

Naming the proposed new National Park in Wales

If a National Park designation is approved then a name is required for the Designation Order and as such one needs to be selected in advance. Failure to do so early would not allow time for an inclusive and well considered process after a NRW board decision in 2025.

In order to avoid this and ensure an opportunity for public input, NRW started the process in 2024. We first consulted with the 'Naming sites and places & List of Historic Placenames' group within NRW, on how to go about the process. Subsequently we consulted the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. A broad set of principles was discussed including using a Welsh or bilingual name with appropriate cultural, historical or geographical relevance, and preferably a name that is relatively easy to pronounce and recall by all.

We are grateful to Dr January-McCann of the Royal Commission for undertaking research based on the Area of Search, and preparing a short list of suggestions, along with a brief outline of their historical, cultural or geographical relevance.

Powys Fadog	<p>Powys Fadog was the name of the northern half of the kingdom of Powys following the split after the death of Prince Madog ap Maredudd in 1160. It comprised the cantrefi of Maelor and Mochnant Is Rhaeadr, with the addition of the commotes of Iâl, Nanheudwy, Cynllaith and Glyndyfrdwy., and at times extended as far as Mold in the north and Corwen in the west. Powys Fadog survived until after the conquest, when it, along with the other Welsh kingdoms, were dissolved under the terms of the Statutes of Rhuddlan in 1282.</p> <p>The advantages of using this name for the proposed national park are as follows. Powys Fadog is the historic name for the area of the central portion of the park, and is the single historic territory which covers the largest area of the park. The inclusion of the name 'Powys' may aid the reception of the new park in the areas of Montgomeryshire which it is proposed to include. There is a tie to Owain Glyndŵr, as he was a direct descendant of the last independent ruler of Powys Fadog.</p>
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	<p>The disadvantages are as follows. The Flintshire part of the AONB was never in Powys Fadog, nor was the area between Afon Tanat and Afon Banwy in Montgomeryshire which falls within the proposed boundary. The historic name does not therefore accurately describe the whole area.</p>
Glyndŵr	<p>Owain Glyndŵr was the last Prince of Wales. A descendant of the royal houses of Aberffraw and Powys, he led a rebellion against English rule in 1400, and by 1404 had established his rule over the whole country. Glyndŵr called a parliament at Machynlleth, where he set out his plans to reintroduce the Laws of Hywel Dda, build two universities and for the Welsh Church to become independent of the jurisdiction of Canterbury. By 1409 the English had recaptured the last of his strongholds, and in 1415 Glyndŵr disappeared. Despite the large bounty placed on his head, Glyndŵr was never captured, and as a result he has acquired a mythical status as the Mab Darogan, who will one day return and liberate Wales.</p> <p>The advantages of using this name for the proposed national park are as follows. Glyndŵr was from the northeast, and lived at Sycharth, within the boundaries of the park. His surname, Glyndŵr, is a variant form of Glyndyfrdwy, one of the constituent regions of the park, and his rebellion began in the northeast. In recent years there has been an explosion of interest in Glyndŵr, and as a result the use of this name would give the park instant name-recognition and local buy-in.</p> <p>The disadvantages are as follows. Glyndŵr, for obvious reasons is closely associated with the desire for independence. With the growth of the independence campaign over the past decade the independence debate has entered the forefront of Welsh politics and there would therefore be a risk that naming the park after Glyndŵr would lead to accusations of a pro-nationalist bias.</p>
Bryniau Clwyd a Berwyn	<p>Bryniau Clwyd is part of the name of the existing AONB. The name comes originally from the river Clwyd, which gave its name to the medieval cantref of Dyffryn Clwyd. The name Bryniau Clwyd as a whole goes back at least as far as 1900, and to a modern audience recalls the name of the local government area 1974-96. Berwyn is the name of the chain of mountains extending south from the Dee Valley through the area of Montgomeryshire proposed to be included in the new park.</p> <p>The advantages of using this name are as follows. It perfectly describes the geographical extent of the park and is entirely in Welsh, whilst not introducing any vocabulary that non-fluent speakers would be unfamiliar with. Berwyn is a historic name, and Bryniau Clwyd recalls one.</p> <p>The disadvantages are as follows. The name is fairly long, particularly when prefixed with Parc Cenedlaethol or affixed with National Park. It does not suggest a unified area, rather two disparate ones that have been joined together.</p>

Ordovices/ Ordoficiaid	<p>The name Ordovices references the geological period, which in itself is named after the tribe that held territory in central and northwestern Wales during and before the Roman period.</p> <p>The advantages of using this name are as follows. It would entail the use of a historic name that is at least 2000 years old. Ordovice territory extended over the southern portion of the park, and thus works well as a geographical name.</p> <p>The disadvantages are as follows. Other than geology the name Ordovices is not in common use, and thus may be unfamiliar to a lot of people. Whilst the Ordovices lived in part of the proposed area of the park, it would be a stretch to say that they continue to live there today, and thus the relevance of the name could well be questioned. A large part of the park would not be in Ordovices territory, but rather in that of the Deceangli (mod. Welsh Tegeingl).</p>
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In the summer of 2024 Welsh Government was consulted on the naming process and a meeting was held on the 10th July 2024 with representatives from CADW, Visit Wales and Welsh Language Policy. The process so far and future intentions were discussed along with a range of potential considerations. One additional suggestion, 'Gororau' also emerged during discussion and was added to the list for consideration. The process and future intention was broadly endorsed, including the intention to have a question on the name in the public consultation.

We submitted the proposed names and some comments around their potential suitability for consideration by the Welsh Place Names Standardisation Panel. The panel sat in September 2024 and provided the following feedback:

Enw a gynigir/ Proposed name	Ymateb y Panel/ Panel's response
Powys Fadog	<p>Nid yw'r Panel yn argymhell mabwysiadu'r enw hwn. Er bod y Panel yn cydnabod seiliau hanesyddol amlwg yr enw hwn, mae'r enw <i>Powys</i> yn cael ei ddefnyddio i gyfeirio at endid gwahanol heddiw a gallai hyn beri dryswch.</p> <p>The Panel does not recommend adopting this name. Despite the clear historical basis, <i>Powys</i> today refers to a different entity and the Panel feared this may cause some confusion.</p>
Glyndŵr	<p>Yr enw syml a chryno hwn yw'r un a ffeirir gan y Panel. Maen nhw'n unfryd mai <i>Glyndŵr</i> yw'r enw sy'n bodloni meini prawf CNC orau. Mae'n enw cyfarwydd (yn y ddwy iaith) ac yn enw â chysylltiadau hanesyddol eglur ac amlwg. Nid yw'r Panel yn rhoi gormod o bwys ar y ddadl y gellid cysylltu'r enw hwn yn rhy agos â'r mudiadau cenedlaetholgar neu o blaid annibyniaeth. Mae'r enw wedi cael ei ddefnyddio mewn sawl cyd-destun am ddegawdau, gan gynnwys fel enw rhanbarth llywodraeth leol yng Nghlwyd gynt rhwng 1974 ac 1996, ac fel enw prifysgol hyd yn</p>

	<p>ddiweddar iawn. Mae'n amserol efallai bod Comisiwn Democratiaeth a Ffiniau Cymru wedi cyhoeddi ei gynigion cychwynnol ar gyfer Adolygiad 2026 o etholaethau'r Senedd yr wythnos hon a bod Glyndŵr yn rhan o un o'r enwau a gynigir. Mae yna hefyd nifer o endidau anwleidyddol (gan gynnwys yn y sector preifat) sy'n defnyddio'r enw hwn ar hyn o bryd, e.e: Llwybr Glyndŵr - National Trails.</p> <p>This simple and concise name was strongly favoured by the Panel. They are unanimous in their opinion that <i>Glyndŵr</i> is the name which best fits NRW's criteria. It's a familiar name (in both languages) with strong historic links. The Panel goes not put too much weight on the argument that the name might be associated with a nationalist/pro-independence bias. The name has been used in many contexts for decades, including as a local government district in the former Clwyd between 1974 and 1996, and a university until the recent renaming. It's timely perhaps that the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru has published its Initial Proposal Report for the 2026 Review of Senedd constituencies just this week and Glyndŵr forms part of a proposed name. There are also many non-political entities (including in the private sector) currently using this name, e.g. Glyndwr's Way National Trail VisitWales.</p>
Bryniau Clwyd a'r Berwyn	<p>Roedd y Panel yn credu bod yr enw hwn yn ddisgrifiad da o'r ardal dan sylw ond mae ychydig yn hir ac yn anhylaw. Roedd y Panel hefyd yn cwestiynu a fyddai angen fersiwn iaith Saesneg hefyd o ddilyn y trywydd hwn. Sylwer fodd bynnag fod y fannod yn rhan annatod o enw'r Berwyn felly Bryniau Clwyd a'r Berwyn fyddai'r ffurf safonol.</p> <p>The Panel felt that this was a good description of the area in question but it's rather long and unwieldy. The Panel also questioned whether you would need an alternative for use in English if this route were followed. Please note that the Welsh definite article is an integral part of the name <i>Y Berwyn</i> so Bryniau Clwyd a'r Berwyn would be the standard form.</p>
Ordovices/ Ordoficiaid	<p>Nid yw'r Panel yn argymhell mabwysiadu'r enw hwn. Nododd y Panel fod yna risg mewn defnyddio enw hynafol ac anghyfarwydd hwn na fyddai'n golygu llawer i'r mwyafrif. Nodwyd hefyd na fyddai rhan helaeth o'r parc yn perthyn i'r rhanbarth hanesyddol hwn.</p> <p>The Panel does not recommend adopting this name. The Panel noted that there is a risk in using an ancient and unknown name that wouldn't mean much to the majority. It also noted that a large part of the park would not belong actually belong to this historic territory.</p>
Gororau	<p>Nid yw'r Panel yn argymhell mabwysiadu'r enw hwn. Roedd y Panel o'r farn bod y cynnig hwn yn rhy gyffredinol ac amhenodol.</p>

	The Panel does not recommend adopting this name. The Panel believe that this suggestion is too general and unspecific.
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Based on this advice, and our feeling that a minimum of two options should be presented to the public, the list of proposals was narrowed to ‘Glyndŵr’ and ‘Bryniau Clwyd a’r Berwyn’ (noting the slight correction advised by the panel).

Public Consultation 2024

A question on the name was included in the public consultation questionnaire, the following is an extract from the consultation report:

QUESTION 5E:

IF A NATIONAL PARK IS ESTABLISHED, THEN IT WOULD REQUIRE A NEW NAME. WORKING WITH PARTNERS WE HAVE IDENTIFIED TWO OPTIONS.

- PARK CENEDLAETHOL - BRYNIAU CLWYD A’R BERWYN - NATIONAL PARK
- PARK CENEDLAETHOL - GLYNDŴR - NATIONAL PARK

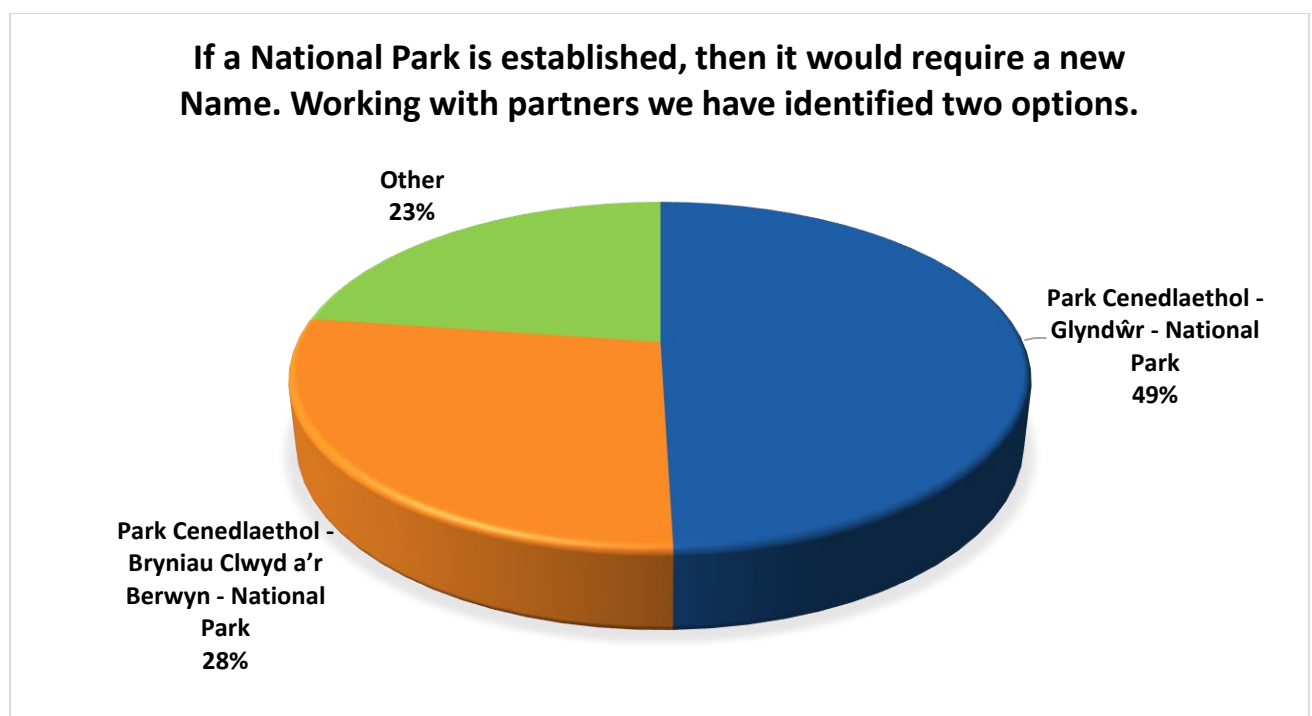


Figure 1: Exploring possible name options for the proposed National Park

Respondents were asked to select one of the two options, or indicate that they wished to choose an alternative. 1,528 out of the 1,911 questionnaire responses answered this question. 49.5% (757) Park Cenedlaethol - Glyndŵr - National Park, 27.8% (424) Park Cenedlaethol - Bryniau Clwyd a’r Berwyn - National Park, 22.7% (347) Other.

The second part of the question allowed the respondents to suggest another name and/or to give a short justification for their answer. Within the 'other' section of the question, respondents were given the option to suggest an alternative name, and to write a justification for their selection. This option was available for any respondent, whether they had selected one of the two proposed names, or had selected their own. There were 562 responses to this option. The answers have been carefully analysed and themed in order of most mentioned to least mentioned.

OTHER NAME

88 respondents (15.7%) suggested 'other names' which included "*Parc Genedlaethol Clwyd National Park*", "*Bryniau Clwyd*" and "*Clwydian National Park*". No alternative name rose to the surface from the abundance of different suggestions received.

HISTORICAL / CULTURAL IMPORTANCE

50 respondents (8.9%) mentioned 'historical and cultural importance'. All of the respondents who suggested Glyndŵr outlined the cultural and historical significance of the name and its heritage, for example, "*Glyndŵr has a historic leaning*". Others felt that calling a National Park Glyndŵr might "dilute the legend of Glyndŵr" and feared the "*name has too many nationalist connotations*", whilst others felt the name was "*not well known outside of Wales*". Many who chose Bryniau Clwyd a'r Berwyn felt that despite the historical significance of Glyndŵr, the name of a new National Park should reflect the area of the National Park and not a historical character.

EASE OF PRONUNCIATION

30 respondents (5.3%) wanted 'ease of pronunciation'. Respondents mainly felt that, as the majority of visitors would probably speak English, it would be sensible to use a name which English speakers may be able to pronounce. Some commented "*Glyndŵr is short, memorable, easy to pronounce for non-Welsh speakers, and also the name of an existing walking route within Wales*".

EASY TO REMEMBER

22 respondents (3.9%) wanted the name to be 'easy to remember'. Most felt any new name should be "*catchy*", some saying they "*like the reference to either Clwyd or Glyndŵr*" but feel "*simplicity is the key*".

LENGTH OF THE NAME

20 respondents (3.6%) commented on the length of the name. All respondents felt the name for a National Park should be "*short*" and "*memorable*". Some saying "*a short name that will resonate with a wide audience*" is needed. Those who chose 'Other', said "*a short clear name is needed. Glyndŵr is too vague, Bryniau Clwyd a'r Berwyn too vague*" some suggested "*Parc Cenedlaethol Clwyd is good enough*".

GEOGRAPHICAL

20 respondents (3.6%) made geographical comments. Of the respondents who selected Bryniau Clwyd a'r Berwyn, they all explained that this best described the area, providing a geographical reference, for example *"describes the geography"* and *"the geographical oriented name is far better and evokes memories of mountains and valleys. Wonderful!"*. Respondents who did not select one of the two choices explained that the names did not cover enough of the proposed National Park area; some noting *"Clwyd/Berwyn doesn't cover the whole areas. Clwyd should not be perpetuated. Glyndŵr is better but mainly identified with Dee Valley/ Llansilin areas"*.

In June 2025 these findings were shared again with the 'Naming sites and places & List of Historic Placenames' Group in NRW with the proposal that, on the balance of evidence and opinion, the name 'Glyndŵr' should be recommended to the NRW Board for the purpose of preparing a Designation Order if required. Following a meeting on the 3rd of January the group responded;

"The group agreed with the outcome of the report shared, appreciating that whilst not a geographic name, Glyndŵr was quite well known and the outcome is evidence based. The group support the outcome."

Conclusion

If a National Park Authority is created then it could change its name. However NRW has a responsibility to prepare the designation order using an appropriate name that meets relevant criteria and for which there is some consensus. As such we have acknowledged the historical justifications provided by the Royal Commission, the feedback from the Welsh Place Names Standardisation Panel, the majority preference that emerged from the public consultation and the feedback from the 'Naming sites and places & List of Historic Placenames' Group. Based on this it is concluded that 'Glyndŵr' is the preferred name option and will be recommended to the NRW Board in July 2025 for the purposes of preparing a Designation Order (should this be the board's decision). At that point the NRW Board will be asked to assess the desirability to designate and if agreed, authorise the project to proceed to statutory consultation later in 2025.