

Press release — 15 October 2025

‘Perfect storm’ for Wales unless climate action involves communities

— new NICW report, rooted in real Welsh communities, shows how diverse voices can help shape a resilient, fair future for Wales

The [National Infrastructure Commission for Wales](#) (NICW) has today (15 October) launched its latest report: [A Perfect Storm — Is Wales doing enough to co-ordinate action and engage communities in adapting our infrastructure to a changing climate?](#)

The report warns that without urgent action to prepare for the worsening impacts of climate change, Wales risks being left dangerously exposed — with yet more devastating floods, record-breaking heatwaves and coastal erosion in decades to come.

However, Wales has the chance to lead in climate resilience if communities, government and infrastructure providers act together.

NICW states that while there is strong political focus on cutting emissions, there is far less emphasis on factors like ageing infrastructure, inconsistent planning, short-term funding cycles and weak co-ordination — leaving Welsh communities and critical services at risk.

Rooted in real communities, the report was shaped by engagement across Wales — led in partnership with the Community Council in Ceredigion, Fairbourne Partnership in Gwynedd, various community groups in Powys and a flagship pilot project in Grangetown, Cardiff — one of the country’s most ethnically diverse neighbourhoods.

Over seven months, NICW worked with the School of International Futures (SOIF), and local partners SEF Cymru, Green Soul, and Grange Pavilion Youth Forum to trial participatory futures methods — giving people a stronger voice in decisions about climate resilience.

From poetry and role-play to walking tours and visioning exercises, local residents of all ages and backgrounds engaged in creative, structured conversations about how infrastructure decisions made today will shape life for future generations.

The process showed that fairness, co-design, and inclusivity must be central to adaptation planning, and that Wales needs a shared hub — such as a Futures Academy — to scale these approaches nationwide.

Set against this backdrop, the report puts forward a package of 12 recommendations for immediate consideration by Welsh Government to strengthen resilience, embed climate adaptation across all sectors, and ensure communities are empowered to shape decisions. These include:

- Establishing clear leadership and accountability through a new Climate Adaptation Act for Wales, setting legally binding resilience targets.
- Creating a Chief Participation Officer role by 2028 to drive public engagement and co-ordinate across government, local authorities and public bodies.
- Integrating climate resilience into planning and investment so all major infrastructure decisions account for future climate risks.
- Aligning funding with climate resilience goals by updating appraisal systems and calling for a dedicated Climate Adaptation Fund for Wales.
- Developing a Climate Futures Hub to improve and share data, tools and lessons across sectors and communities.

NICW stresses that adapting infrastructure to climate change cannot be achieved by government alone. Communities, businesses and local authorities all have a part to play — with inclusive engagement central to success.

The Future Generations Act, as well as Wales' understanding of the Nature and Climate Emergencies, demonstrate that combined action will be key to safeguarding communities in the long term.

Steve Brooks, Lead NICW Commissioner on the project, said: “This report brings together evidence, expertise and lived experience to show how Wales can strengthen its resilience to climate change. The science is clear — yesterday’s infrastructure will not withstand tomorrow’s climate. We need urgent action now — embedding adaptation into planning, strengthening engagement, and building public confidence. By working with communities, businesses and local authorities as well as government, we can protect homes, jobs and the natural environment for generations to come.”

Helen Armstrong, Lead NICW Commissioner on the project, added: "This report is a wake-up call. We want Wales in 2100 to be a thriving place for people and nature — but extreme weather is already locked in. This report offers practical solutions to help Welsh Government, public bodies and infrastructure providers prepare for what lies ahead, while also showing how diverse communities can shape the future through creative, co-designed activities. There is no time to lose — acting now will be far less costly and far more effective than waiting until it's too late."

Caroline Star, SOIF Operations Director, comments: "This collaboration with NICW has shown the power of communities to imagine their futures and shape the infrastructure that supports them. Through participatory foresight approaches, we have co-created tools that can strengthen resilience, build skills and ensure decisions today support the Wales of tomorrow."

The full report, *A Perfect Storm*, is available here:
<https://nationalinfrastructurecommission.wales/perfectstorm>

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Notes to editors:

NICW was established in 2018 as an independent, non-statutory, advisory body to Welsh Ministers. Its primary purpose is to analyse, advise and make recommendations on Wales' longer term strategic economic and environmental infrastructure needs over a 5–80-year period.

NICW's partners on this report include:

- Grange Pavillion Youth Forum
- SEF Cymru
- Green Soul
- Arup