

Planning for the Planet

Technical guide: Wales

Planning for the Planet is a commitment that councils can make to signal leadership on environmental issues. The following guide has been developed alongside planning experts and is designed to provide council officers with everything they need to implement the Planning for the Planet commitment. We have included a brief overview of the problem, but you can find more in our evidence base documents and councillor briefing.

What's the problem with intensive livestock production?

- Intensive agriculture is the leading cause of river pollution and wildlife decline in the UK, resulting in the loss of almost half of Britain's natural biodiversity.
- Intensive livestock developments provide just one or two, often low-paid, jobs and have been found to harm other rural business sectors.
- Farmers and local economies receive a pittance from intensive livestock supply chains, with profits being diverted to supermarkets, processors and supply companies.
- 69% of UK adults see factory farming as prioritising profits over tackling the climate emergency.
- 40% of the UK's most productive agricultural land is used to grow food for farm animals, with half of the UK's wheat harvest fed to farm animals each year.
- We need to reduce meat and dairy consumption by up to 50% by 2050 to meet our statutory climate targets.

What do we mean by Intensive Livestock Production?

Sometimes referred to as 'megafarms', 'factory farms', or 'intensive production units' (or, for chickens, 'intensive poultry units'), intensive livestock operations are the most industrialised and polluting agricultural operations, with animals kept indoors for most or all their lives, in crowded conditions with

little or no natural light. They are more akin to an industrial operation than a farm, with associated traffic generation, noxious processes, waste and effluent treatment, in addition to the wider issues of biodiversity loss and greenhouse gas emissions.

For the purposes of planning policy, intensive livestock operations are normally defined as those which require planning permission and a license from Natural Resources Wales to operate. These are those that hold at least 40,000 poultry or 2,000 pigs or 750 breeding sows.

Intensive livestock production is distinct from more sustainable, higher welfare and nature-friendly agro-ecological farming, which is more resilient to climate change and vastly better for local communities and the planet.

The Planning for the Planet 4-step process

By joining Planning for the Planet, we are asking councils to implement the following 4-step process.

STEP 1: Assess the impact of intensive livestock production in your area (within 6 months)

The first step is to find out how big an issue this is in your area. A template self-assessment tool has been provided below, but there may be other issues you wish to consider, and other sources of information.

Questions for your assessment (please fill in)	How to find this information
<p>The extent of intensive livestock production in your area.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Do you have intensive livestock farms in your area?2. How many animals do you estimate are in these operations in your area?3. Any incidents of breaches of environmental permits?	<p>To find the number of intensive livestock operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Search previous planning applications in your council, to see roughly how many have been approved.• An <u>environmental permit</u> (EPR Permit) is required to rear pigs or poultry intensively in an installation with more than 40,000 places for poultry, or 2,000 places for production pigs (over 30kg), or 750 places for sows. Helpfully, Natural Resources Wales publish permits that they issue. You can search for all permits in your area <u>here</u>. The results won't <i>all</i> be intensive livestock production, but many will be.• Information on the structure and type of farms by area is available <u>on the Welsh Government website</u> as small area statistics tables. In the UK, about 70% farm animals live in intensive conditions, including 60% pigs and 95% broiler chickens, so if the number of these livestock is high, there is a very high chance you have lots of intensive farming.• <u>CIWF's agriculture map</u> is also a great tool to show the prevalence of industrial farming across the UK where data is available.

<p>The status of water in your area</p> <p>4. What is the status of your waterways and what are the main causes of pollution?</p> <p>5. Do you have any safe bathing rivers or lakes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can find out the 'classification' of the water in your area on the Natural Resources Wales interactive map. You can also find out how many of your local rivers, lakes or other water courses are safe to swim here.
<p>Local air quality</p> <p>6. Do you currently have high concentrations of any harmful pollutants commonly resulting from agriculture in your area?</p>	<p>You can find maps of the concentrations of the above pollutants in an interactive map.</p>
<p>Impact on climate change</p> <p>7. What is a rough estimate of the GHG emissions from intensive livestock in your area?</p>	<p>Using the information from Q1 and Q2, you can make a rough estimate of the GHG emissions from your intensive livestock production as follows:</p> <p>Chicken: Estimated annual GHG emissions from one chicken shed with 20,000 capacity = 2,058 T CO2 equivalent</p> <p>Pigs: Estimated annual GHG emissions from one pig shed with 2,000 capacity = 2,708 T CO2e</p> <p>Dairy cows: Estimated annual GHG emissions from an intensive cattle farm of 2,000 cows = 9750t CO2e per year</p> <p>(calculations in Annex 2)</p>
<p>Impact on deforestation, habitats and biodiversity</p> <p>8. Roughly what is the land footprint of your current intensive livestock operations?</p> <p>'Effective use of land' consideration</p> <p>9. Risk that intensive livestock operations in your area is contributing to deforestation?</p> <p>10. Do you have any Special Areas of Conservation?</p>	<p>Using the information from Q1 and Q2, you can make a rough estimate of the land footprint from your intensive livestock production as follows:</p> <p>Chicken: Estimated land requirement for one chicken shed of 20,000 capacity = 2,520 sq km land</p> <p>Pigs: Estimated land requirement for one pig shed with 2,000 capacity = 3,819 sq km land</p> <p>(calculations in Annex 2)</p> <p>A study of small-scale, agroecological farms (including vegetables, fruit and some meat and dairy) from across the UK found that it is possible to achieve much higher yields per hectare in agroecological systems (as well as higher employment, more social benefits and higher biodiversity).</p> <p>The likelihood of UK feed being from deforested land is high. Research last year from WWF linked meat in European diets with widespread deforestation and conversion of habitats in South America.</p> <p>There's a map to show Special Areas of Conservation on the Natural Resources Wales interactive map.</p>
<p>Impact on the local economy</p> <p>11. Estimated jobs created in intensive livestock operations.</p>	<p>Planning applications make an estimate of the jobs created - likely to be 1-2 per development. You can therefore make a rough estimate of the contribution of intensive livestock agriculture to local employment using your calculations above.</p> <p>More localised, sustainable food systems create more and better jobs. (Please see the evidence base on our website for more detail on this)</p>
<p>Local Character</p> <p>12. Do you have SSIs or other protected areas, or AONBs?</p>	<p>You can check on the designations of land in your area on the Natural Resources Wales interactive map.</p>

<p>Policy and local culture</p> <p>13. What opportunities do you have for a thriving and diverse local food culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a local food strategy? • Do you have a local food partnership? • Does your council include food and farming in your biodiversity action plan or climate plan? • Is there a local food culture and economy that can be supported to grow, for example alternative routes to markets for farmers, speciality foods, markets, veg boxes, co-operatives, direct routes to market etc? • Does the council have a policy to support sustainable and locally sourced food through public procurement? 	<p>Find out if you have a Local Food Partnership</p> <p>Check out Sustain's Every Mouthful Counts report to see how well food and farming is integrated into your council's climate and biodiversity policies.</p>
--	--

STEP 2: Publish this impact assessment transparently (within 6 months)

Allow expert and public scrutiny, including by the local authority's environment, audit, and planning teams.

STEP 3: Adopt planning policies that are right for your area (within 2 years)

Assess the policy solutions best for your council, considering the impact that intensive livestock production is having now, your biodiversity and climate commitments, and the status of your air and water, and put this policy into place.

The specific policy you adopt will depend on your council. Our recommendations are, as a minimum:

- 1) **Include a supportive statement for sustainable farming, land use and good food in key planning policies**, so you are supporting sustainable agriculture and food in a joined up and holistic way.
- 2) **Require developers to complete an enhanced Impact Assessment for intensive livestock operations to include specific information** on GHG emissions, biodiversity and health impacts, so you can properly assess the risks
- 3) **Require developers to demonstrate that all farm developments are of the highest standards** for sustainable development, biodiversity net gain and climate change

These policies could be adopted as part of the Local Plan, as supplementary planning documents, or via a climate emergency compliance form. Examples of the above are provided in Annex 1. Further examples of the kinds of policy solutions that might work for you will become available to councils that join Planning for the Planet. Ideally, this should be in place within two years, but this will depend on your policy review cycle.

STEP 4: Influence Wider Progress: Support our calls for better planning and farming policy across the UK

Councils can support a transition to a good food system in which farmers see improved livelihoods and the production of more, better healthier food by diversifying to a model other than intensive livestock. As part of your work to support diverse and resilient food communities, councils can:

- Set up and/or support a [Food Partnership](#), or get involved with the partnership if you have one already.
- Support sustainable and local food through your procurement policy, to support good farming with public money.
- Support wildlife-friendly and agroecological models of farming through your planning, including market gardens, and the infrastructure needed to support a localised food system (see [Sustain's Fringe Farming report](#) for recommendations).
- Protect existing allotments and community food growing spaces, and where there is demonstrated demand, increase these resources.

You can also use your voice by encouraging other councils to follow your example and call for policy change at a national level.

Why are these issues important for planning in Wales?

National planning policy includes a number of statements in support of sustainable farming systems and against intensive livestock. This table will help you ensure the local policy you develop around intensive livestock operations is clearly linked with national planning priorities.

<p>Policies relevant to planning and intensive livestock production</p>	<p>Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs), Welsh Government Circulars, and policy clarification letters, which together with PPW provide the national planning policy framework for Wales. PPW, the TANs, MTANs and policy clarification letters comprise national planning policy.</p> <p>The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation and resultant duties such as the Socio-economic Duty. A well functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places.</p> <p>2.29 When considering planning applications, planning authorities should seek the views of all relevant local authority departments and external specialist public bodies, particularly those with responsibility for Economic Development, Housing, Transport, Regeneration, Culture, Heritage and Environment/ Biodiversity, as this can assist in the identification of multiple benefits and an integrated approach to balancing priorities against policy</p>
--	--

	<p>on an individual basis. This will also enable the full range of costs and benefits over the lifetime of development to be taken into account, including those which cannot be easily valued in monetary terms, and considerations relating to timing, risks and uncertainties addressed.</p> <p>Key: PPW = Planning Policy Wales</p>
Climate Change and the environment	<p>The PPW makes clear that: “The planning system has a vital role to play in making development resilient to climate change, decarbonising society and developing a circular economy for the benefit of both the built and natural environments and to contribute to the achievement of the well-being goals. The proximity principle must be applied to ensure problems are solved locally rather than passing them on to other places or future generations. This will ensure the use of land and other resources is sustainable in the long term.”</p> <p>PPW states that planning decisions should be made within a framework of considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “• will the causes and impacts of climate change be fully taken into account through location, design, build, operation, decommissioning and restoration; and • does it support decarbonisation and the transition to a low carbon economy.” <p>3.30 In 2019 the Welsh Government declared a climate emergency in order to coordinate action nationally and locally to help combat the threats of climate change. The planning system plays a key role in tackling the climate emergency through the decarbonisation of the energy system and the sustainable management of natural resources.</p> <p>3.31 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 sets a legal target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Wales by at least 80% in 2050. The Act also requires a series of interim targets (for 2020, 2030 and 2040) and carbon budgets. The budgets set a limit on the total amount of greenhouse gas emissions in Wales over a 5-year period to serve as stepping stones and ensure progress is made towards the decadal targets.”</p> <p>5.6.9 Care should be exercised when considering intensive livestock developments when these are proposed in close proximity to sensitive land uses such as homes, schools, hospitals, office development or sensitive environmental areas. In particular, the cumulative impacts (including noise and air pollution) resulting from similar developments in the same area should be taken into account.</p>
Economic impacts and sustainable development	<p>PPW states that planning decisions should be made within a framework of considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “• the numbers and types of long term jobs expected to be created or retained; • whether, and how far, the development will help redress economic disadvantage or support regeneration priorities, for example by enhancing local employment opportunities or upgrading the environment; • how the proposal would support the achievement of a more prosperous, low carbon, innovative and resource efficient Wales.”
Biodiversity / habitat loss And Making an effective use of land	<p>6.4.3 The planning system has a key role to play in helping to reverse the decline in biodiversity and increasing the resilience of ecosystems, at various scales, by ensuring appropriate mechanisms are in place to both protect against loss and to secure enhancement. Addressing the consequences of climate change should be a central part of any measures to conserve biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems. Information contained in SoNaRR, Area Statements and species records from Local Environmental Record Centres should be taken into account. Development plan strategies, policies and development proposals must consider the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the conservation of biodiversity, in particular the conservation of wildlife and habitats; • ensure action in Wales contributes to meeting international responsibilities and obligations for biodiversity and habitats; • ensure statutorily and non-statutorily designated sites are properly protected and managed; • safeguard protected and priority species and existing biodiversity assets from impacts which directly affect their nature conservation interests and compromise the resilience of ecological networks and the components which underpin them, such as water and soil, including peat; and • secure enhancement of and improvements to ecosystem resilience by improving diversity, condition, extent and connectivity of ecological networks. <p>Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty (Section 6 Duty)</p> <p>6.4.5 Planning authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. This means development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity. In doing so planning authorities must also take account of and promote the resilience of ecosystems, in particular the following aspects:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diversity between and within ecosystems; • the connections between and within ecosystems; • the scale of ecosystems; • the condition of ecosystems including their structure and functioning; and • the adaptability of ecosystems.
Health	<p>PPW states that planning decisions should be made within a framework of considerations:</p> <p>3.21 Planning authorities have a role to play in the prevention of physical and mental illnesses caused, or exacerbated, by pollution, disconnection of people from social activities (which contributes to loneliness) as well as the promotion of travel patterns which facilitate active lifestyles. The planning system must consider the impacts of new development on existing communities and maximise health protection and well-being and safeguard amenity. This will include considering the provision of, and access to, community and health assets, such as community halls, libraries, doctor's surgeries and hospitals. Health impacts should be minimised in all instances, and particularly where new development could have an adverse impact on health, amenity and well-being. In such circumstances, where health or amenity impacts cannot be overcome satisfactorily, development should be refused.</p>
Impacts on local communities and their character	<p>PPW states that planning decisions should be made within a framework of considerations:</p> <p>"• what are the short and long-term consequences of the proposal on a community, including its composition, cohesion, character, how it functions and its sense of place; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how does the proposal support development of more equal and more cohesive communities. • whether or not the development protects areas and assets of cultural and historic significance; • have cultural considerations and their relationships with the tourism industry been appropriately maximised;"
Pollution	<p>6.7.16 Relevant considerations in making planning decisions for potentially polluting development are likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • location, including the reasons for selecting the chosen site itself; • impact on health and amenity; • effect of pollution on the natural and built environment and the enjoyment of areas of landscape and historic and cultural value; • impact on groundwater and surface water quality; • effect on biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, including where there may be cumulative impacts on air or water quality which may have adverse consequences for biodiversity and ecosystem resilience; • the risk and impact of potential pollution from the development, insofar as this might lead to the creation of, or worsen the situation in, an air quality management area, a noise action planning priority area or an area where there are sensitive receptors; and • impact on the road and other transport networks, and in particular on traffic generation, particularly where the proposed development is not transport infrastructure itself.

Annex 1: Example planning policies to control intensive livestock operations

There are a number of routes to taking a proactive approach to planning policy on this issue. These are just a few examples of text to get you thinking. Example policies and specialist advice is available to councils that have joined Planning for the Planet.

Example Supportive statement – For your local plan

Currently, our food and farming system is responsible for a third of climate emissions and is the main cause of biodiversity loss and wildlife decline in the UK, including water pollution incidents. A Sustainable and healthy future means transitioning to a better food system. Planning policy will support:

- Supporting farming which helps meet climate and nature goals, including agroecology and reducing livestock numbers
- Giving people opportunities to grow food through allotments and food growing spaces
- Infrastructure for a localised food economy, for example market spaces

Requirements for Impact Assessments

Environmental impact assessments are required for all planning applications that require an environmental permit. Better quality information at the planning application stage will assist the decision making process. To ensure impact assessments provide the information needed to understand the pollution they cause, they must include:

- Endogenic GHG emissions per year from the development (ie emissions from the animals themselves)
- GHG emissions from the operation (ie heating, lighting, scrubbing the air for pollutants, feed and animal transport)
- Feed requirements, including amount of feed consumed per year, the source of feed and composition of feed including kg soya and imported feed consumed per year
- Approximate land required to grow feed (so you can understand biodiversity impact)
- Any previous reported breaches of environmental standards (including water pollution) by all companies involved in the development

Requirements for all farm developments:

- Biodiversity net gain happens on-farm
- Net Zero happens on-farm

- Scrubbers used to reduce ammonia pollution
- Real living wage

Annex 2: Calculations and what to do next

We would be delighted to have your council as part of Planning for the Planet. Doing so demonstrates your support for reversing the decline of our rivers and biodiversity and will ensure you have planning policy in place necessary to address the spread of toxic and polluting intensive livestock farms.

More information, including detailed evidence of the problems caused by intensive livestock to the environment and the economy on the [Planning for the Planet website](#).

[Register to join here](#)

Calculations for the GHG emissions from intensive chickens, pigs and dairy cows

Chickens:

Each broiler chicken produces about 1.5kg edible meat and each kg meat causes 9.8kg CO₂e

Chicken sheds typically contain 20,000 birds and produce 7 cycles per year, which is 140,000 birds per year.

The annual GHG emissions from one chicken shed therefore = $(1.5 \times 9.8) \times 140,000 = \mathbf{2,058 \text{ T CO}_2 \text{ equivalent}}$

Pigs:

Each pig produces about 55kg edible meat = (62% yield from 88kg carcasse), each kg pig meat emits 12.31kg CO₂e, and reach slaughter weight in 24 weeks, allowing 2 cycles per year.

A shed of 2000 pigs emits an estimated $(55 \times 12.31) \times 2000 \times 2 = \mathbf{2,708 \text{ T CO}_2 \text{e}}$

Dairy cows:

Average GHG footprint for UK milk is 1.3kg CO₂e per litre. Each cow produces about 7500litres per year

An intensive cattle farm of 2000 cows therefore emits roughly $(1.3 \times 7500) \times 2000 = \mathbf{9,750t \text{ CO}_2 \text{e per year}}$

Calculations for the land footprint of intensive chickens and pigs

Chickens:

Each broiler chicken produces about 1.5kg edible meat and each kg meat requires 12sq metres land

Chicken sheds typically contain 20,000 birds and produce 7 cycles per year, which is 140,000 birds per year.

The annual land requirement for one chicken shed therefore = $(1.5 \times 12) \times 140,000 = \mathbf{2520 \text{ sq km land}}$

Pigs:

Each pig produces about 55kg edible meat = (62% yield from 88kg carcasse), each kg pig requires 17.36sq metres of land and reach slaughter weight in 24 weeks, allowing 2 cycles per year.

A shed of 2000 pigs uses an estimated $(55 \times 17.36) \times 2000 \times 2 = \mathbf{3,819 \text{ sq km land}}$