# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Electronic Register of Common Land for Wales** |
| **DATE** | **12 February 2018** |
| **BY** | **Lesley Griffiths, Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs** |

Welsh Government is committed to protecting our common land both now and for future generations. The Commons Act 2006 was introduced to remedy many of the deficiencies of earlier legislation, to protect common land from development, allow more sustainable management of common land and to improve the protection of common land from neglect and abuse.

The area of common land in Wales amounts to some 175,000 hectares, or 8.5% of the total land area, and is important to and predominately used for agricultural purposes. In addition, common land is valued for its contribution to the natural and national heritage of Wales, especially nature and habitat conservation, with 40% being designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 50% falling within the protected landscape of Wales.

Fundamental to the on-going implementation of the Commons Act 2006 in Wales, is the need to develop and introduce an electronic register of Common Land for Wales. This work is now underway and progressing well. The project has been broken down into four phases over a period of four years. These are set out at Annex One of this statement.

The development and introduction of electronic registers provides an opportunity for Wales to lead the way across the UK. I am keen to encourage all those with an interest in the future success of our commons to get involved in the process as we develop the new system for Wales. Details of how to register interest and become involved are available at

<http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/farmingandcountryside/common/commonsact2006/commons-section-25-electronic-registers/?skip=1&lang=en>

I will continue to keep Members updated on progress.

Annex One

**Table 1: Project Phases and Indicative Timeline**

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| **Phase** | **Title** | **Summary of Key Elements** | **2017**  **2021** |
| 1 | Project Start Up | Establish Governance arrangements, stakeholder mapping, risk and benefit analysis, initial discussions on procurement and security |
| 2 | System Design and Build | Procuring a specification to inform options on systems build, systems hosting and data migration. Build of system. |
| 3 | Data Migration | Implement process to migrate all paper maps and registers to the electronic system and quality assure. |
| 4 | Deployment | Public consultation to verify the migration of paper records to the electronic system.  Working with Commons Registration Authorities (CRAs) to agree implementation and training  Agreeing roles and responsibilities (both within Welsh Government and CRAs) to manage system going forwards. |
| Business As Usual | | |