

Diversity and Inclusion: Annual Report 2025-26

July 2026



The Welsh Parliament is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people. Commonly known as the Senedd, it makes laws for Wales, agrees Welsh taxes and holds the Welsh Government to account.

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Diversity and Inclusion: Annual Report 2025-26

July 2026





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Introduction



This Annual Report marks both the final reporting year of the Sixth Senedd and an important moment of transition for the Senedd Commission's approach to Diversity and Inclusion.

It reflects a period of significant organisational change, sustained delivery and growing maturity in how Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) is understood, led and embedded across the organisation.

The Sixth Senedd D&I Strategy (2022-2026) set out an ambitious vision: to ensure that Diversity and Inclusion underpin our everyday activities and strategic planning; to foster values-led leadership and culture; to be a representative and inclusive place to work; and to deliver an accessible, inclusive Parliament for the People of Wales. Over the course of the Senedd term, this strategy has provided a strong and consistent framework for action, accountability and learning during a time of continued internal and external change.

Throughout the Sixth Senedd, the Senedd Commission has navigated significant transformation – including changes to our size and shape, new workforce planning approaches, evolving recruitment models and preparations for the expansion of the Senedd itself. These shifts have inevitably influenced how some strategic objectives could be delivered in practice. For example, changes in recruitment volume and approach have affected our ability to meet the specific criteria required for certain external accreditations. However, this period of change has also sharpened our focus on sustainable inclusion, capability-building and long-term cultural impact, rather than activity alone.

Against this backdrop, the Strategy has driven meaningful progress. Diversity and Inclusion considerations are now more firmly embedded in governance, policy development, estate planning, electoral activity, communications and citizen engagement. Leadership accountability has strengthened, Equality Impact Assessment practice has matured, and colleagues across the organisation increasingly understand their role in creating an inclusive culture. Investment in learning, wellbeing, our Workplace Equality Networks and inclusive engagement has helped to ensure that inclusion is not the responsibility of a single team, but a shared organisational endeavour.

A significant development during this reporting period has been the transition of Diversity and Inclusion from a standalone function adjacent to recruitment into the wider Culture and Capability portfolio, alongside Organisational Development and Learning & Development. This move reflects a deliberate shift from treating Diversity and Inclusion as a discrete specialism to positioning it as a core organisational capability. It recognises that lasting inclusion is built through culture, leadership systems and everyday behaviours; not solely through policy or programme delivery.

This integration has enabled closer alignment between Diversity and Inclusion, workforce development, leadership capability and organisational design. It has also strengthened our ability to respond to evidence from staff surveys and lived experience, focusing on prevention as well as response, and embed inclusive practice across the full employee lifecycle. While this transition has required adjustment, it represents a critical step towards a more holistic, sustainable and outcomes-focused approach.

As this Annual Report demonstrates, progress during the Sixth Senedd has been achieved through the commitment, professionalism and creativity of colleagues across the Senedd Commission, supported by our Workplace Equality Networks, steering groups and external partners. At the same time, we are clear that inclusion is not a destination. The work of the Sixth Senedd provides strong foundations and clear learning for the next phase.

Looking ahead to the Seventh Senedd, we remain firmly committed to embedding and championing Diversity and Inclusion as a fundamental enabler of organisational effectiveness, democratic legitimacy and public trust. Building on the progress of the Sixth Senedd, our focus will be on deepening inclusion through culture and capability, strengthening inclusive leadership and ensuring the Senedd Commission continues to reflect, serve and belong to the people of Wales.



Joyce Watson MS

Senedd
Commissioner
with responsibility
for employees and
equalities

Foreword

It is our pleasure to introduce the Senedd Commission's Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2025-26.

This reporting period has been a year in which we have continued to strengthen our commitment to being an accessible, representative, and inclusive Parliament for the people of Wales.

This report demonstrates the breadth and depth of work undertaken across the organisation: from embedding inclusive design into the refurbishment of the Siambr, to delivering multilingual election resources; from strengthening our workplace culture and wellbeing support, to deepening engagement with communities whose voices are too often under-represented in public life. These achievements are the result of colleagues across the Senedd working with dedication, compassion, and creativity.

The work of the Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group, our Workplace Equality Networks, and the many teams and individuals championing inclusion in their everyday roles has been central to this. Their leadership and lived experience continue to enrich our culture and influence our strategic direction.

We have also made meaningful strides in widening participation through programmes such as Ymlaen, by providing accessible digital and physical resources for the 2026 Senedd Election, and by engaging thousands of people across Wales through tailored outreach and creative engagement approaches. These efforts are vital as we seek to build confidence, understanding, and representation in our democratic processes.

Internally, our focus on wellbeing, flexible working, inclusive recruitment, and staff development continues to evolve, informed by evidence from our surveys and through ongoing dialogue with colleagues. We are proud that so many of our staff feel able to bring their whole selves to work, and we remain committed to ensuring that every colleague feels valued, supported, and empowered to thrive.

Thank you to every colleague, partner organisation, and community member who has contributed to this year's achievements. Your commitment is what makes this progress possible.

Our Year in Highlights

Over the last year we have continued to develop best practice and promote inclusion.

Developed our new People & Culture Strategy.

Delivered a suite of training and awareness to celebrate diversity and promote inclusion, including an enhanced interparliamentary offer.

Improved processes for the delivery of reasonable adjustments.

Reviewed our corporate culture and our ONE TEAM approach through regular staff surveys.

Supported the development of our YMLAEN graduate interns.

Continued to enhance our corporate commitment to wellbeing.

Utilised our inclusion networks, our Workforce Steering Group and our Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group to promote inclusion, provide guidance and scrutiny of our work.

Reviewed our recruitment policy and rolled out mandatory inclusive recruitment training.

Undertook consultation and engagement with people across Wales, including participation in committee inquiries and the promotion of the Senedd 2026 election.

Signed the Armed Forces Covenant.

Improved the accessibility of our estate

Engaged with thousands of children through our education programme and the work of the Welsh Youth Parliament

Invited a diverse range of people onto our estate and held events and exhibitions that celebrate Diversity & Inclusion in Wales.

Supported Members to promote Wales and the Senedd on a global stage.

Our Approach to Diversity and Inclusion

We are committed to being an accessible parliament that represents all the people of Wales and welcomes people from around the world. We aspire to be an exemplar and inclusive organisation for our staff, the Members of the Senedd and the public that we serve.

As a public body, we have obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, promote inclusion and foster good relations between different people. These three duties underpin our approach to diversity and inclusion.

Our Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

Our strategy¹ for the sixth Senedd sets out our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion. It outlines the following objectives for the rest of the Senedd term:

- Ensuring Diversity and Inclusion underpin our everyday activities and strategic planning;
- Developing a values-led leadership and culture;
- Fostering a representative, inclusive place to work; and
- Delivering an accessible, inclusive parliament for the people of Wales.

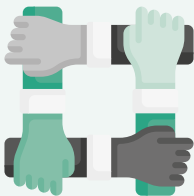
As part of this Strategy, our teams across the Senedd Commission are tasked with considering Diversity and Inclusion in all aspects of their work. We continue to strive to be a welcoming place to work, to visit, and to represent everyone in Wales.

Our strategy is available on our website in full, in a summary form, in Easy Read and in British Sign Language.

¹ <https://senedd.wales/commission/work-for-the-senedd-commission/diversity-and-inclusion-at-the-commission/our-strategy/>

Our Values

Our corporate values state our commitment to be respectful, inclusive and kind, and to support the Welsh Parliament in a way that celebrates our individual contributions to serving the people of Wales.



RESPECT

We are inclusive, kind, and value each other's contributions in delivering excellent services.



PASSION

We are purposeful in our support of democracy and pull together to make a difference for the people of Wales.



PRIDE

We embrace innovation and celebrate our achievements together as a team.



WE ARE ONE TEAM

Our Values define what we do and how we do it, and they unite us as a single team.



Diversity and Inclusion underpin our everyday activities and strategic planning



Colleagues across the organisation work innovatively to build Diversity and Inclusion into their work.

Equality Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) enable us to consider how our work may impact different people. They are a way of ensuring that the needs of different people are fully considered when developing or reviewing all kinds of activities such as policies, procedures, or projects. Our HR Business Partners have monthly meetings with each Head of Service to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities to undertake EQIAs.

During this reporting period impact assessments have been undertaken on a range of work including: HR policies (such as our Transition at Work Policy, Sickness Absence Policy, Dignity and Respect Policy, Hybrid Working Policy and Neonatal Policy); changes to our estate (such as the refurbishment of the Senedd Siambr and changes to the Senedd entrance); and other working policies, practices and projects (such as our AI Policy, election campaign, and the Determination of the Seventh Senedd)

Dignity and Respect

Our Dignity and Respect policy sets out our commitment to an inclusive culture free from bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, and victimisation. As a result of staff feedback from our Dignity and Respect survey, this policy has been fully reviewed and updated and sets out:

- Detailed definitions of inappropriate behaviours including bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, and victimisation.
- Clear procedures for reporting any issues or concerns, including informal and formal mechanisms.
- The support people can access, including the role of trained Contact Officers.
- Details of the overall dignity and respect framework the organisation has in place to demonstrate steps to mitigate inappropriate behaviour.

- Measures to protect complainants and witnesses where concerns are raised.
- How information will be processed to manage confidentiality whilst ensuring a fair process.

Accessible Estate

We continually review the accessibility of our estate by undertaking monthly maintenance and grounds audits, acting on feedback. We adopt best practice and consider access requirements for all refurbishment work.

- The largest project undertaken during this period was the refurbishment of the debating chamber in the Senedd to improve accessibility and accommodate additional Members following the May 2026 election. The Siambr 26 project involved replacing the stepped floor with ramped walkways, raising the Llywydd position to improve lines of sight with a fully accessible ramp to access this raised position, and working closely with accessibility consultant throughout the design and building works phases and undertaking EQIA for the project.
- We improved accessibility by providing additional automatic door openings.
- We continued with the programme of installing LED lighting to improve visibility in the Senedd for people with visual impairments and photo-sensitive epilepsy.
- We undertook remedial actions to repair and improve external lighting of the Pierhead.
- We installed new signage at the entrance to the Senedd.
- We promoted our success in achieving the Kids in Museums Family Cafe Standard, outlining recent changes, such as baby feeding bottle warming facilities, water bottle filling station, increased signage, and an improved children's area.
- We made improvements to our grounds maintenance processes to prevent slips, trips and falls.

- We commissioned a sensory audit of the public areas of our estate to ensure that our buildings are welcoming and inclusive for people who are neurodivergent.

People and Culture Strategy

Our **People & Culture Strategy** sets out how, as an organisation, we build and develop our team to achieve our organisational goals. It outlines our 'offer' to our current and future workforce: how we will utilise the talent of the workforce to deliver the best services to the Senedd and how we will look after, develop and engage the Commission's workforce.

This Strategy serves as a framework for us to bring in, bring on and help our workforce thrive and deliver an exemplary service to Members of the Senedd. It also helps to join-up related existing strategies, workstreams and other activities into a coherent package.

Other ways Diversity and Inclusion are built into our work:

Senior accountability

To further advance senior accountability and ownership of our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, members of our Executive Board each have a Diversity and Inclusion objective in their performance reviews. They have also made service area commitments to wellbeing.

Building partnerships

We have close working relationships with a number of external strategic partners, public sector networks and interparliamentary counterparts who provide advice, guidance and resources on different topics to help us to further embed inclusion.

Partnership Forum: TUS and Management meetings

Members of our recognised trades unions (collectively known as Trade Union Side) meet regularly with our senior management to discuss strategic and operational issues. These meetings ensure that there is a constant dialogue between our leadership and staff representatives and help develop inclusive policies and further embed a sense of belonging for our staff.

Recruitment

We have refreshed our Recruitment Policy following extensive consultation. The refreshed policy strengthens our approach to recruitment by supporting delivery of the People & Culture Strategy and Workforce Plan, enabling more strategic and evidence-based decision making, and reinforcing consistency, transparency and inclusion across recruitment practices. It also reflects operational learning and feedback on the previous policy and procedures.

The review and consultation process engaged a wide range of stakeholders, including the Leadership Team and Executive Board, Equality Networks, the Workforce Steering Group and the Trade Union Side through formal consultation, Partnership Forum discussions and dedicated engagement sessions.

This collaborative approach has ensured the refreshed policy is robust, inclusive and fit for purpose.

Our careers website has been refreshed to provide more streamlined information about us as an employer, including new candidate guidance. Staff profiles and stories have been refreshed to provide insights to prospective employees as to the type of roles we have and what is it like to work with us.

Recruitment for Public and Crown Appointments

The Senedd and Senedd Commission's role in Public and Crown appointment varies according to each appointment process. We continue to collect, analyse and monitor applicants' diversity data for all Public and Crown appointments processes in order to build a richer data set. We have piloted anonymised applications for our most recent campaigns and work with our executive search partners to increase and diversify the talent pipelines and panels for senior Commission appointments and Public and Crown appointments.

Our Public Appointments webpages have also been updated to provide information on the range of appointments and general candidate information designed to attract the widest range of prospective candidates.

Workforce Steering Group

The Workforce Steering Group (WSG) provides a strategic oversight of our workforce priorities and future planning. The Group:

- Supports the development of the workforce to ensure we have staff with the skills, competencies, and knowledge to deliver effective support and services for the Senedd;
- Ensures there is a positive working environment for staff which promotes an open culture that supports our values;
- Ensures that health and wellbeing remain a priority;
- Makes recommendations on workforce matters to Executive Board.

The WSG also works in partnership with the Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group to ensure that inclusion runs throughout our strategic forward work programmes. Key impacts include:

- Refreshing a PESTLE analysis to better understand the external factors affecting the Commission;
- Discussing and prioritising workforce planning activities for the Commission, including consideration of proposals for a talent management framework and the refreshed recruitment policy;
- Contributing to discussions on operational issues related to recruitment and workforce activities; and
- Discussing how members of the WSG, who are on Leadership Team, can ensure their services commit to the strategy.

Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group

The Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group (DISG) plays a vital role in fostering an inclusive, progressive, and forward looking workplace. A core function of the DISG is to ensure that diversity and inclusion remains central to our governance and decision-making processes. The group has supported this by:

- Contributing to business-as-usual reports presented to the Executive Board, ensuring D&I considerations are consistently embedded.
- Overseeing progress on the D&I Strategy, providing scrutiny and accountability on outstanding objectives.
- Providing insight and recommendations on the draft People and Culture Strategy 2025–2028, ensuring that inclusivity remains fundamental to the delivery of the Commission’s people priorities.
- Establishing a D&I Steering Group Sub Group focused on improving communication and engagement with diverse communities, strengthening the impact of inclusive campaigns and outreach efforts.

Through the sharing of lived experiences and professional insights, DISG members have helped shape policies and practices that reflect the values of fairness, equality, and inclusion. Their contributions have been instrumental in driving meaningful change, and we look forward to building on this positive momentum in the years ahead.

Procurement

Equality of opportunity is included as part of our sustainability risk assessments, which we undertake at the very start of our procurement process. In addition, our tender prequalification process includes equality considerations for suppliers. Suppliers who fail to demonstrate their commitment to equality will not be successful in getting onto our tender lists.

We conduct regular contract review meetings with our top suppliers and one of the standard agenda items is corporate social responsibility. We work with our suppliers to monitor and ensure fair employment practices, and we reserve the right to request changes to any of those practices we consider to be unfair. This is also a contractual obligation through our terms and conditions.

We are an accredited Real Living Wage employer, and we ensure that our in-house contractors are paid above the living wage rate by their employers, plus we have worked with them to enhance their sickness policy.

A member of the team recently attended a workshop facilitated by Business in the Community, where the findings of its Leadership, Employee, and Procurement survey focusing on diversity in supply chains, was discussed. The session highlighted:

- Best practice for procurement processes that are inclusive of suppliers led by Black, Asian, Mixed Race, and other ethnically diverse groups;
- Barriers faced by these suppliers and solutions to overcome them; and
- Case studies of successful inclusive procurement strategies from leading businesses.

The learning from this event is being incorporated into our work going forward.

We have included a section in our tender documents, where we signpost suppliers to sign up to Disability Confident Scheme.

Security

Following on from last year our dedicated Members' Security Team is undertaking ongoing work to enhance both safety and accessibility within constituency and regional offices, improving accessibility into offices for members of the public.

Our Security Team also continues to promote inclusion by:

- Providing reasonable adjustments for staff, such as amending shift patterns and adjusting rotas to accommodate prayer, visits to a mosque and observing Ramadan;
- Providing reasonable adjustments for staff who are observing Lent. Prayer time and reflection time.
- Ensuring that our uniforms meet the needs of our staff; and have recently provided health and safety standard boots for the service.
- Ensuring that visitors receive an inclusive welcome by adjusting procedures, anticipating the needs of visitors and undertaking inclusive customer service training.
- Updated our visitor code of conduct for consistency off all visitors to the Senedd.
- Provided a "virtual tour" of the new Security layout at the Senedd to give members of the public prior notice of what to expect.

ICT and Broadcasting

Over the past year, we have continued to strengthen our commitment to digital inclusion by expanding the tools, services and support available to Members, their staff, Commission colleagues and members of the public.

The new Accessibility Tools and Reasonable Adjustments page on our intranet provides a central, easy-to-navigate resource outlining the full range of assistive technologies available across the Microsoft 365 platform. The page also highlights the process for requesting specialist equipment and approved assistive software - including tools like Dragon Professional, Read & Write, and Global Tasks - as part of our reasonable adjustments framework. This ensures that staff with visual, hearing, mobility, cognitive, or neurodiversity-related needs can access the tools required to work effectively and confidently.

Supporting the progress of the British Sign Language (BSL Bill)

Our ICT and Broadcasting team played a key role in supporting the Senedd's consideration and delivery of the British Sign Language (BSL) Bill, ensuring that Deaf BSL signers could access proceedings throughout the legislative process.

Working closely with the Host Broadcaster, clerking teams and specialist BSL interpreters, the service established the technical arrangements required to deliver live BSL interpretation across both Plenary and committee proceedings, supporting every stage of the Bill's passage.

Broadcasting workflows were enhanced to integrate live BSL interpretation into standard coverage, ensuring that interpretation was delivered reliably, to broadcast quality, and made available to audiences both on the Senedd estate and remotely via Senedd TV.

The technical arrangements put in place ensured that BSL signers were able to follow debates in real time, rather than relying on retrospective access. This was particularly important given the length, complexity and significance of the Bill's scrutiny.

The work also supported accessible participation within the Senedd building, enabling visitors in the public gallery and the Neuadd to view proceedings with BSL interpretation during debates. This helped to ensure that Deaf people were not only observing the legislative process but were able to engage with it directly.

The work undertaken to support the BSL Bill demonstrated how technology and broadcasting services can support inclusive democratic participation. Embedding accessibility into the delivery of proceedings helped to ensure that Deaf people across Wales could engage fully with legislation that directly affects them.

The improvements delivered during the progress of the BSL Bill created wider and lasting benefits. The enhanced broadcasting setup enabled the Senedd to seamlessly provide live BSL interpretation for First Minister's Questions from December 2025, replacing the previous retrospective-only provision. This represented a significant step forward in making core parliamentary business accessible as it happens.

Alongside BSL interpretation, ICT and Broadcasting continues to assist with the delivery of a range of accessibility measures for deaf and hearing-impaired audiences.

The team work closely with colleagues and customers to ensure that appropriate assistive technologies are in place for all system users. This involves keeping pace with the changing needs of Members, Members' staff, our staff, and visitors by adopting a range of technologies to support accessibility, such as providing support during events and proceedings for speech to text palantypists, maintaining proven solutions such as induction loop systems for assistive hearing, and evaluating new Bluetooth-assisted hearing technologies on our estate.

To support inclusive and barrier free participation at public events, the Senedd is replacing its existing translation and portable induction loop system with a new all in one system. The system is DIN EN 60118 4 compliant, providing crystal clear sound and excellent speech intelligibility for hearing aid users. Its low latency performance also enables lip sync compatibility and, for visually impaired users the system can deliver blind coverage and audio description services.

We continue to progress a multiyear project to install new broadcasting systems and infrastructure. A key driver for this work is improving accessibility through enhanced subtitling and closed captioning capabilities, as well as new options for displaying BSL interpretation.



Values-led leadership and culture



Diversity and Inclusion training and awareness raising

All our colleagues understand their role in advancing inclusion and nurturing an inclusive workplace and parliamentary environment.

Training

We understand that Learning and Development are key to developing an engaged and inclusive workforce. During this reporting period we have continued to provide a suite of learning opportunities for our staff, offering both formal learning and informal awareness raising – enabling staff to fulfil their potential and better understand the diverse experiences of colleagues, visitors and the people of Wales.

We continue to review our internal courses through an inclusion lens and are working to have all our internal courses CPD accredited. This process includes ensuring our courses are accessible, representative, and support the diverse needs of our workforce. By embedding inclusion into professional development, we are fostering a learning environment where all colleagues can thrive.

Inclusive recruitment

This training is offered in-house to support our recruitment panels to provide reasonable adjustments and fair working practices when supporting Senedd applicants at application and interview stage. This work has enabled us, as a Disability Confident employer, to continue to break down barriers and lessen the potential for discrimination and bias; allowing panel members to provide a positive experience to applicants throughout the recruitment process.

Sexual Harassment prevention

Our mandatory sexual harassment prevention training is designed to reinforce our commitment to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive workplace for all employees. The training helps ensure that staff clearly understand what constitutes unacceptable behaviour, how to identify and challenge it, and the routes available for support or reporting concerns. It also supports us in meeting our legal and ethical responsibilities under UK equality and employment legislation, reducing risk and strengthening a culture where everyone feels valued and able to contribute without fear of harassment or discrimination.

Interparliamentary Learning and Development

Our Interparliamentary Learning and Development work has gone from strength to strength this year. Working with parliamentary colleagues from across the UK and Republic of Ireland, we have successfully delivered a series of learning events throughout the year.

These events have placed a spotlight on inclusivity and enabled everyone to think about the importance of having a diverse workplace - as well as how we can create safe, inclusive and welcoming environments for colleagues, visitors and the people of Wales.

Learning at Work Week

For Learning at Work week, we hosted a range of sessions and workshops to inspire and enthuse colleagues and interparliamentary counterparts - including sessions on the Power of Mentoring, how to run effective staff networks, the Chemistry of Collaboration and how to best cultivate positive workplace relationships. There were also sessions on British Sign Language, Scottish Gaelic, Irish Gaelic and Welsh.

Inclusion Month

Inclusion Month saw a range of exciting events, including: a carer's workshop focussing on how best to balance work and caring responsibilities; a Q&A panel session with Interparliamentary Senior Leaders on Men's Mental Health; inclusive communication; and a focused one-hour session inviting parliamentarians to engage in constructive conversations around race and ethnicity.

LGBTQ+ History Month

To mark LGBTQ+ History Month 2026, we supported a series of informative and engaging sessions designed to build understanding, reflect on lived experiences and strengthen inclusion and allyship. This included Transgender Awareness Training, which supported colleagues on how to be a better ally to Trans people at work, an interactive discussion session on LGBTQ+ Inclusion and Allyship and a session on LGBTQ+ Science, Innovation and Health Inequality hosted by the House of Lords.

Interparliamentary Mentoring Programme

We have worked with colleagues from the Northern Ireland Assembly, The House of Lords and the House of Commons to develop a mentoring programme which focuses on professional and personal development and building networks across the Parliaments.

Awareness raising for an inclusive culture



- We have promoted many awareness days throughout the year, such as Trans Awareness Week, Eid, Easter, Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month, World Down Syndrome Day, World Mental Health Day, the Holi festival, Hanukkah, Lunar New Year, Pride, Black History Month, Diwali, disability inclusion, and Women's History Month.
- We publish a weekly top tip on being a D&I ally, covering a range of topics such as benevolent sexism, being grief aware, agism, producing accessible information, racial gaslighting, having a respectful Halloween, and celebrating diverse families.
- The Senedd was illuminated in the colours of the rainbow pride flag for International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia.
- As part of our ongoing commitment to being a menopause-friendly employer we marked World Menopause Day by hosting a Menopause Café, a safe, supportive space to enable open dialogue.
- We marked White Ribbon Day by promoting awareness of domestic violence and violence against women and girls, sharing our domestic abuse policy and relevant resources on our safeguarding hub.
- To mark Stress Awareness Month, we welcomed an external speaker to share tips on how to manage stress in a busy and demanding world. In this session, there were six interventions recommended to help staff manage and improve their stress levels.

Supporting Health, Safety, Wellbeing and Safeguarding

Wellbeing

We continued to take an evidence driven approach to wellbeing throughout the reporting period, drawing on insights from the Spring 2025 staff survey and workforce data presented through the HR Dashboard.

Wellbeing Action Plans for each Service area were refreshed enabling Heads of Service to target consistent improvements in areas where negative trends were emerging.

A series of special edition Wellbeing Newsletters were also published, focusing on Endometriosis, Menopause and Neurodiversity. Awareness activity remained strong across the year, with communications supporting Endometriosis Awareness Month, World Menopause Day, Men's Health Month, Festive Wellbeing and other seasonal themes, as well as national mental health campaigns including Time to Talk Day and World Mental Health Day.

Wellbeing Survey - Headline Findings

The findings from our most recent survey are generally positive, with the metrics generally moving in the desired direction compared to the previous survey in Spring 2025.

- 79% of respondents agree that the organisation does a good job of embedding wellbeing into the workplace culture, an increase of 3%.
- 82% agree that they are able to 'bring your whole self to work', being authentic at work without judgement, a slight decrease from 84%.

Physical health

- Respondents rating their physical health increased from an average of 3.49 out of 5 to 3.56 out of 5.
- The percentage of respondents who say they have worked whilst unwell has significantly reduced from 47% to 39%.

Mental health

- There has been an increase in staff rating of their mental health – increasing from 3.31 out of 5 to 3.35 out of 5.
- There has been a slight reduction in the number of staff who say they have experienced work-related stress over the last 6 months; now at 47%, compared to the two previous years of 50%.
- 77% of staff saying their workload is about right for their hours. 19% of respondents saying they have too much work and 4% of respondents saying they do not have enough work for their contracted hours.
- The 3 main causes of work-related stress continue to be: workload, last minute demands/deadlines and providing cover for a role. However, the percentage of respondents citing these as contributing factors have reduced.

Social connection

- The vast majority of respondents feel supported and connected to their team and agree their line manager cares about their wellbeing (94% and 95% respectively). These are comparable to the previous survey.
- 89% feel valued by their management team.

Financial wellbeing

- 73% of respondents agreed that the pay deal improved their financial wellbeing. Responses highlighted that the pay award helped staff manage increased living costs, pay off debts, and improve their overall financial situation.
- 77% agree that we provide sufficient financial support and information.

Working arrangements and general support for staff

- 91% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their working arrangements and 86% had no current concerns about their health, safety or wellbeing with regards to attending site to work.

- There is a substantial level of awareness regarding the available support mechanisms, with seven out of the eight surveyed mechanisms achieving an awareness rate of 80% or higher.

Embedding Wellbeing: Supporting staff in our Research Service

Over the past year, Senedd Research has taken more steps to promote inclusion by strengthening how we support staff health and wellbeing. Following a rise in presenteeism, we reinforced the message that taking sick leave is fully supported and provided clearer guidance for line managers on helping staff make informed decisions around absence and spotting early signs of burnout. Teams also discussed barriers to taking sick leave to ensure solutions reflect real staff experience.

To support inclusive mental wellbeing, we improved visibility of mental health resources and recognised the “invisible workload” pressures that may disproportionately affect colleagues with caring responsibilities, disabilities or complex portfolios. We continue to monitor wellbeing trends through wellbeing pulse surveys.

Rising work-related stress prompted the team to focus on the underlying causes rather than expecting individuals to simply be more resilient. The service’s Team Leader group now share information to prioritise work more realistically and fairly across teams, so people aren’t overloaded. Regular all staff meetings also help ensure everyone has equal access to information. Together, these steps promote a more supportive and inclusive environment.

Workplace Equality Networks

Championing Equality Together

Our Workplace Equality Networks are a space where colleagues can connect, feel heard, and help shape a workplace that truly values diversity and inclusion. Every conversation, every idea shared within these networks contributes to making our organisation stronger and fairer for everyone.

Driving Change Across the Organisation

Our networks play a vital role in influencing policies and practices, ensuring equality is embedded in everything we do. By working closely with leadership and colleagues, we help turn principles into action. Whether that's improving accessibility, celebrating cultural diversity, or challenging barriers. These networks are a bridge between staff and decision-makers, and your involvement makes that bridge even stronger.

Passion and Commitment at the Heart

Our passion comes from knowing that together, we can create a workplace where everyone feels respected and empowered.



EMBRACE

Our Disability Workplace
Equality Network



INSPIRE

Our Women's Workplace
Equality Network



MINDFUL

Our Mental Health
Support Network



PLWS

Our LGBTQ+ Workplace
Equality Network



REACH

Our Race, Ethnicity and
Cultural Heritage Network



RISE

Our Social Mobility
Network



TEULU

Our Working Parent
and Carer Network

This year saw the launch of two sub-networks – Café Neuro for staff who are neurodivergent and Sied Senedd, a social and support group for men.

Café Neuro

This year, we were proud to launch Cafe Neuro, our network for neurodivergent people. It's a supportive space for colleagues to connect share experiences and help shape a more inclusive workplace for everyone. The group has already promoted awareness of neurodiversity, provided invaluable feedback and one member has met with our Executive Board members to discuss their experience of joining our organisation.

Sied Senedd

Our Men's Shed was established to provide an informal, low-pressure environment for male colleagues to connect and support one another. Recognising that the best conversations often happen "shoulder-to-shoulder" rather than across a desk, we designed the group to create places where camaraderie can develop.

Since our launch, momentum has built rapidly. Our programme of self-organised events reflects the diverse interests of our members, ranging from match days at Cardiff Arms Park to Gaelic football trials and sauna trips in Porthcawl. We have also begun collaborating with community partners, such as UK Men's Sheds Association, to develop hands-on workshops in woodworking and tech skills.

"Sied Senedd is a place for men around the Senedd to come together outside of formal roles, to talk, unwind, and support each other. Whether it's through shared activities, walking meetings, or just a discussion, the Shed is a space to build wellbeing. No agendas. Just people"

As one colleague puts it, "It's just great to get talking,".

REACH

As part of our work to mark Ramadan, our Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage (REACH) workplace network shared information about the holy month, provided advice on how to support colleagues, and invited colleagues to iftar, the meal that breaks the fast during Ramadan. Staff gathered in our canteen after work to break the fast with water and dates as a local imam shared information about fasting, iftar and Ramadan. This was followed by a meal where colleagues who joined their Muslim colleagues to try fasting for the day shared their experience.

MINDFUL

MINDFUL, our mental health and wellbeing network, has continued to focus on encouraging staff to make time in their working day to re-connect with colleagues and take time away from screens, by getting outside together and moving more during break times.

To mark Time to Talk Day, the network hosted a drop-in session to encourage colleagues to have open conversations about mental health while completing mindfulness activities.

PLWS

A consultation and listening exercise was run by the network over the summer recess, after which a plan was developed to revitalise the network, including reviewing the network's intranet content, the development of external contacts, fostering opportunities for member interactions, and promoting learning and development opportunities. One notable innovation, thanks to members of the network, is the setting up on a book group focussing on works by LGBTQ+ authors. This is proving an excellent way to engage members of the network in a relevant and enjoyable activity.

ENGAGE – our all-staff network

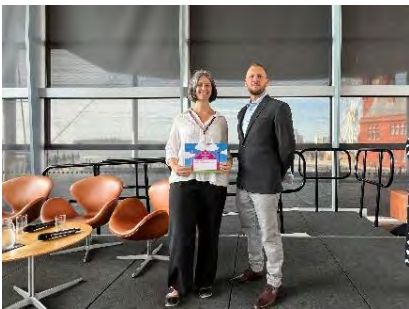
ENGAGE is our online network that is designed to enhance communication, foster employee engagement and promote a positive working environment. It allows all our staff to be involved in shaping their work experience and to share and celebrate ideas to drive a positive change. It contributes to a positive and productive workplace environment, with our values at the heart; Passion, Pride, Respect and One Team.

One Senedd: The Senedd Community – Belonging and #OneTeam

One Senedd: Bringing us together

We strive to entrench a sense of community and togetherness for our staff through regular all staff meetings. These events are used to share information from our senior team, celebrate our staff, welcome external speakers and help to enhance a sense of belonging and sense of pride in our Senedd community. Our annual rewards and recognition ceremony celebrates the work of our staff with awards aligned to our corporate values of Passion, Pride, Respect and #OneTeam. Our Eisteddfod celebrated the creativity of our colleagues with awards for photography, Welsh learners, poetry, musical performances, short stories, a bake off and the highly competitive cutest pet competition.

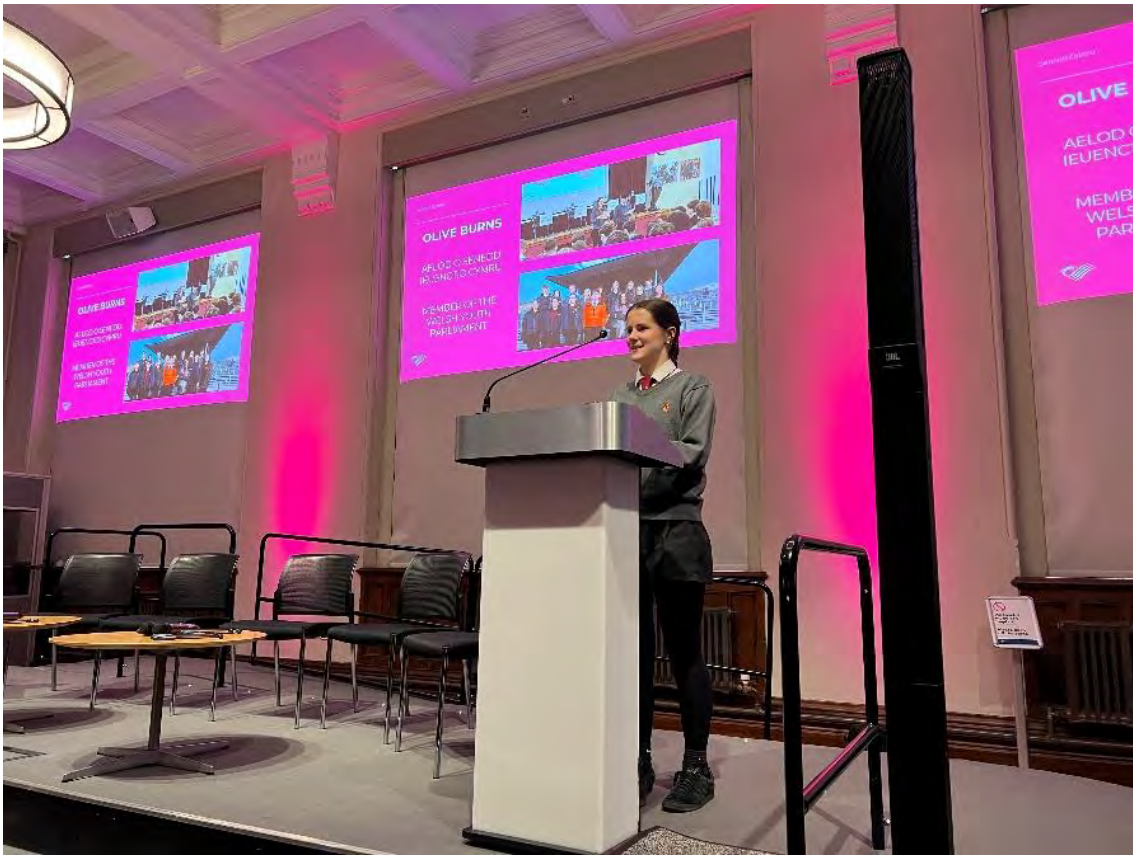






This year we were delighted to have been joined by our YMLAEN interns to hear about their experiences working with us and by Olive, one of the members of the Welsh Youth Parliament who told us about her school's LGBTQ+ society and her work in the youth parliament.





There are also a number of other groups that build connections and a culture of belonging and togetherness, including photography club, book club, Senedd steppers walking group, recipe club, gardening and bee keeping, and our bike shed cycling club.

One Senedd: Senedd sports

Our football, rugby and golf teams have continued to bring together colleagues to raise money for charity and build relationships with other public sector and parliamentary bodies.

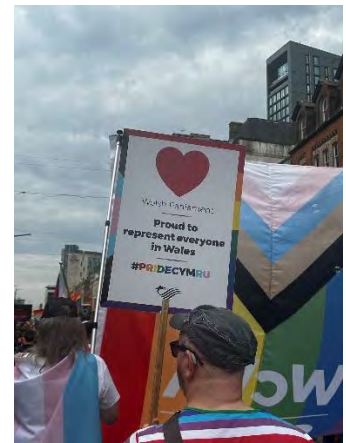


Pride Cymru

We were out in full colour at Pride Cymru. Members and allies of our PLWS network were delighted to again join the Pride Cymru parade to show support for LGBTQ+ communities in Wales and beyond and to promote the Senedd as an inclusive employer and parliament.

It was wonderful celebrating the diversity that makes Wales so special.

As the sign says, we are proud to represent everyone in Wales.



Volunteering and community outreach

During National Volunteer's Week we applauded and shared stories from staff who regularly volunteer, at local events such as Parkrun, and when supporting charities like the local dog rescue.

"Personally for me volunteering is all about boosting my mental health and wellbeing. An independent survey showed that 84% of volunteers felt an improved sense of happiness and I can certainly vouch for that."



Our festive foodbank collection was once again well supported by colleagues who had the options of donating directly to their local foodbank, donating money via a QR code, or adding contributions to collection boxes across the Senedd estate. We collected nearly 100kgs of food and toiletries which were delivered to Cardiff Foodbank.

Reaching out to promote inclusion

Our Legal team works collaboratively with universities to encourage students to see the Senedd as offering career opportunities. They regularly host student placements. In particular, we have hosted A-Level students through the Lord Edmund-Davies Legal Education Trust (LEDLET for short) scheme. The LEDLET is an independent charity established in 2013 to serve young people living in Wales or having a connection with Wales who are interested in entering the legal profession, especially those who have no prior connection with the law. We also host students through the FAIRE scheme which aims to support social mobility in the legal sector.

Social Mobility

To mark Social Mobility Day in the UK, the RISE network met to welcome new and existing members. The name reflects the aspiration for people from lower socio-economic backgrounds to rise to their potential, and the focus of the network is ensuring that everyone has the same opportunities to succeed, regardless of their socio-economic background.

This year, 50.1% of our staff disclosed their socio-economic background, compared to 47.5% in 2023, 48.5% in 2024 and 51.7% in 2025. continue to encourage all staff members to disclose their backgrounds to help us generate a richer and more comprehensive data set. This information is crucial for understanding the diverse backgrounds of our workforce and identifying areas where we can improve.

Going forward, we will continue to:

- **Encourage Disclosure:** Increase participation in socio-economic background disclosure to better understand our workforce and tailor our initiatives accordingly.
- **Enhance Recruitment Practices:** Implement more inclusive recruitment strategies to attract and support candidates from underrepresented socio-economic backgrounds.
- **Support Career Development:** Provide targeted career development and mentorship programs to ensure that all staff members have equal opportunities for growth and advancement.



A representative, inclusive place to work



Our workforce

Our aim is that our workforce reflects the society that the Senedd serves and is representative at all levels in our organisation. The widest range of people view the Senedd Commission as an attractive, prospective employer offering a unique, rewarding employee experience working at the heart of democracy in Wales. Our colleagues feel engaged and supported to realise their full potential.



Using data

Our online recruitment system enables us to collect anonymous demographic data on all job applicants. Internal data is collected through our HR /Payroll system and is presented in a way that does not enable any individual to be identifiable. Only a very small section of HR has access to the raw data.

Workforce, recruitment, and equal pay reports are published alongside this narrative report.

Commission staff headcount

31 March 2026	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
539 staff	506 staff	503 staff

Workforce and recruitment data summary

Age

Workforce

<21	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61>
0.7%	14.5%	30.2%	33.0%	17.0%	4.2%

The average age of Senedd Commission employees remains the same as last year, at 42.

Recruitment

External job offers

<20	20-39	30-39	40-49	50-59	60>
3.8%	50.0%	16.7%	20.5%	7.7%	0.0%

Internal job offers

<20	20-39	30-39	40-49	50-59	60>
0.0%	9.8%	39.0%	39.0%	9.8%	0.0%

Disability

Workforce

Disabled	Non-disabled	No data
8.7%	83.5%	7.8%

Recruitment

External job offers

2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
12.8%	17.6%	7.7%

16.8% of total applications were from disabled people.

Internal job offers

2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
9.8%	4.2%	18.8%

12.6% of total applications were from disabled people.

Gender reassignment

Less than five members of staff have identified as being trans.

4.2% of total applications for external roles were from applicants who identified as trans compared to 3.2% of applicants in 2025.

4.2 % of total applications for internal roles were from applicants who identified as trans, compared to 3.2% of applicants in 2025

0.8% of external job applications came from non-binary candidates but no job offers were made.

Race / Ethnicity

Workforce

6.1% of staff identify as being of an ethnic minority, compared to 5.9% in 2025 and 5.2% in 2024.

Ethnic minority	White	No data
6.1%	89.6%	4.3%

36.4% of staff who identify as being from an ethnic minority are employed at our lowest pay band (TS grade), up from 33.3% last year. This had shown a continued decline over the last few years, from 42.3% in 2024, 45.5% in 2023, 50% in 2022, and 57.1% in 2021.

Recruitment

The percentage of total applications from ethnic minority candidates has remained fairly stable going from 16.2% of total applications in 2023-2024, 20.2% in 2024-2025 and 17.8% this year.

External job offers

2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
9.0%	7.8%	11.5%

17.8% of total applications were from people from an ethnic minority background.

Internal job offers

2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
0.0%	4.2%	6.3%

5.0% of total applications were from people from an ethnic minority background.

Religion / Belief

Workforce

No religion / belief	Christian	Other religion/ belief *	No data
39.9%	27.5%	14.7%	18.0%

*Staff who identify with other religion / belief (Agnostic, Atheist, Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Zoroastrian) has risen from 12.6% in 2025 and 10.9% in 2024.

Recruitment

External job offers

No religion / belief	Christian	Other religion / belief	Prefer not to say / no reply
43.6%	20.5%	28.2%	7.7%

Internal job offers

No religion / belief	Christian	Other religion / belief	Prefer not to say / no reply
53.7%	26.8%	12.2%	7.3%

Sex

Our workforce is 50.6% women and 49.4% men. Women represent 52.1% of staff in our three most senior pay bands, up from 50% in 2025.

Working pattern

Women		Men	
Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
74.7%	25.3%	94.4%	5.6%

Recruitment

External Job Offers

Women			Men		
2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
41.0%	54.9%	57.7%	57.7%	45.1%	42.3%

42.1% of total applications were from women.

Internal Job Offers

Women			Men		
2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
61.0%	58.3%	50.0%	36.6%	41.7%	50.0%

53.8% of total applications were from women.

Sexual Orientation**Workforce**

LGBQ+ ²	Heterosexual / straight	Prefer not to say / No reply
7.2%	81.3%	11.5%

7.2% of staff identify as being LGBQ+, compared to 6.1% in 2025 and 5.4 in 2024.

Recruitment**External job offers**

2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
15.4%	15.7%	13.5%

15.6% of total applications were from people who identify as being LGBQ+

Internal job offers

2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
7.3%	0.0%	18.8%

15.1 % of internal applications came from LGBQ+ people

² LGBQ+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer (or Questioning) or other non-heterosexual sexual orientation

Pay Gap reporting

Gender Pay Gap – Hourly Pay

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Mean Gender Pay Gap	-5.30%	-6.50%	-4.80%	-5.33%	-3.94%	-4.25%
Median Gender Pay Gap	-9.80%	-9.75%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Ethnicity Pay Gap – Hourly Pay

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Mean Ethnicity Pay Gap	28.10%	26.10%	23.50%	23.20%	18.20%	19.85%
Median Ethnicity Pay Gap	38.90%	35.80%	23.60%	26.44%	20.10%	20.17%

Disability Pay Gap – Hourly Pay

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Mean Disability Pay Gap	-2.87%	1.28%	4.17%	5.97%	9.82%
Median Disability Pay Gap	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.32%

Voluntary Reporting Framework on Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing

We are providing additional information regarding disability, mental health and wellbeing which meets the requirements in the Voluntary Reporting Framework on Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing³:

- The personal details form on iTrent (employee self-service system) asks employees if they have a disability, and if so, the nature of the disability / disabilities;
- Employees can access reasonable adjustments to enable them to carry out their duties effectively;
- We are a Disability Confident Employer operating the guaranteed interview scheme for disabled candidates who meet the minimum criteria for a role;
- We work in partnership with our Embrace, Mindful and Café Neuro workplace equality networks and online employee support groups to further inclusion for disabled staff and disabled applicants applying for jobs with us;
- We publish our disability pay gap information and monitor pay across the protected characteristics via regular equal pay analyses; and
- We monitor internal and external recruitment data for disabled candidates and examine progression rates.

Mental health

- Between April 2025 and March 2026, mental health absence as a percentage of total absence has decreased to 27.3% from 45.9% in 2024-2025.
- 8.4% Commission staff experienced a mental health condition leading to sickness absence between April 2025 and March 2026. The biggest cause of mental health sickness from the data that we have is 'Personal reasons', however we recognise that we don't have a

³ [Voluntary Reporting on Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

complete data set and will work to ensure that sickness is properly recorded going forward.

- MINDFUL, our mental health and wellbeing network, has offered regular virtual and face to face weekly drop-ins for staff, with extra focus on adapting their support virtually, to continue encouraging connection and sharing of resources for better mental well-being and work performance whilst working from home.
- We have raised awareness of different inclusion days, like International Day of Disabled People and Mental Health Awareness week. For example, MINDFUL invited colleagues to take a break from their work, to enjoy some mindful activities like mandala dot painting, and mindful colouring, whilst connecting with colleagues.
- Our training provision includes courses such as Mental Health for Line Managers. We also build related topics into other training to make sure that inclusion is considered always, in all ways.
- In acknowledgment of Mental Health Awareness Week, specific sessions from our Learning at Work week were dedicated to nurturing mental well-being.

Staff Surveys

Dignity and Respect Survey

We undertake annual dignity and respect surveys to gauge the knowledge, confidence and experiences of our staff. Key results for Commission staff from the latest survey show:

- A high proportion (83%) of our staff they know how to report inappropriate behaviour. This is comparable to the previous survey in 2024.
- 80% of respondents would feel comfortable reporting inappropriate behaviour using the existing process.
- 79% of our staff know how to access guidance and advice on the process. This is also comparable to the previous survey in 2024.
- 73% of respondents know where to access support – this has increased compared to the previous year.
- The vast majority of respondents say they have not experienced or observed inappropriate behaviour on the workplace over the last 12 months. However, 11% of respondents have experienced or observed inappropriate behaviour. The Commission is committed to creating an environment which is free from bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or other inappropriate behaviour, and takes a zero-tolerance approach to such behaviour.



YMLAEN – our Ethnic Minority Graduate Internship

This year saw the conclusion of our third cohort of our YMLAEN internship programme. The four interns successfully completed their placements, and we are grateful for the value that they added to their teams and to the wider Commission.

The programme continues to play an important role in our commitment to building a more diverse and representative workforce within public services.

Following a competitive tender exercise, we are pleased to continue our partnership with Windsor Fellowship, who will deliver the programme alongside us for a further five years. Together, we will continue to support talented individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds by providing opportunities to gain valuable experience, develop skills, and explore careers within the public sector.

Through this renewed partnership and the continued growth of the YMLAEN programme, we aim to strengthen accessible pathways into our organisation, broaden our reach within diverse communities, and ensure that a wide range of voices and perspectives are represented in our work.

The next intake of interns will start in September 2026 following a summer of recruitment activities. The upcoming cohort will have opportunities to contribute to meaningful projects, engage with colleagues and stakeholders, and gain insight into the impact of public service, helping to build strong foundations for their future careers.

My time at the Senedd has been nothing short of fantastic. The experience allowed me to grow professionally in my technical knowledge of buildings and their services, but more importantly in my confidence and interpersonal skills. We can all learn so much from how the Organisational Development, Learning and Inclusion Team created and tailored this programme to this year's cohort to create a good balance of pastoral conversations, mentorship and training. Wales definitely needs more graduate opportunities to gain work experience, especially for managerial roles and for members of the global majority.

Shoruk, YMLAEN intern

Inclusive policies and practices

We continue to be a progressive employer with policies and practices that promote inclusion. We use equality impact assessments to engage with internal stakeholders and ensure that our work remains inclusive.

“Each year observing Ramadan is a meaningful period of reflection, discipline and community, and I’ve always felt supported in balancing that with my work at the Senedd Commission. Having open conversations with my manager and team ahead of the month helps set expectations, and the Commission’s flexible working culture — including the use of flexi time, adjusted hours, annual leave and, where appropriate, special leave — makes it much easier to manage fasting while continuing to meet my responsibilities.

Equally important is the wider culture of inclusion and understanding across the organisation. Colleagues are consistently respectful, engaged and willing to learn, creating an inclusive environment. That sense of support makes Ramadan not only manageable, but meaningful within the workplace.”

Small changes, big difference

To promote inclusion, we have updated the email signature templates for our staff so that they are now able to use the Welsh speaker logo, the Welsh learner logo and/or the hidden disabilities sunflower as part of their email signature. In addition, staff can add phonetic spelling to their signature to accompany their names to help colleagues and service users understand the correct pronunciation of their name.



The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower is a universal logo used as a discreet way for someone to voluntarily share that they have a disability or condition that may not be immediately apparent, and that you may need a helping hand, support, understanding, or more time.

Reasonable Adjustments

We have enhanced our organisational approach to reasonable adjustments, ensuring disabled colleagues and those with long-term health conditions and neurodivergent needs receive practical, timely and person-centred support. This work was shaped through cross-team collaboration and informed by both internal experience and external best practice. We have shared information on ICT support available and have developed a central budget to speed up the processing of requests.

Accreditations

We have once again been recognised as one of the top 10 Employers for Working Families in the UK, celebrating organisations that do the most to support the work-life balance needs of all their employees.



Disability Confident scheme

Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2026 included an objective to become a Disability Confident Leader organisation. Due to a change in the way that we recruit, we recognise that we would be unable to attain that status. As such, we commit to being a Disability Confident employer and exercising best practice where we can, by promoting disability inclusion, providing reasonable adjustments, offering guaranteed interviews to applicants who meet the minimum criteria, and ensuring that our recruitment process is inclusive.

Our Commitment to the Armed Forces Community

The Senedd Commission is proud to support the Armed Forces Covenant - a promise that those who serve or have served, and their families, will be treated fairly and with respect. We recognise that members of the Armed Forces community may face unique challenges due to their service.

We are proud to launch our new intranet pages dedicated to the Covenant and the support available to members of the Armed Forces Community

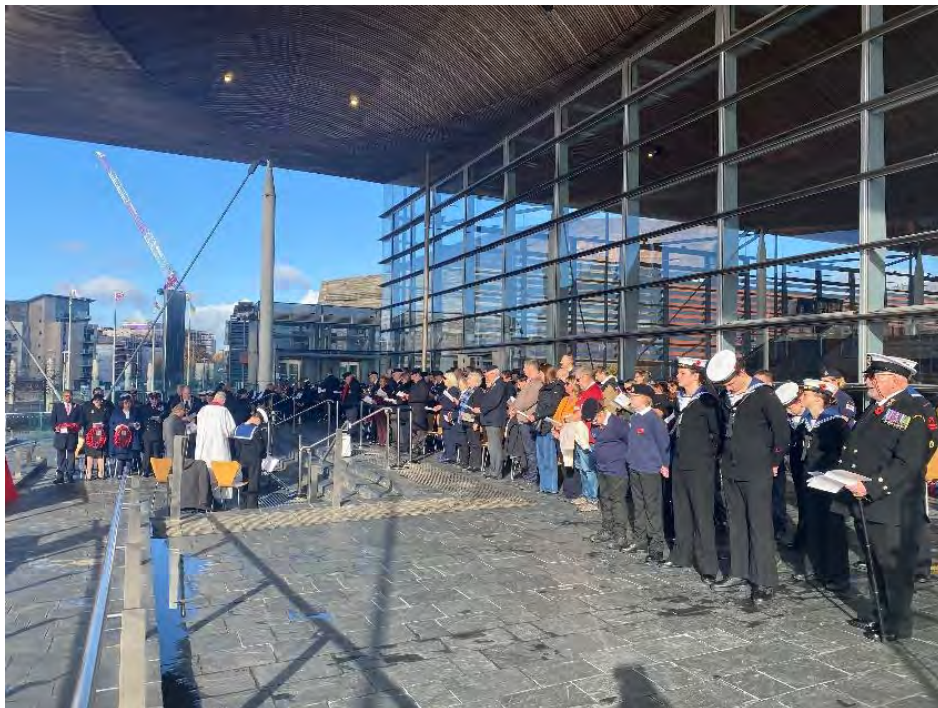
The Senedd Commission has signed the **Armed Forces Covenant** – the official pledge which ensures that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces are treated fairly.

Senedd Commissioners have all signed the pledge which reflects our strong commitment to the welfare of service members.

In our pledge we commit to promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation, supporting staff who are members of the Armed Forces Community, promoting Armed Forces Week via our website and recruitment material, and signposting support available.

Senedd Commissioner with responsibility for Equality, Joyce Watson MS said:

"I am pleased that we have secured unanimous support for becoming a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant. Coming from an Armed Forces family, this cause is very close to my heart. The Commission already makes provisions such as special leave arrangements and wellbeing advice and support for current reservists and veterans, so signing the Covenant was a natural next step. The Covenant reflects our longstanding commitment to supporting members of the Armed Forces community as well as our determination to ensure that the Senedd Commission is an inclusive and supportive workplace for all."



Here is what some of our staff had to say about the commitment:

"I'm thrilled that the Senedd Commission has signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant. This commitment aligns with the core values of ex-serving military personnel, ensuring they have the opportunities and recognition they deserve. By promoting an armed forces-friendly environment, we are honouring the service of veterans and reservists."

Paul, RAF Veteran

"We look to our Armed Forces to undertake arduous duties and place themselves in harm's way to keep the nation secure. I am delighted that the Commission, by signing the Armed Forces Covenant, is acknowledging the debt we owe to those currently serving, to the veterans and to all their families who support them."

Huw, volunteer ambassador for a veterans' housing project

"My partner has been an Army Reservist for the past 4 years, and during this time I have developed a deeper understanding of the day-to-day work of our armed forces, and in particular, the huge contribution made by Reservists. The commitment Reservists demonstrate is incredible - training, readiness exercises, personal and professional development, learning new skills, time spent away from their families - all on a practically voluntary basis, to support the capacity of the regular Army. It is important that this commitment is supported and recognised, and I'm delighted that the Senedd Commission has signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant to show its support."

Chloe, partner of a Reservist

"Ich Dien" (I Serve) is a near-homophone for the Welsh phrase "Eich Dyn" meaning "Your Man". The true meaning has some mystery around its usage, but any serving soldier or veteran who has read the oath of allegiance understands the gravity of serving our country across all generations.

"The Senedd Commission signing the Armed Forces Covenant shows commitment to serving those who have served our country and may continue to do so in the future. This demonstrates that the Commission is willing to offer current and future employees the support required to thrive and maintain in a civilian environment.

"As many ex-military personnel know, loyalty is earned and not expected. But this makes me look at my old cap badge, three white ostrich feathers encircled by a gold coronet, and say "Ich Dien" with the same old sense of loyalty and pride when I first donned my beret when I became a soldier."

Chris – Army Veteran



An Accessible, Inclusive and Global Parliament



An inclusive, accessible Parliament

Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament

This year, the Commission undertook review of gender and inclusion in our parliament. The review was a 'stocktake' of how our culture, ways of working, and facilities represent and serve everyone. It delivered on a recommendation from the Reform Bill Committee.

The Family-Friendly and Inclusive Parliament Review ("the Review") was conducted in response to a recommendation from the Reform Bill Committee, in its scrutiny of the *Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill*. This resulting report draws on evidence and analysis from a review of culture, rules, and ways of working in the Senedd undertaken during the autumn of 2025.

The Senedd Commission established a cross-party board of Members, chaired by Joyce Watson MS to oversee the Review. A team from Cardiff University gathered, analysed and presented a significant amount of evidence relating to these matters, including the views and experiences of current and former Members of the Senedd. The Review benefitted greatly from this wealth of first-hand experience.

The Review found that the Senedd compares well in its commitment to inclusive working practices, from parental leave and caring allowances, hybrid working and proxy voting to public engagement. It also found high levels of female representation and participation, but that more can be done to embed equality into leadership, representation, and scrutiny.

This report makes recommendations in many areas. For instance, that mainstreaming of equalities considerations should be a priority when scrutinising policies, budgets and law-making.

The recommendations aim to institutionalise ways of working that promote and advance equality, rather than relying on discretionary practices and individual champions to lead change.

This Review is a starting point. The Board recommended establishing an implementation board to deliver the recommendations, and the next Senedd Commission will respond to the recommendations of the Review.

Election campaign 2026

Senedd election 2026: More Power to You campaign

The Senedd election 2026 campaign aimed to raise awareness of the changes to the Senedd, increase understanding of the Senedd's role and increase voting intention - especially among young people and those in lower socio-economic areas.

Our approach uses behavioural science to rebuild engagement by:

- Strengthening civic duty ("Wales is voting, make your mark");
- Increasing investment in outcomes through relatable, local examples;
- Reducing effort and complexity through simple, multilingual, multi-format content; and
- Using trusted messengers (community partners, youth ambassadors, local press).

Community engagement

Our Visitor Experience team delivered *Understand Your Vote* workshops both on-site and online, designing bespoke sessions for groups with specific needs. This included collaboration with Disability Wales to develop an accessible presentation, delivered live with support from a palantypist and a BSL interpreter.

We also strengthened relationships with underrepresented communities through grassroots outreach. By meeting Ukrainian and the Cardiff Hong Kongers groups in their communities, we were able to remove barriers and support confident participation. The Visitor Experience team worked with local interpreters to deliver sessions in community venues as well as here at the Senedd.

“The presentation worked very well — the audience was engaged and learned a great deal. Thank you for enabling the Cantonese interpretation to be included in the delivery; it greatly helped several attendees to better understand the content. Looking forward to the next event with the Chinese community.” **Cardiff Hong Kongers**



Hannah Tanhai, Visitor Experience Officer, with Cardiff Hong Kongers, February 2026

Online presence

Our website election hub provides essential, easy-to-find information through blogs and FAQs. Insights from social media listening and community engagement ensure that the content is accessible and reflected the real questions people were asking.

Video content

We commissioned a suite of BSL (British Sign Language) videos which give users key information about the election which are available on both our YouTube channel and election hub.

We have also released five new animated explainer videos on our YouTube channel, designed to clearly and visually introduce the Senedd, the election, and how voting works in Wales.

Providing accessible information

To ensure everyone can access election information, we have developed bilingual election resources in Braille, including a Braille map of the new Senedd constituencies. These have been used in schools and libraries as well as with visiting groups.

We have also created resources in a bilingual easy-read format, which have been used by the Events team and are available online via the election hub.

To support engagement with wider audiences we have created information resources in nine additional languages: Arabic, Bengali, Farsi, Mandarin, Cantonese, Polish, Somali, Kurdish Sorani and Urdu).

“What a nice surprise to see a flyer in Arabic, thank you so much. I wanted to let you know that I will be sharing it with my community group, they will be very happy. Looking forward to our visit to the Senedd”.

Grassroots Empowerment Project (GREP)



Community Engagement session GREP

Supporting the media

We have delivered multiple briefing sessions for both national outlets and new media, including podcasts, to support accurate and accessible reporting. To help support non-Welsh outlets, we worked with our translation service to create a video demonstrating how to correctly pronounce the 16 new Welsh language constituency names.

Vote.Wales

As part of the Senedd's work in raising awareness of 2026 elections, and the changes to the system of electing Members, our Education and Youth Engagement Team has partnered up with The Children's Commissioner for Wales, and Electoral Commission to jointly create new resources that support young people to learn about the Senedd and how to vote. The team also rolled out *Let's Talk About Senedd* sessions to support teachers and help them to understand how to get the most out of the resources.

The resources cover key topics including:

1. Children's rights and the importance of voting.
2. The role and history of the Senedd and how it's changing in 2026.
3. How to register and vote at a Senedd election.

BSL Relay service from InterpretersLive!

Members of the public who are British Sign Language (BSL) signers can now call us using the BSL Relay service from InterpretersLive! The service is available on demand during our normal Contact Centre opening hours.

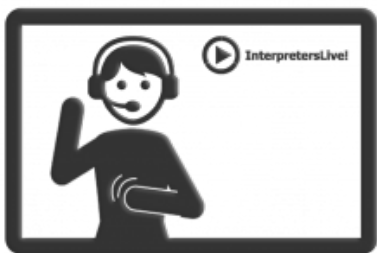
This service enables BSL signers to contact us using a BSL video interpreter during normal operating hours, ensuring equitable access to information and support. The service is supported by user guides and a direct connection link, making it straightforward and intuitive for the public to engage with the Senedd.

The rollout has been further complemented by a pilot of onsite video interpretation at Senedd Reception Desks - providing immediate communication support for visitors who use BSL, in addition to the option of arranging in-person interpreters for Committee evidence sessions and pre-planned visits.

Calls made via this service will be answered by our Customer Contact Centre (0300 200 6500) in the usual way and this team will answer questions, take a message or forward calls to the relevant team.

BSL signer wishing to contact the Senedd using BSL can simply follow the link from the **Contact page on our website**, follow the Senedd link in the InterpretersLive! App or use the link below.

<https://connect.interpreterslive.co.uk/vrs?ilc=SeneddCymru>



Member support - Committees, Research and Senedd Business

Citizen Engagement

The Citizen Engagement Team supports Senedd Committees by designing and delivering engagement programmes that bring diverse perspectives into policymaking. Committees task the team to understand the attitudes, behaviours, and experiences of people across Wales.

Below are some examples of our committee engagement work that show how we strive to make the work of Senedd committees accessible to all.

British Sign Language (Wales) Bill

The Senedd broke new ground in its British Sign Language (BSL) provision as part of work to support the development and then scrutiny of legislative proposals by the Member for North Wales, Mark Isherwood MS. Having secured cross-party support, the proposed law would see new duties introduced on public bodies to promote and facilitate BSL in Wales. To ensure that the Senedd's processes and proceedings were inclusive and available in the preferred language of BSL signers, the Senedd enlisted the help of deaf BSL signers and third sector organisations to provide advice and guidance.

After introduction, the Bill was referred to the Equality and Social Justice Committee for scrutiny. Having considered the needs and views of BSL signers alongside other considerations such as practicalities, resources and impact the Committee agreed an ambitious and inclusive approach which aimed to reflect the spirit of the Bill. This included ensuring that all proceedings on the Bill in Committee and Plenary were available live with BSL interpretation for anyone in the gallery or watching on Senedd.TV.

Generic guides to the legislative process and explainer videos were also translated into BSL. These were supplemented by short update videos at key stages of the Bill process and after each major decision.

The Citizen Engagement Team delivered two stages of engagement with BSL signers to ensure that the development and scrutiny of the British Sign Language (Wales) Bill was informed by the experiences of the Deaf community.

The first programme of engagement was undertaken during the development of the Bill and involved 77 participants, including Deaf BSL signers, family members and supporters. This work gathered lived experiences and

perspectives to inform the drafting of the proposed legislation. Following the engagement, the findings were shared with participants and the wider Deaf community through a dedicated engagement findings webpage presented in BSL, allowing people to access the full report in their first language and see how their contributions had shaped the proposed legislation.

As the Bill progressed into the Senedd's legislative process, the Citizen Engagement Team delivered a second programme of engagement with BSL signers and their families to support the Equality and Social Justice Committee's scrutiny of the legislation. This ensured that Deaf people and BSL users were able to continue contributing their perspectives during the Committee's consideration of the Bill.

The second programme of engagement involved 54 contributors across six focus groups, with participants drawn from all five Senedd regions. Rather than focusing on lived experiences, the engagement sought views on whether the Bill, as drafted, was fit for purpose.

The Plenary debate on the Bill took place on 11 March 2026, with a number of participants attending the Senedd in person to watch proceedings. Their presence reflected the strong engagement of the Deaf community throughout the process and demonstrated how inclusive engagement can support continued public interest and participation as legislation progresses through the Senedd.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: Inclusive Engagement Programme

The Citizen Engagement Team supported the Equality and Social Justice Committee's post-legislative scrutiny of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 through an engagement programme designed to ensure the inquiry heard from people whose perspectives are often under-represented in policymaking. The programme focused on whether communities across Wales feel the Act has delivered on its ambitions since it came into force.

A targeted, inclusive recruitment approach was used to involve a diverse range of participants. Engagement prioritised groups who are less likely to contribute to formal policy processes, including young people, disabled people, individuals experiencing vulnerability or social disadvantage, and older people. Sessions were held across urban, valleys, rural and coastal communities, alongside

contributions from all-Wales organisations, helping to capture perspectives from different geographic and social contexts across the country.

The engagement was designed to reduce barriers to participation. Activities were delivered face-to-face, online and by phone, with contributions welcomed in both Welsh and English. Creative methods were also used to make the process accessible to people who may not wish to engage through traditional consultation formats. For example, *Flags for the Future* invited young people to draw or write their hopes for Wales, while *Postcards from the Future* encouraged visitors to the Senedd to describe what Wales could look like in 2030 and beyond in relation to the Act's seven well-being goals. Individual interviews were offered where participants preferred to share views privately.

In total, 324 people contributed to the engagement programme, including participants in 21 targeted engagement sessions and visitors who took part in creative activities at the Senedd. Over half of the participants were from groups often excluded from decision-making processes, ensuring that a broad and diverse range informed the Committee's scrutiny of lived experiences from communities across Wales.

Finance Committee Budget Engagement: Sixth Senedd

During the Sixth Senedd, the Citizen Engagement Team supported the Finance Committee to deliver an annual programme of public engagement to inform scrutiny of the Welsh Government's draft budget. The programme was designed to ensure that people from diverse communities across Wales could contribute directly to discussions about public spending priorities.

Engagement activities included focus groups and interviews with participants recruited through open calls and partnerships with community organisations. This approach helped ensure participation from groups often under-represented in policymaking, including young people, older people and disabled people, alongside individuals with lived experience of policy areas such as education, health, agriculture and the voluntary sector.

Across the five-year Senedd term, 337 people contributed through 62 focus groups and interviews, with participants drawn from communities across Wales. Sessions were structured around key themes within the Welsh Government's draft budget, enabling participants to share how spending decisions affect their lives and communities. In the most recent programme, the team also worked with Learning Disability Wales to facilitate a dedicated

online focus group with young people with learning disabilities. Easy-read materials were developed to support participation.

The Committee's work during the Sixth Senedd has helped establish a distinctive model of citizen engagement in budget scrutiny. Few legislatures have embedded direct public participation within the scrutiny of government budgets, particularly given the tight parliamentary timetables that often limit opportunities for meaningful engagement. The Senedd's annual focus-group programme has become one of the more comprehensive examples of how lived experience and community perspectives can be incorporated into parliamentary scrutiny of public spending.

Improving Access to Support for Unpaid Carers: Interviews and Focus Groups

The Citizen Engagement Team supported the Health and Social Care Committee's inquiry into improving access to support for unpaid carers through an engagement programme centred on the lived experiences of carers across Wales. The approach aimed to ensure that the inquiry reflected the perspectives of people whose caring responsibilities can make participation in policy discussions difficult.

To reduce barriers to participation, the programme offered flexible engagement options, including online, telephone and in-person sessions at convenient locations. This allowed carers to contribute in ways that fitted around demanding caring responsibilities and varying levels of availability.

Participants were recruited through organisations and charities supporting unpaid carers, using an expression of interest process designed to ensure a diverse range of caring circumstances and backgrounds were represented. The programme included carers supporting partners, disabled children, adult children and older relatives, as well as individuals providing very high levels of care and those sharing caring responsibilities. Participants also came from different regions of Wales, ensuring the engagement reflected a range of geographic contexts.

Through interviews and focus groups, carers described the barriers they face in accessing support and the pressures of balancing caring responsibilities with their own wellbeing. Their contributions highlighted how factors such as geography, caring intensity and personal circumstances can shape access to

services. These insights ensured the Committee's scrutiny was informed by the experiences of a broad and diverse group of unpaid carers.

Housing Support for Vulnerable People: Focus Groups and Interviews

The Citizen Engagement Team supported the Local Government and Housing Committee's inquiry into housing support for vulnerable people through an engagement programme designed to capture the perspectives of individuals with lived experience of housing insecurity and those supporting them.

A qualitative approach was used to create safe and supportive spaces for participation, including focus groups and one-to-one interviews. This format enabled participants to share personal experiences in ways that felt comfortable and appropriate to them. In total, the programme included seven focus groups, four individual interviews and a follow-up written contribution, with 118 participants contributing from across all five Senedd regions.

Participants were recruited through organisations working directly with people accessing housing support, helping to ensure the engagement reached individuals who are often under-represented in policy discussions. The programme included people facing a range of vulnerabilities, including young people, working families experiencing housing pressures, prison leavers, and refugees and asylum seekers. Frontline workers were also included to provide insight into how services operate in practice and the challenges of supporting people with complex needs.

Through these discussions, participants highlighted barriers to accessing housing support, including the suitability and availability of accommodation and the increasing complexity of people's circumstances. Their contributions ensured the Committee's scrutiny was informed by the experiences of diverse groups who rely on housing support services, as well as the perspectives of those delivering them.

Routes into Post-16 Education and Training

The Citizen Engagement Team supported the Children, Young People and Education Committee's inquiry into routes into post-16 education and training through an engagement programme designed to capture the experiences of young people navigating education and career pathways. The programme explored how effectively learners receive information and guidance about the full range of post-16 options, including academic and vocational routes.

To reach a broad and diverse group of participants, the team delivered online surveys for young people aged 16–20 and for parents or guardians, receiving 451 responses in total (311 from young people and 140 from parents or guardians). An easy-read version of the young people’s survey was also produced to support participation from individuals with different communication needs and to improve accessibility.

Targeted engagement was undertaken to ensure the inquiry reflected the perspectives of young people who may face additional barriers in education. This included a focus group with learners aged 16–25 with Additional Learning Needs, alongside face-to-face interviews in an alternative education setting, enabling young people who do not follow traditional educational routes to share their experiences directly.

Participants highlighted the importance of clear, accessible information about post-16 pathways, more personalised and impartial careers guidance, and better support for disabled learners and those with additional needs. Their contributions ensured the Committee’s scrutiny reflected the experiences of a diverse range of young people and families navigating education and training options in Wales.

Apprenticeship Pathways: Focus Groups with Apprentices and Completers

The Citizen Engagement Team supported the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee’s inquiry into apprenticeship pathways through an engagement programme designed to capture the experiences of people undertaking or completing apprenticeships across Wales. The aim was to ensure the inquiry reflected the perspectives of learners navigating apprenticeship routes in different sectors and regions.

To enable participation from apprentices balancing work and training commitments, the programme used flexible online engagement, including five focus groups and one individual interview. Sessions were scheduled around participants’ availability, helping to reduce barriers to participation for those combining employment with study.

Participants were recruited through partner organisations across Wales to ensure representation from both rural and urban communities and a range of apprenticeship sectors. Apprentices taking part were studying at levels 2 to 5,

including in fields such as engineering, health and social care, project management, plumbing, beauty therapy and welding.

The engagement also sought to reflect issues of access and representation within apprenticeship pathways. This included women working in sectors traditionally dominated by men, such as engineering and welding, and men undertaking apprenticeships in sectors more commonly associated with female participation, such as health and social care.

Participants shared their experiences of accessing apprenticeships, the information available about different routes and the challenges involved in progressing between levels. Their contributions helped the Committee understand how apprenticeship pathways operate for diverse learners and where barriers to equitable access may arise.

Research and information for Members of the Senedd

Mainstreaming equality, inclusion and human rights issues is a fundamental part of the work undertaken by the Senedd Research team for Members of the Senedd and their staff, and widely accessible to the public via the website and social media.

Research articles relating to equality have included: **When homes put health at risk, access to eye care; the British Sign language (Wales) Bill, making voting more accessible in Wales, post-legislative review of the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales Act 2019, Women's Health in Wales: Support for households with energy bills and fuel poverty, reforming the Mental Health Act 1983, diversity in public appointments, the disability employment gap in Wales, the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community, tackling poverty and improving living standards** and a series looking at aspects of the **criminal justice system**.

An article marking the **fourth anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine** and support for Ukrainian refugees in Wales continued the spotlight on issues facing asylum seekers and refugees.

Supporting Members of the Senedd

In terms of supporting Members in their scrutiny of the Welsh Government draft budget, the team circulated a guide to mainstreaming equality with suggested questions including signposting to equality-sensitive scrutiny training developed by Senedd Research.

Supporting Senedd committees

As well as publishing research articles, various Senedd committee inquiries have received advice and research covering a wide range of equality issues, including:

- The Equality and Social Justice Committee's reports on the **British Sign Language (Wales) Bill**, **social cohesion** and **fuel poverty**, its inquiry into **access to healthy, nutritious and affordable food** and post legislative scrutiny of the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**;
- Local Government and Housing Committee's report on **housing support for vulnerable people** and inquiry into **hazardous disrepair in social housing**;
- The Children, Young People and Education Committee's reports on **school improvement and learner attainment** and **routes into post-16 education and training**;
- The Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee report into the **impact of funding reductions for culture and sport**;
- The Health and Social Care Committee's reports on the **prevention of ill health and obesity**; **access to ophthalmology services** and **support for people with chronic conditions** and inquiries into **access to support for unpaid carers** and the **future of general practice in Wales**;
- The Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee's report on **apprenticeship pathways**; and
- The Scrutiny of the First Minister session focussed on **education and young people** and future generations summarised **in this research paper**.

Diversifying the research evidence available to the Senedd

Senedd Research also delivers the **Knowledge Exchange Programme** which aims to broaden, deepen, and diversify the research evidence and expertise available to the Senedd by strengthening connections with academics and universities.

This includes providing training, building networks, hosting PhD interns, commissioning research, holding events and exchanges, and developing innovative ways to encourage academic engagement with the Senedd's work.

Areas of Research Interest (ARIs) have proven to be an effective way of engaging with new audiences. Since 2022, committees have launched nine ARIs with nearly 400 responses, 67% from people who had never previously engaged with the Senedd. 52% of ARIs respondents were female, 45% were under 45, 21% were from ethnic minority communities, and 12% had a disability.

Supporting Members and their staff – Members' Learning and Engagement

Our Members' Business Support and Member Learning and Engagement teams provide support to members in relation to running their offices and employing support staff. During this reporting period, our teams have reviewed a number of policies to reflect new legal requirements and the latest employment good practice.

The Member Learning and Engagement (MLE) team has provided a range of courses to Members and support staff including courses on Gender-based Violence; Unconscious Bias; Anti-Racism; and creating psychologically safe spaces. Members and support staff have access to workplace equality networks and dedicated pages on the intranet which provide additional training and advice on Diversity and Inclusion.

Senedd events

Senedd 26 Engagement campaign

As part of the wider Senedd 26 communications and engagement election campaign our Events and Engagement team visited festivals, events and communities across Wales to inform audiences about the changes to the Senedd in the leadup to the 2026 election.

The 2025 summer show programme was expanded to include greater presence at the Urdd Eisteddfod, Royal Welsh Show and National Eisteddfod alongside other community events such as the Wales Air Show, Pembrokeshire County Show and the Caernarfon Food Festival.

We also looked for opportunities to provide smaller pop-up events to reach our target audiences, for example in disengaged local authority areas and areas with a higher proportion of ethnic groups using spaces such as public libraries, shopping centres, universities and other community spaces.

During the campaign we attended Learning Disability Wales's North Wales Conference in Llandudno and worked in partnership with Race Council Cymru to attend Swansea's Multicultural Hub.

Due to the increased engagement with varied audiences, we provided our Senedd 26 literature in an easy-read format, in Braille, and created information leaflets in 9 new languages (Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Farsi, Kurdish, Mandarin, Polish, Somali and Urdu).



Y Farchnad: International Day of Disabled People

In celebration of International Day of Disabled People, we hosted a themed Y Farchnad Marketplace event in the Senedd on Wednesday 3 December where we welcomed 12 disability organisations to join us to highlight and showcase their work. The event also featured a special performance by Hijinx Theatre *'Silent Glimpses, Loud Truths'*.



Christmas Service

We were delighted to welcome Ysgol Bro Teyrnnon, Newport and Menter Caerdydd's Young Adults with additional needs group to perform in our annual Christmas service in December. As well as their performances, both groups also got to tour the building and learn more about our work during their festive visit.



St. Davids Day

The Senedd was bursting with Welsh pride and culture on Saturday 28 February and Sunday 1 March to celebrate St. David's Day! We welcomed over 2,500 visitors to our estate to celebrate with us and enjoy the talents of Welsh choirs, musical groups and dancers.



Visitors took part in a host of different activities and workshops throughout the day – from decorating plant pots, creating unique love spoons, trying their hand at sand art to science skills.

Visitors made the most of a rare sunny day on Saturday by practicing their circus skills outside the Pierhead and joining in with our Samba band on the Senedd steps on Sunday.

Tours of the building proved very popular with over 110 visitors taking part and learning more about the work that takes place at the Senedd, and the upcoming election.

The programme included live performances by Flamingo Chicks – a colourful inclusive dance performed by children, Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama's Good Vibrations choir for people with Parkinsons and their families and a sand art workshop with Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff.



International Women's Day

We held two engagement activities to mark International Women's Day this year – welcoming GirlsWhoRun into the Senedd and having a presence at the Wales Women's International football match in Llanelli as part of the Senedd 26 campaign.

On Saturday 7 March, we collaborated with a group of young women aged 18–30 from GirlsWhoRun Cardiff, who joined us in Cardiff Bay for a 5k run before visiting the Senedd. For many participants, this was their first visit to the building. The visit included a tour led by the Front of House team, followed by refreshments and a short talk on women's representation in the Senedd.

The session highlighted the contributions of prominent women in Welsh politics, including the Llywydd and the First Minister. Participants also learned about the Women's Caucus and discussed the significance of civic participation, particularly in the context of the upcoming election.

The morning concluded with a group discussion on collective engagement and the role individuals can play in contributing to positive outcomes for women across Wales.



Exhibitions

Through Our Eyes: 160 Years Of Vision and Resilience - 'Through Our Eyes' is a photography exhibition celebrating 160 years of Sight Life, formerly Cardiff Institute for the Blind. All the photographs on show have been taken by people whose vision is limited in one way or another.



Image - Sprucing Up ©Ian Burgess

Heartbeat of Two Nations - An exhibition by Armenian Community Centre. This exhibition was a celebration of the shared cultural and historic traits that connect Armenia and Wales, including deep storytelling traditions, choral singing, ancient mythologies reflecting resilience, deep spirituality, and a profound respect for cultural continuity.

Unsettled Lives: War and Displacement in Wales. This exhibition includes artwork, artefacts and migration stories of those displaced to Wales during the first half of the 20th century.

Wanderlust. The Wanderlust photography project aimed to capture the rich and vibrant culture of the Gypsy and Traveller community through the camera lens. Created by pupils from West Monmouth School, in partnership with photographers Jon Pountney and David Harrhy, and poet Patrick Jones, the exhibition featured documentary style images and poems, to shed light on the diverse and complex narratives of Gypsy Traveller life, challenging stereotypes and promoting understanding and empathy.

Make it right - 'Make it Right' is a poignant collaboration between The Water Poets and Carmarthen School of Art, connecting over 1,000 young creatives from Carmarthenshire and Alabama through art and music. The project draws inspiration from **John Petts' stained glass window**, created in response to the

1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, which killed four young Black girls.

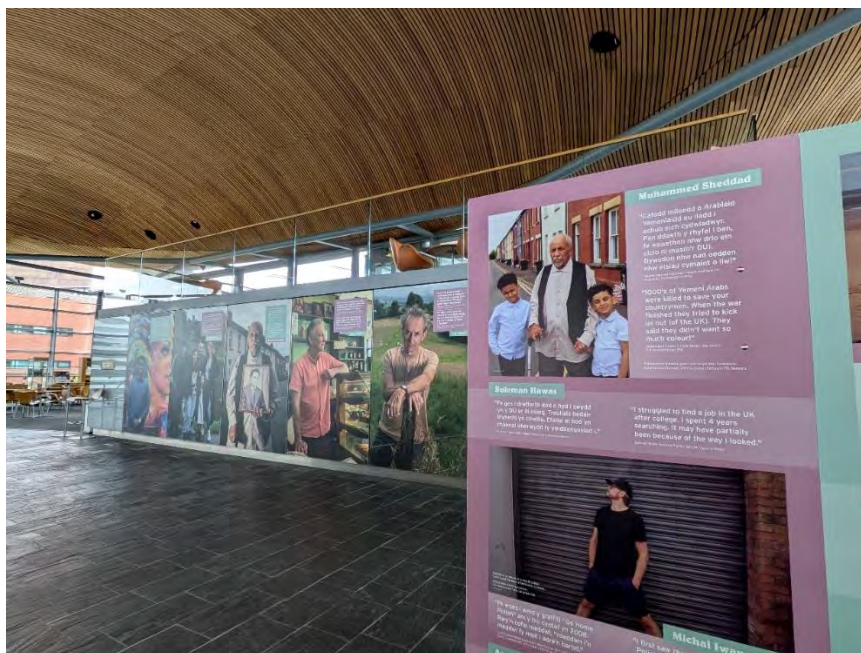


Sikhs in Wales - Exploring Heritage, Migration, and the Making of a Community - This exhibition celebrates the history and contributions of the Sikh community in Wales, providing a platform to share stories, heritage, and culture through artefacts, photographs, film, and personal stories.



Image ©Harchran Singh

Wales: A Home From Home. Created by Vision Fountain, the 'Wales: A Home From Home' exhibition brought together stories gathered from Wales's diverse global communities. The multi-media exhibition presented collected stories through a blend of traditional methods and innovative technologies, including virtual reality.



Rooted in Our Dhaqan: The exhibition was a collaboration between Hayaat Women Trust's **Young Queens Project** – an arts initiative for young Welsh Somali women – and **Al Naaem magazine**, a publication centring Black and Muslim fashion, photography, and art.

The group created artwork focusing on 'Dhaqan', a Somali word meaning culture. The exhibition displayed photographs from the project and the 'Rooted In Our Dhaqan' film, as well as interpretive text panels in Somali.

To link to the film, we developed an activity for visitors, asking them: 'If you could make a film celebrating your culture or community, what would you want to share with people of the future?'. Visitors' reflections were on display in the Senedd from 22 July to 1 September.

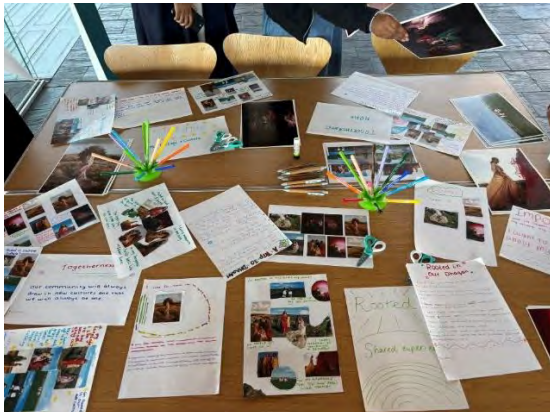
Al Naaem also ran a poetry and creative writing workshop designed to empower young people and develop their creativity.

Participants explored their heritage and identities through guided writing and storytelling. The workshop celebrated cultural diversity, and nurture the next generation of artists and leaders.

Many people told me that this exhibition made the Senedd feel far more accessible, welcoming, and relatable to them. They felt a stronger sense of connection to the space, and for some, it was the first time they had ever stepped inside. That in itself is powerful, it shows how initiatives like this can bridge the gap between institutions and communities.

As someone who doesn't always see individuals like myself represented in these spaces, it meant so much to feel that the Senedd was opening its doors to diverse voices and perspectives. The exhibition created a sense of belonging and representation, making the space feel not only democratic in principle but also inclusive in practice."

I also believe this kind of activity encourages greater community involvement and participation. It demonstrates the Senedd's commitment to ensuring that people from all walks of life feel that they have a place here, that their stories matter, and that their voices can be heard. For me, that is the real legacy of this experience, and I hope to see more opportunities like this in the future.



Member Sponsored events

As an inclusive parliament that is accessible to the people of Wales, the Senedd's event spaces are available to individuals and organisations to raise awareness of an issue, highlight their organisation or celebrate a special occasion. Event organisers need to have a Member of the Senedd as their sponsor for an event. During this reporting period, we have hosted a range of Member sponsored events welcoming thousands of people to our estate. Events have included:

Welsh Ethnic Minority Professors Initiative Launch	Foster Care Fortnight - The Power of Relationships
MS Awareness Week	Polish Culture and Heritage day
Eid Celebration Event	Disability Pride
Remembering Srebrenica 30	Diwali
Women in Wales in Leadership	TUC - Black History Month
White Ribbon Day Events	World AIDS Day Reception
International Day of Disabled People	Chanukah Menorah Lighting
Champions for Children: A Manifesto for babies, children and young people in advance of Senedd election 2026	Launch of Cymru Women's Sports Strategy
South Wales Menopause Community	Men's Shed Event
Ramadan and Iftar events	Young Carers Action Day
Celebrating the Women of the Senedd	Newroz – The Kurdish New Year





Community engagement: going out to the community

The Community Engagement work undertaken this period demonstrates strong progress toward greater inclusivity and accessibility.

Our team has continued to strengthen relationships with a diverse range of communities and support greater inclusion across the Senedd's public facing work. Engagement activity has focused on reaching groups who experience linguistic, cultural, or social barriers to participation, ensuring that more people are able to understand and contribute to the democratic process in Wales.

A key priority has been supporting individuals for whom English or Welsh is not a first language, alongside targeted work with local community organisations and groups representing marginalised communities.

Below are some examples of our engagement work and the feedback that we have received.

- **Grassroots Empowerment Project (SRCDC)** – supporting young people and community members from diverse backgrounds to better understand democratic structures and express their views.

"We are incredibly grateful to you for organising such an informative and useful workshop for us. As almost none of our participants are native speakers, many people especially highlighted how clear, simple and accessible the language of your presentation was. This made a real difference, and we truly appreciate it."

- **Let's Interpret** a community project of female interpreters based at South Riverside Community Development Centre that trains bilingual and multilingual women to become professional public service interpreters and supports equal access to services for migrant and sanctuary seeking communities.

"That was so helpful to everyone, thank you so much, everyone felt so involved and welcome. They are all talking about wanting to visit the Senedd."

- **Splott Community Centre**— building connections with local residents and supporting participation from individuals who are seldom heard in formal engagement channels.

"Thank you so much for the session last week. We all found it incredibly useful (I am still making people guess the monthly water bill for the Senedd :))."

- **Cardiff Hongkongers**— engaging with newly settled Hong Kong families and individuals to ensure they are aware of their rights and the role of the Senedd.

"It was a really nice presentation; the audience was very engaged, and they learned and understood more about the upcoming elections. You are excellent and have very good control of everything. Thank you so much".

- **Butetown Pavilion** – supporting engagement with multi-ethnic communities in Butetown, an area with rich diversity and strong grassroots networks.

"Thank you once again, everyone felt they learned so much about the Senedd and the Election."

- **Grange Pavilion** – continuing collaboration with community groups based at the Pavilion, including the Walkers Group and other local initiatives.

“Thank you so much for today everybody enjoyed the talk and felt that they had learned something. Your delivery style was informative and engaging making a difficult and potentially, dare I say, dry subject fascinating and easy to understand. We are all looking forward to returning in April.”

- **Adult Learning Cardiff People First**, supporting adults with learning disabilities to explore how they can share their experiences and influence policy.

“Thank you so much for coming to talk to us and making the session inclusive and accessible, looking forward to our visit to the plenary session.”



Development of Multilingual Resources

To support this expanding engagement work, the team has progressed the development of resources translated into ten additional languages. These materials will help ensure that information about the Senedd Election are accessible to a wider range of people, particularly those for whom written or spoken English/Welsh creates significant barriers.

The availability of these multilingual resources will also support community partners, enabling them to share accurate, trusted information with the groups they work with.

Community engagement: inviting people in

Y Farchnad

Y Farchnad brings people from across Wales to the Senedd each month in a marketplace-style event. It provides organisations with an opportunity to host a stand in the heart of the Senedd; to network, meet Members of the Senedd and let their voice be heard and has been overwhelmingly popular with stakeholder organisations.



Y Farchnad

• Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament •



Craft activities – Family-Friendly Senedd

This year we continued our work to be a family friendly parliament, welcoming people into the Senedd for Fflam's Festive Trail and for winter crafts



Fflam's Pierhead Adventure Activity Booklet encourages young visitors to explore the Pierhead



Education service and Welsh Youth Parliament

Senedd Election youth engagement

Raising awareness of the upcoming Senedd Election, and improving understanding of the changes to the system of electing Members has been a key area of focus, especially with younger people who will be voting for the first time.

Resources have been developed in partnership with the Electoral Commission, and the Children's Commissioners office, to enable educators to engage and inform young people in schools, colleges, and youth group settings, including resources developed for young people with disabilities and additional learning needs. Specific training sessions have been delivered in partnership with Learning Disability Wales to support educators on the use of these resources.

A number of sessions have been delivered by officials in schools, colleges and youth groups across Wales, with groups from diverse backgrounds, including Brecon Pupil Referral Unit, Aberaid Refugee Support community, Ceredigion Disability Forum, Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn, and STAND North Wales.



Welsh Youth Parliament - report into Behaviour in Schools

The Welsh Youth Parliament's Crime and Safety committee decided to focus on behaviour in schools as the topic of their work in 2025. They focused on the growing concern around crime and safety in schools and colleges in Wales, with news reports suggesting some pupils' behaviour is getting worse including serious examples of aggression and violence and disruptive behaviour like disobeying rules, and lower attendance levels. The committee published their report called Safe, included and heard in November 2025

<https://youthparliament.senedd.wales/committees/crime-and-safety-wyp3/crime-and-safety-report/>

Nearly 2,000 young people took part in the consultation through completing the survey or through focus groups. One of the key findings of this work reported that young people from marginalised groups, like those with disabilities, from different ethnic backgrounds, from poorer areas and LGBTQ+ young people feel less safe at their place of learning, and are more often the target of abuse and bullying.

To understand the experiences of these young people, focus groups were held with young people in alternative education, LGBTQ+ young people, those with additional learning needs, young people at risk of homelessness, and experiencing poverty to inform this work.

One of the key recommendations from the report calls on the Welsh Government to improve the experiences of young people from marginalised groups where they receive their education. They also call on the Welsh Government to build on this work and engage further with the groups highlighted in the report to identify solutions that will improve the safety and educational experiences of these young people.



WYP Partner Organisations

The WYP works with a range of partner organisations to ensure the representation of diverse groups of young people, including Race Council Cymru, Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team Wales (EYST), Tros Gynnal Plant, Talking Hands, Carers Trust Wales, Learning Disability Wales, Digon (from Ysgol Plasmawr who promote equality for LGBT students and combat homophobia in their school and the wider community) GirlGuiding Cymru, Young Farmers Club Wales, Urdd, Voices from Care, NYAS, GISDA, Action for Children, Headlands School, Conwy Youth Service, Swansea Council, Tŷ Hafan and Ty Gobaith, Stephens and George Charitable Trust, Youth Engagement and Participation Service Merthyr.

Each organisation elects a young person from within their membership as a Welsh Youth Parliament Member (WYPM), ensuring the unique perspective of young people from a range of different backgrounds is heard throughout the Welsh Youth Parliaments work.

The Welsh Youth Parliament is committed to work inclusively and support its Members to access information and engage with our work effectively. As a result, all of our meetings during the third Welsh Youth Term have speech to text capacity, Turkish translation and key documents and consultations are translated into Easy Read. We also work closely with Learning Disability Wales to ensure the way we communicate with Members suits varied needs. Additionally, we always offer the option to translate our consultations into different languages.

A Global Senedd - International Engagement

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) British Isles Mediterranean Regional Conference (BIMR)

The Senedd hosted a flagship Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) international conference between 17-19 June, focusing on “Addressing the Needs of a Modern Parliament”. We welcomed over 50 delegates from 15 legislatures to Wales and sessions included the importance of LGBTQ+ voices in parliament, our Welsh Youth Parliament, participation of disabled people, mental health and wellbeing of parliamentarians, and the launch of the BIMR LGBTQ+ Network.

The network, whilst in its infancy, has been very active. The Steering Committee, with Adam Price MS as its interim Chair and in which Hannah Blythyn is a Member, has met frequently and in November 2025 a first in-person Forum was held in Westminster. The programme examined the key themes of: “*The Visibility of LGBT+ people in politics across the BIM Region*” and “*The Status of LGBT+ equality across the wider Commonwealth.*”

An article by Adam Price MS, reflecting on the Forum, can be read [here](#).





Photo credits: CPA Wales

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Regional Conference (CWP)

The theme of the conference was “*A Parliament for All: the Importance of Women in Politics*” **Report**.

CWP Workshop, the theme of which was “Parliamentarians as Drivers of Women’s Economic Empowerment” **Report**.

The theme of the Conference was “*Power and Peace: Protecting Our Mental Health in Public Life*” Official Report in development. **[Link to CPA Secretariat Article](#)**.

Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD)

In February 2026 Mark Isherwood MS represented the Senedd at the **Inaugural BIMR CPwD Forum**, hosted by the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. Further details of the Forum can be found [here](#).

Notable visits

The Llywydd hosted official visits to the Senedd by the following Commonwealth Speakers, during this reporting period.

- Speaker of the Australian Senate (federal) President Sue Lines
- Speaker of the New South Wales Legislative Council, President Ben Franklin
- Speaker of the Queensland Parliament, the Hon Pat Weir MP







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