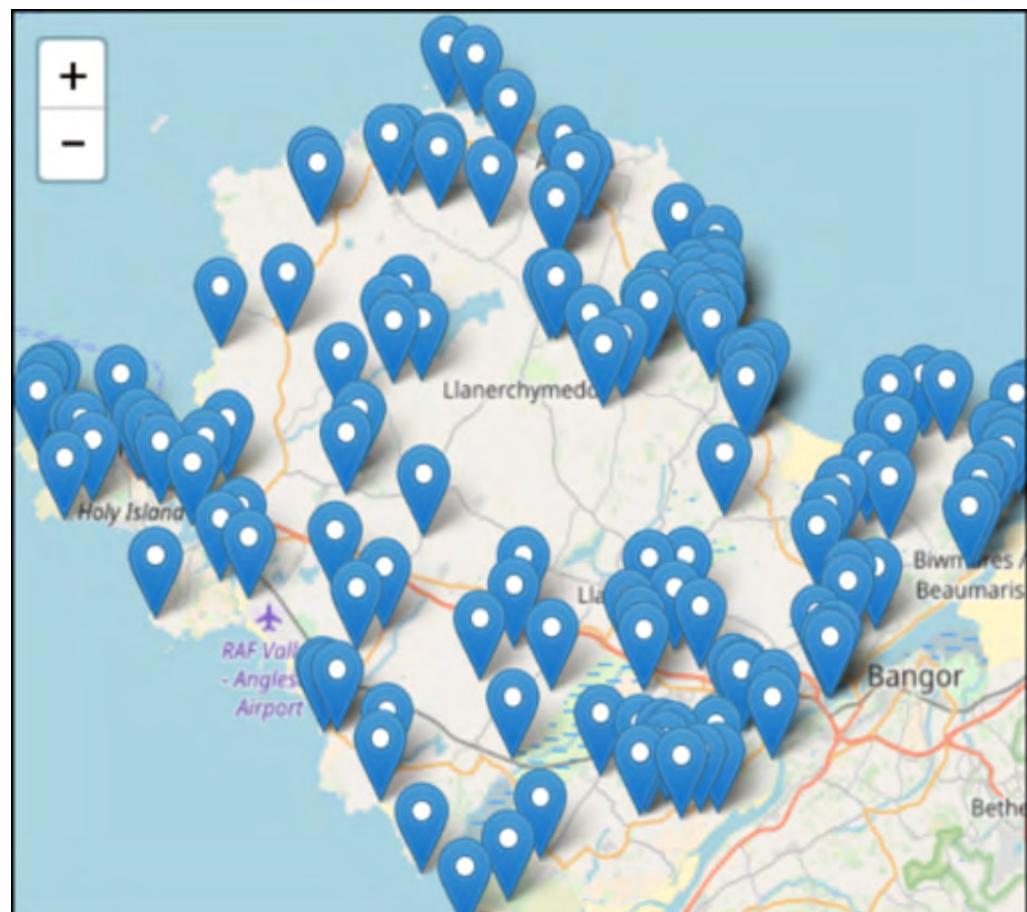


Figure 15: Distribution of Scheduled Ancient Monuments

4.7.3 Anglesey's built environment is also extremely well endowed with historic buildings stretching back across the centuries. A substantial stock of 1120 Listed Buildings and structures are again scattered across the Island (Fig 16<sup>18</sup>). 38 of these are designated as being of the highest importance (Grade I), 99 at Grade II\* and the remainder as Grade II. These cover a very wide range of types of structure, including bridges, walls, wells, vernacular cottages, large estate houses and farm buildings.

<sup>18</sup> Map Môn. Isle of Anglesey County Council Geographical Information System.



Figure 16: Distribution of Listed Buildings

4.7.4 Beaumaris Castle (Fig 17), which forms part of the World Heritage Site known as The Castles and Town Walls of King Edward I is, by many, regarded as the finest of all Edwardian castles in Wales. These were built for Edward I following his conquest of Wales and of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, 'Llywelyn the Last', Prince of Wales, and served as administrative centres as well as military sites. Siwan, the wife of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (or Llywelyn the Great), and the daughter of King John of England is buried at the Franciscan friary in Llanfaes. Beaumaris Castle was built between 1295 and 1330 as a near perfect concentric castle with four lines of defences and direct access to the sea. Beaumaris, the seaside town offers a mix of medieval, Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian architecture with views across the Menai Strait and Snowdonia. The Courthouse (celebrating its 400th anniversary in 2014), and the Gaol at Beaumaris provides an insight into the world of the prisoner during the 1800s.



Figure 17: Beaumaris Castle

4.7.5 As well as Beaumaris Castle, which is Grade I listed, the iconic Menai Suspension Bridge (Fig 18) also carries this highest grade of listing.



Figure 18: The Menai Suspension Bridge

4.7.6 The Island also has 12 Conservation Areas (most of which relate to the former extent of historic settlements or ports), 143 Scheduled Ancient Monuments include 89 prehistoric funerary sites settlement and defesive sites, chambered tombs and cairns, henge monuments, individual standing stones, hillforts and hut circles, monastic sites, churches and chapels, cemeteries, holy wells and crosses. Linked to its agricultural past as Môn Mam Cymru, the Island has the remains of 32 mill structures. Melin Llynon (Fig 19 ), being a fully restored working mill is the only surviving working mill in Wales and is a highly popular tourist attraction.



Figure 19: Melin Llynon

<sup>19</sup> Anglesey Visitor Survey 2012, Beaufort Research.

4.7.7 A wealth of industrial heritage is also encountered on the Island. Parys Mountain, at Amlwch in north east Anglesey, (once the largest copper mine in the world producing 3,300 tonnes of ore annually during the 18th century, is one of the few sites in Britain where there is evidence of the prehistoric beginnings of the British metal mining industry. Today, Parys Mountain and its dramatic landscape of orange and purple rocks is enjoyed by tourists and locals with a marked trail around the mountain including views across Anglesey and down to Amlwch Port from which the copper was once exported. Along the coast lies Borthwen Brickworks, a much visited cove on the Coastal Path. There was also even coal production from 28 small colliery pits running along the margins of Malltraeth Marsh. “To visit historic buildings and to enjoy history and heritage” is given by a large proportion of visitors as their motivation for coming to Anglesey (29%<sup>19</sup>), second only to “to enjoy landscape, countryside and coast). This is particularly the case for overseas visitors.

4.7.8 Artistic and literary culture and heritage are also prevalent. Many of the tales of the Mabinogion, which appear in two medieval Welsh manuscripts (the White Book of Rhydderch or Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch, written circa 1350, and the Red Book of Hergest or Llyfr Goch Hergest, written about 1382–1410), are set on Anglesey. The Mabinogion are the earliest collection of stories in British literature – offering drama, philosophy, romance, tragedy, fantasy and humour – making them not only locally but nationally significant. Many are set in the Aberffraw/ Llanddwyn area, with Branwen (who is married to the King of Ireland, Matholwch, in an attempt to bring peace between nations), being buried, according to tradition, near Llanddeusant.

4.7.9 The Island is also the home to important art and cultural collections at Oriel Môn near Llangefni, as well as a number of galleries across the Island which display the work of local contemporary and world renowned artists, photographers and makers. Sir Kyffin Williams KBE RA, a world-renowned landscape artist, was born and bred on Anglesey and many of his works were typically inspired by the vast landscapes and farmlands of the Island. Williams is widely regarded as the defining artist of Wales during the 20th century and as a result, his works can be seen at a permanent exhibition in Oriel Môn as well as several other galleries across Britain. Charles Frederick Tunnicliffe OBE RA, an internationally renowned naturalistic painter of wildlife also spent most of his working life on Anglesey drawing inspirations from his surroundings.

4.7.10 A rich heritage of performance art also continues to play a prominent role in the every-day cultural life of the Island. Eisteddfodau, a meeting of Welsh artists dating back to at least the 12th century, when festival of poetry and music began to be held in Wales, are still held annually in very many of the Island's communities. The Urdd, the national Welsh language youth movement offering all kinds of activities for children across Wales, has a strong membership on Anglesey. Alongside the National Eisteddfod of Wales and the Urdd Eisteddfod (which happen annually in differing locations across Wales), and the local, community eisteddfods, Anglesey is also home to its own annual Eisteddfod. Not only are the finest talents of the Island in singing, dancing and recitation on display but competitions in art and science through the medium of Welsh for primary and high school pupils are a popular event. Anglesey was also recently home to the National Eisteddfod in August 2017 (as well as 1957, 1983 and 1999), attracting some 150,000 visitors with fundraisers raising more money for the festival than ever before. Their importance, as a focal-point for the coming together of the local community cannot be underestimated.

  
*“The indigenous culture of local eisteddfods is still holding its own. An Island where the Welsh Culture is strong enough to nurture a generation of musicians and singers, authors and poets, artists and performers of international status.”*

(Cllr Vaughan Hughes, Lligwy Ward)



## 4.8 Outdoor Activities

4.8.1 With a 125 mile Coastal Path now circumnavigating the Island (through the AONB and areas of Heritage Coast, Fig 20), and a wide range of other cross-island and circular walking routes, it is easy to explore the rich nature, history and archaeology of the Island on foot. The coastal path passes through landscapes of coastal heath, dunes, farmland, cliffs and a few pockets of woodland and is well used and appreciated by both visitors and local people.

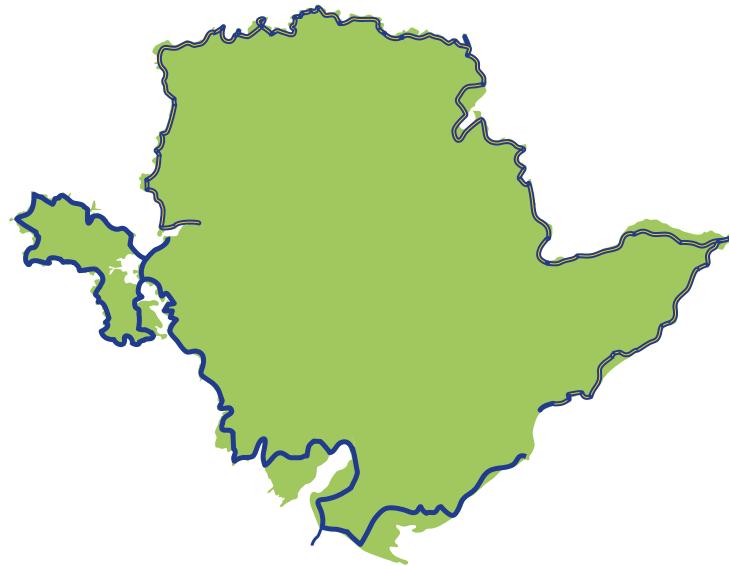


Figure 20: The Anglesey Coastal Path (shown in blue)

4.8.2 Cycling is also a very popular activity with an extensive 'Rural Cycling Network', comprising of signposted circular cycling routes criss-crossing the Island (Fig 21), as well as waymarked linear routes such as Lon Las Cefni and The Copper Trail.



Figure 21: Principal circular cycling routes.

4.8.3 Local residents and visitors delight in the waters of the Menai Straits and the broad open coastline surrounding the Island. Anglesey is a mecca for water-sport enthusiasts, from sailors to coasteering novices, divers exploring the very many wrecks that line the sea-bed, to surfers, wind surfers and families splashing around in the shallows on extensive beaches referenced previously in 4.6.

4.8.4 'Access to the outdoors' and 'participating in outdoor activities' were amongst the top answers given by Anglesey residents in the 2017 Well being Assessment survey to the question "what improves your wellbeing and quality of life". 'Walking footpaths and the coastal path' were the most spontaneously mentioned aspect contributing to visitors' enjoyment in Beaufort Research's 2012 visitor survey.

 *"Coastal paths are excellent.... able to walk around the whole Island."*  
(Visitor, Anglesey Visitor Survey, 2012) 

 *"Walking the coastal path in my spare time is one of life's greatest pleasures"*  
(Cllr Carwyn Elias Jones Seiriol Ward) 

 *"Good choice of walks.... good information on walks"*  
(Visitor, Anglesey Visitor Survey, 2013) 

## 5. Looking to the Future

- 5.1 Irrespective of the above, Anglesey remains 'Gwlad y Medra' – 'the land of I can'. It has a forward-looking, resilient community, open to, accepting of and willing to make the most of change.
- 5.2 "More job opportunities", "more local businesses", "better transport links", "more shops (particularly those that attract tourists)" and "better IT and communications infrastructure" are recurrent themes coming through from the Islands communities in the 6 Area Well-being Assessments undertaken for Anglesey during 2017 for the Joint Gwynedd and Anglesey Well-being Plan.
- 5.3 Similarly, our local civic leaders, looking to the changes that have made a positive contribution to the Island in recent years, cite a range of developments and investments they regard as appropriate and beneficial.

***"Small businesses, cafes, restaurants opening on the Island Larger International businesses on the Island "Halen Môn" for example"***

(Fon Roberts, IACC Head of Service: Children, Families & Communities)

***"... the new opportunities that have been identified to harness energy from the sea"***

(Cllr Dylan Rees, Canolbarth Môn Ward)

***"The indigenous culture of local eisteddfods is still holding its own. An Island where the Welsh Culture is strong enough to nurture a generation of musicians and singers, authors and poets, artists and performers of international status".***

(Cllr Vaughan Hughes, Lligwy Ward)

***"... tourism with emphasis on top class eating places using local produce..."***

(Cllr Richard Dew, Llifon Ward)



*“the huge investments being made by Coleg Menai in developing skills centres for our young people and the construction of the Llangefni Link Road”*

(Cllr Dylan Rees, Canolbarth Môn Ward)



*“The investment made by Coleg Menai in developing the skill centres that will give our young people the skills and ability to work in these innovative industries, thereby hopefully stemming the “brain drain” that we have seen in recent decades.... good, stable, well paid jobs are vital for Ynys Môn for the future wellbeing of our communities.”*

(Cllr Robin Williams, Aethwy Ward)



*“If the Wylfa Newydd development does come, it will have an impact on the Island’s day to day life as dramatic as the building of the breakwater had on the little port of Holyhead in 1845.”*

(Cllr John Arwel Roberts, Ynys Gybi)



5.4

Our young people (participants in Llais Ni and from local secondary schools), do, however, sound a note of caution highlighting, for example, that future development and tourism growth cannot be unfettered. These is a need, in their view, to safeguard against adverse impacts on the language, the way of life and the other things that make Anglesey a unique and special place to live and visit.



*“Will incomers change our Island to how they want to see it rather than it being what we local people want it to be?”*

(Participant, Llais Ni)



## 6. Conclusion

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- 6.1 As a Local Authority, elected representatives are clearly, therefore, eager to seize, on behalf of the Island's people, opportunities that are transformational to the Island's future economy. They also wish to ensure that such opportunities are fully realised in order to deliver long-term sustainability (social, environmental, economic and linguistic), to the Island's communities – the proviso is that development and change is not acceptable at any cost.
- 6.2 As evidenced in this report, Anglesey clearly has a high value landscape with almost the entire coastline designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) with interspersed stretches of Heritage Coast. Alongside this sits the rich built environment which includes a substantial and diverse range of heritage assets and sites, tracing back the Island's history and its development over many millennia. This valuable landscape and rich heritage sits within a rural context offering a sense of peace and tranquillity – a place that is truly different to and separate from the mainland.
- 6.3 Anglesey is an Island whose land, landscapes, natural resources and assets have been pivotal in sustaining strong local communities for many generations – these are central to its vibrant and vital agricultural economy. Such assets now also support and sustain a still-growing tourism sector which is crucial to the Island's future economic sustainability.
- 6.4 The Welsh language is of critical importance. It serves as a golden thread, weaving together history and heritage with a strong sense of belonging, community, community cohesion and well-being. It underpins the very nature of Island life, also bringing with it its own traditions of song, dance, visual and literary arts.
- 6.5 Anglesey is undoubtedly a unique and very special place. Even though outward looking and ready to embrace change, change and development is not acceptable at any cost.
- 6.6 To this end, those seeking to bring major development and change to the Island must recognise the significance of the above and the imperative of respecting its unique character and very special place. Horizon Nuclear Power, in its *Wylfa Newydd: Main Consultation Report* (June 2018), for example, recognises and describes Anglesey as:
  - “unique, both in the context of the UK and Wales, due to its distinctive landscape and setting, and the strong social character that has evolved due to its separation from mainland Wales”

- “the Welsh language and culture acts as an anchor for the dispersed pattern of distinct communities. It is the touchstone of social interaction that runs like a golden thread through all aspects of island life”

and as having

- “a vibrant landscape and heritage.”

6.7 In looking to the future, the enactment of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Environmental (Wales) Act 2016, have also, together, placed significant emphasis on (as well as new statutory duties in respect of), the promotion of sustainable development. The process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the Island, in accordance with the sustainable development principles and the well-being goals set out in the new Act, are now central to the Council's philosophy and approach – none more so than in protecting, preserving and enhancing the Island's unique character and special Sense of Place.

6.8 The importance of 'place' and 'placemaking' in securing both sustainable development and well-being in Wales is also gaining considerable momentum. The consultation draft of the 10th edition of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) prioritises 'placemaking' – a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of spaces. Placemaking 'capitalises on a local community's various assets, its inspiration, and its potential, with the intention of creating developments that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being'. 'Place' is therefore central to the creation of Sustainable Places and achieving and delivering the wider objectives of the 2015 Well-being Act.

6.9 By endeavouring to recognise and protect Anglesey's unique character and very special sense of place, Isle of Anglesey County Council embraces the concept of 'placemaking' as a basis for both delivering sustainable places as well as for safeguarding and enhancing the potential well-being of the Island's communities and its future generations.

# APPENDIX A

## Anglesey Well-being Assessment 2017

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### Area Focus group views and priorities - summary tables.

#### I. Bro Aberffraw & Bro Rhosyr

Note up to 3 things that makes your area a nice place to live.

Comments	Number
Rural location and environment and/or coastal and convenient	48
Quiet	19
Community spirit, good neighbours and friendly local people	17
Transport links e.g. A55 expressway, Walking paths	9
Local facilities e.g. attractions, shops, churches, community centres	9
Wildlife	6
Welsh language and culture	5
Low crime level, feel safe	5
Schools nearby and good	2
Healthcare	1
Heritage, history and culture	1
Low pollution	1
Proud to live in the area	1
No large developments	1
Close to work	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>

Note up to 3 things in your area that improve well-being and contribute towards your quality of life.

Comments	Number
Natural environment - Rural location and environment and/or coastal and convenient, landscape and views	26
Access to locations for walking, cycling, outdoor activities	13
Social Communities - Good neighbours, community spirit, support business and events and local activities and things to do	12
Tranquillity	7
Close to facilities, local amenities e.g. shop, library, leisure activities	6
Low pollution	5
Fitness classes and clubs	4
Health Services - close to efficient surgeries and access to NHS dental care	4
Low Crime level / Feel safe	2
Welsh language and culture	2
Cost of living and work opportunities	1
Positive Attitude and self supporting	1
Local Member	1
Quicker broadband	1
Road Safety - reduce speeding	1
Street Lighting	1
Close to work	1
Low traffic	1
Transport Links - close to the A55	1
Chapel	1
Natural Resources Wales train people in jobs that deal with the environment and natural world	1
School in the village	1
Location	1
Less intensive farming than the remainder of the UK	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>

## 2. Aethwy & Seiriol

Note up to 3 things that makes your area a nice place to live.

Comments	Number
Natural environment - landscape and views	36
Transport Links	17
Community spirit / neighbours	16
Local facilities	14
Rural location	11
Low Crime rate / Feel safe	11
Quiet	8
The Welsh Language / Welsh Language Culture	5
No housing developments	2
Work Opportunities	2
House prices	1
Heritage - castles/ancient buildings	1
No flooding threat	1
Active Town Council	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>

Note up to 3 things in your area that improve well-being and contribute towards your quality of life.

Comments	Number
Places to walk / Outdoor Activities	28
Natural environment - landscape and views	18
Friends and family / neighbours	9
Community spirit	6
Tranquillity	5
Transport Links	5
Close to Ysbyty Gwynedd/ surgeries	4
Social/community activities	4
Fitness classes	3
Close to facilities	3
Good school	3
Quality housing	2
Street Lighting	2
Close to work	2
Sailing Club	1
Low Crime rate / Feel safe	1
Location	1
Town Council	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>

### 3. Lligwy & Twrcelyn

Note up to 3 things that makes your area a nice place to live.

Comments	Number
The natural environment - landscape, beaches	42
Tranquillity / Silence	12
Community spirit	11
Low crime levels	9
Facilities available locally	8
Views	7
Family / Friends / Neighbours	7
Fresh air	4
Plenty to walk	3
Clean and tidy streets	3
Transport Links	3
No traffic	2
Able to live through the medium of Welsh.	2
Access to health services	2
The standard of the school	2
Nothing	1
Good condition of roads	1
Heritage	1
No pylons	1
Affordable housing	1
Birdwatching	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>

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Note up to 3 things in your area that improve well-being and contribute towards your quality of life.

Comments	Number
Natural environment/location	22
Access to facilities	14
Fresh air	9
Family / Friends / Neighbours	8
Tranquillity / Silence	7
Close community /Community spirit	6
Low crime levels	5
Places to walk	4
Improve the town through investment	4
Leisure facilities	4
Clean and tidy area	3
Community Activities / Amlwch Age Well	3
re-open the railway	1
Better connection to the web/telephone signal	1
My garden	1
Industrial heritage	1
Able to drive a car	1
The weather	1
Safe area for children to play outside	1
The standard of the school	1
Public transport	1
Being employed	1
Do not approve more wind turbines	1
Parking management	1
Adult Education	1
Low cost of living	1
Variety of bird species	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>

## 4. Canolborth Môn & Llifon Area

Note up to 3 things that makes your area a nice place to live.

Comments	Number
The natural environment / views	28
Community spirit / events in the community	23
Facilities available - shops /pubs	17
Tranquillity / Quietness	16
Able to use of the Welsh language /Welshness of the area	12
Rural location	11
Feel safe /Low crime levels	11
Family / Friends / Neighbours	9
Transport Links	8
The local school	4
Fresh air	3
Nothing good	2
Places of worship	1
Tidy streets / flowers	1
Working in the area	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>

Note up to 3 things in your area that improve well-being and contribute towards your quality of life.

Comments	Number
Rural area - plenty of places to walk and play	38
Community spirit / Community events	16
Friends and family	9
Fresh air	8
Leisure Centre	7
Welsh Language Culture	5
Quality of Education	4
Low crime levels	4
Tranquillity / Silence	3
Close to work	3
The local shop	2
Community Centre	2
Citizens' Advice Bureau	2
Plenty of facilities	2
More social housing	1
Welsh medium school	1
Pension	1
Access to GP service	1
Public transport	1
Work-life balance	1
The Summer	1
Tidy streets	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>

## 5. Talybolion

Note up to 3 things that makes your area a nice place to live.

Comments	Number
Natural environment - Location and beautiful views, rural environment and/or coastal	16
Community spirit, good neighbours and friendly local people	13
Tranquillity	7
Feel safe, low crime levels	4
Fresh air	3
Facilities such as shops, local pubs, community events	3
Public Footpaths	1
Welsh Culture	1
Good schools	1
Low traffic	1
Nature	1
A slower pace of life	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>

Note up to 3 things in your area that improve well-being and contribute towards your quality of life.

Comments	Number
Quiet location, isolated and beautiful	13
Being able to walk in the area, rural footpaths	8
More facilities, activities, keep healthy clubs	7
Community Events	6
Low crime level , feel safe	6
Fresh air, lack of pollution	2
Able to ask people in the community for support	1
More inclusive attitude towards English people	1
Broadband and a better signal	1
Ambulance service and good local surgery	1
Better public transport	1
Good school	1
Low traffic level	1
Newspaper	1
Low cost of living, no facilities to spend on them	1
Freedom to move	1
Have always lived in the area	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>

## 6. Caergybi & Ynys Cybi

Note up to 3 things that makes your area a nice place to live.

Comments	Number
Beaches and the Seaside	15
Quietness and tranquillity	11
Countryside / Walking paths	11
Family / Friends / Neighbours	9
Community spirit	8
Beautiful views	4
Arts Centre	3
A safe place to live	3
Air quality	2
Close to work	1
Eating places	1
Visitors	1
Plenty to do	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>

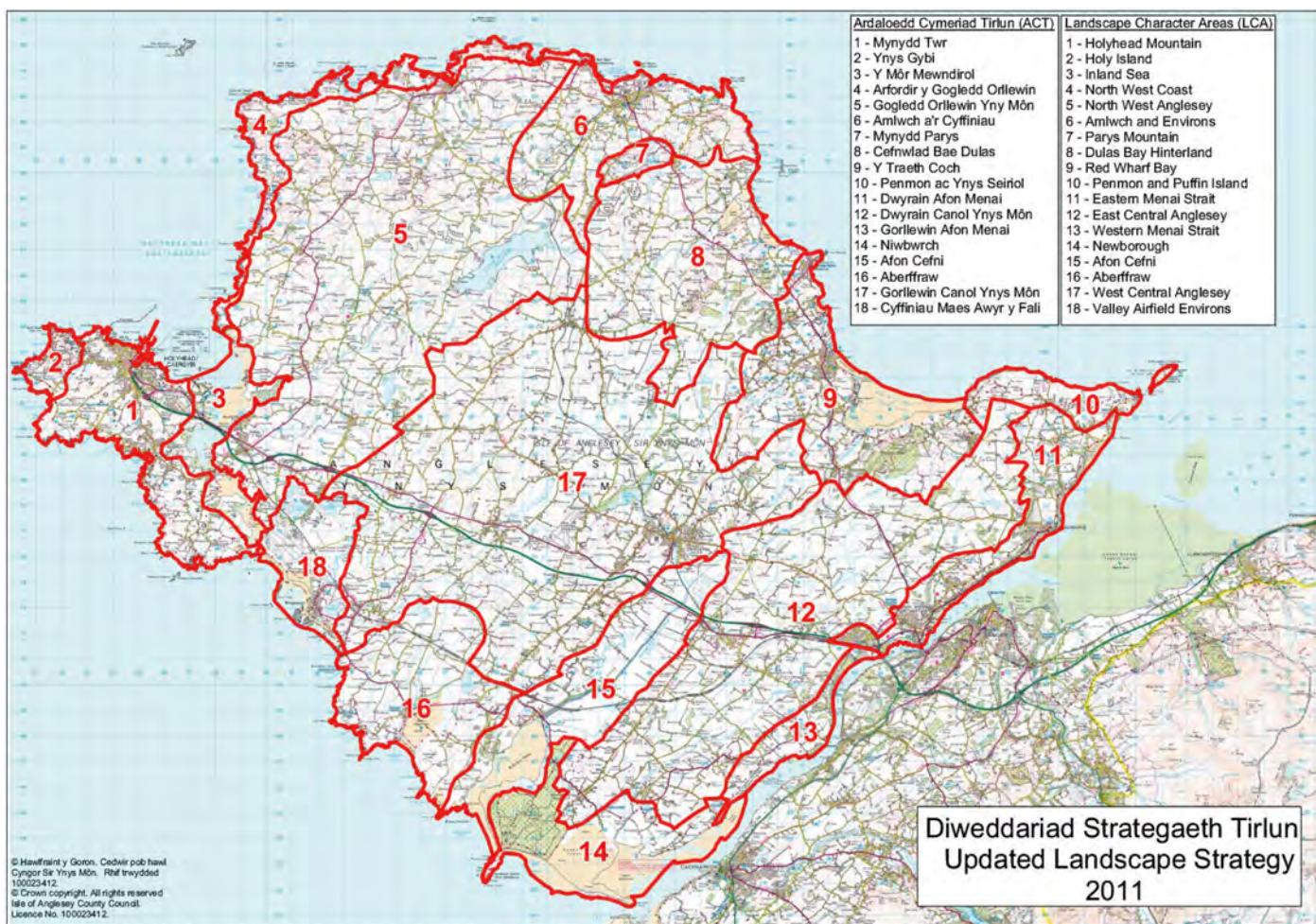
Note up to 3 things in your area that improve wellbeing and contribute towards your quality of life.

Comments	Number
Places to walk - parks, seaside	12
Community spirit	6
Leisure facilities/golf club	5
The Arts Centre	5
Tranquillity / Quietness	5
Fresh air	4
Living near the sea	2
Appearance of streets - planted flowers	1
Travel connections	1
Culture and the Welsh language.	1
Feel safe	1
Excellent waste collection/street cleaning service	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>

## APPENDIX B

### Landscape Character Areas

Typical Anglesey landscape character areas –  
from the Anglesey Council 2011 Landscape Strategy  
Update and images of landscape types from across  
the Island.



## Area 1 - Holyhead Mountain



Abraham's Bosom and South Stack

## Area 5 - North West Anglesey



Llynnon Mill and Mynydd Mechell

## Area 6 - Amlwch and its Environs



Amwch environs from Mynydd Eilian



Amwch Port

## Area 9 - Red Wharf Bay



Red Wharf Bay and Llanddona

## Area 11 - Eastern Menai Straits



Beaumaris



Bridgehead Area

## Area 14 - Newborough



Newborough sand dunes



Abermenai Point, Newborough Forest and Llanddwyn Island

## APPENDIX C

### Tweet of the Day - BBC Radio 4

### First Broadcast 5.55am Thursday 22 March 2018.

#### The Peregrine Falcon



#### TRANSCRIPT

"We had a primary school teacher who set up a young ornithologist's club.

I remember going down the steps at South Stack lighthouse on Anglesey.

There was a big colony of breeding sea birds – we went to see those.

All of a sudden we just heard this cry.

Every other bird went silent.

We looked up and there was just this dark sickle shape just circling around the cliff face.

And because Peregrines are so rare, I just had to see one again and again – I became really good at Peregrine watching – it's the whole visual, auditory, endorphin hit – that, literally, is what I'm always chasing.

I now fly my own captive-bred Peregrine Falcon.

And actually, my whole career path – I'm a veterinary surgeon who specialises in birds these days – I can probably trace all that back to that moment on the stair-case at South Stack lighthouse on Anglesey."

**Richard Jones**  
**Avian Veterinary Surgeon**  
**Rudeheath, Northwich, Cheshire.**





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