

# Diversity and Inclusion: Annual Report 2024-25

July 2025



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 2024-25

July 2025





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# Introduction



## Foreword

It is our pleasure to introduce the Senedd Commission's Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2024-25.

From community engagement and support for Senedd Business, to policy changes and learning and development, we are proud of the steps we have taken. Our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion is a core value that underpins everything we do.

We strive to create an inclusive environment which makes the most of everyone's skills and contributions, where everyone operates in a safe space, with a true sense of belonging, helping us all to play our part in supporting devolution and delivering an inclusive, accessible and effective parliament.



**Manon Antoniazzi**

Chief Executive and  
Clerk of the Senedd



**Joyce Watson MS**

Senedd Commissioner  
with responsibility  
for employees and  
equalities



But we are not and cannot be complacent. We know that we aren't perfect, and we will always have work to do as we strive to be the best that we can be. And that is our goal - to be the best employer, to provide outstanding support for Members, and to be the most accessible parliament where everyone in Wales can have their voice heard.

The progress and activities in this report are a testament to the commitment and collaboration of our colleagues whose unwavering professionalism is a credit to the

Members and to the people of Wales for whom we all work. Diversity and Inclusion is a shared responsibility, and we invite you to engage with us in creating a more inclusive future for all of us. True inclusion is an ongoing journey, not a destination; we hope that you will join us.

As always, we welcome your feedback on this report and on how we might consider doing things differently in the future.

## Our Year in Highlights

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

We respond to feedback and challenges to grow as an inclusive organisation.

- Preparations continue for the forthcoming Sevent Senedd to promote the election to the people of Wales, accommodate additional members and ensure that they will have the information and support that they need from day one.
- Enhanced focus on monitoring social mobility.
- Worked closely with our trade unions to further advance worker benefits.
- Initiated a gender sensitive audit of the parliament.
- Welcomed our third cohort of Ymlaen interns.
- Increased maternity and paternity / co-parental leave for staff.
- Delivered a suite of training and awareness to celebrate diversity and promote inclusion.
- Involved the people of Wales in the work of the Senedd through consultation outreach and engagement.
- Welcomed members of the third Welsh Youth Parliament and engaged with thousands of children through our education programme.
- Reviewed our corporate culture through staff surveys, where 84% of respondents said that they feel they can be themselves at work.
- Celebrated diversity, inclusion and the people of Wales.
- Continued our ONE TEAM approach to working together and building relationships with colleagues.
- Invited people into the Senedd and held events and exhibitions that celebrate Diversity & Inclusion in Wales.
- Promoted an enhanced corporate commitment to wellbeing.
- Y Farchnad – invited Welsh organisations into the Senedd to promote their work.
- Recognised as a best practice employer.



## 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.

### Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Our strategy<sup>1</sup> 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.

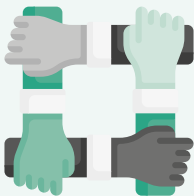
Our strategy is available on our website in full, in a summary form, in Easy Read and in British Sign Language.

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<sup>1</sup> <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



## Diversity and Inclusion in our work

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

### Equality Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessments enable colleagues throughout our organisation to consider how their 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 undertake impact assessments as part of any changes or updates. During this reporting period impact assessments have been undertaken on a range of work including HR policies, changes to our estate and our working practices.

### Dignity and Respect

In 2023-24, a review was undertaken into the culture and practices around Dignity and Respect. A working group was set up to lead the review and implement the recommendations. As a result of this, a Dignity and Respect framework was introduced, and the following actions taken:

- Our Dignity and Respect internet pages have been reviewed to simplify and improve the wording;
- New awareness raising posters have been displayed across the Senedd estate;
- Additional staff have been trained as Dignity and Respect contact officers. We now have 12 trained contact officers that reflects diversity related to a range of protected characteristics;
- A new mechanism has been launched to monitor rates and trends of inappropriate behaviour;
- We have undertaken a Dignity and Respect survey of our staff and the contractors who work with us on our estate;



- Mandatory Dignity and Respect training and awareness raising has been delivered to our staff;
- Our Staff Code of Conduct has been updated to reflect the expectations related to Dignity and Respect;
- As a result of the introduction of The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, a risk assessment related to sexual harassment of employees has been undertaken and an action plan has been introduced.

## **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 that is undertaken and complete Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) as required. During this reporting period we have:

- Continued our engagement with the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) to improve accessibility following their audit of the Senedd. Actions include modifying the handrails outside the Senedd and painting contrast strips on pillars;
- Commissioned an audit of our induction loop provision as part of a wider project to review assistive hearing provision across the estate. Following the audit, induction loop system updates have been made to all front of house areas to enhance visitor experience;
- Continued the installation of LED lighting to improve visibility for people with visual impairments and photo-sensitive epilepsy;
- Undertaken weekly inspections of external estate to proactively identify and repair potential obstacles that could hinder access;
- Completed a refresh of Tŷ Hywel as part of an ongoing large-scale estate project which included an EQIA and consultation with building users from across the Commission services, including all our diversity networks and Trade Unions;
- Progressed design works for the adaption to the Senedd Siambr which has included extensive engagement with our staff, Members and accessibility consultants. The new layout will include a raked floor

(previously stepped), an integrated desk lectern, and a platform lift has been included in the design to ensure that the interpretation and AV booths will be fully accessible in the future;

- Proactive repairs and maintenance of the Senedd rumble strips. Nine rumble strips were painted with anti-slip paint to enhance grip and avoid slip, trips and falls.

## **People and Culture Strategy**

The People and Culture Strategy forms part of our corporate governance and planning arrangements, pulling together existing strategies and relevant workstreams. These existing strategies include the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, the Wellbeing Strategy, and the Dignity and Respect Framework which all place an emphasis on the importance of respect, tolerance and inclusivity in the workplace.

One of the six strategic priorities within the People and Culture Strategy is ‘Belong’ – the aspiration to create a collaborative and inclusive workplace where Diversity and Inclusion is built into everyday decision-making, through planning, service and project design, and delivery.

## **Other ways Diversity and Inclusion are built into our work:**

### **Senior accountability**

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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.

### **Building partnerships**

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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

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Members of our recognised trades unions 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

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We have promoted inclusion during the recruitment process by:

- Reviewing our recruitment policy to align with our workforce plan and People and Culture Strategy;
- Developing an inclusive recruitment training module and accompanying hiring manager guidance;
- Reviewing candidate guidance to provide clarity on processes and to reassure disabled candidates as to the reasonable adjustments that can be made throughout the recruitment process; and
- Refreshing elements of our recruitment webpages.

Our Recruitment Team continues to:

- Operate name-free applications where possible to give job applicants confidence that biases will be eliminated from the application process;
- Develop an attraction plan with strategies to widen the talent pipeline and develop marketing materials and outreach activities;
- Work in partnership with an executive search agency to increase and diversify the talent pipelines and panels for senior Commission appointments and Public and Crown appointments; and
- Review candidate and hiring manager feedback to improve processes and guidance.



## **Recruitment for Public and Crown Appointments**

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Our role in Public and Crown appointment varies according to the Senedd's role in 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. Along with data collection and analysis, there is an opportunity to increase the awareness of, and attraction to, the various roles for prospective Public and Crown appointees.

## **Workforce Steering Group**

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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.

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

- Conducting a PESTLE analysis to better understand the external factors affecting the Commission;
- Discussing and prioritising Workforce Planning activities for the Commission;
- Contributing to new draft Commission People and Culture Strategy;
- Discussing how members of the WSG, who are on Leadership Team, can ensure their services commit to the strategy.

## Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group

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Since its inaugural meeting in February 2024, the Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group (DISG) has played an important role in fostering an inclusive and progressive workplace. Key impacts include:

- Ymlaen Internship Programme – providing input to ensure accessibility and meaningful development opportunities;
- Inclusion Week (September 2024) – shaping the themes and focus areas to foster engagement and awareness; and
- Diversity calendar events – supporting the marking of key Diversity and Inclusion dates to celebrate and educate.

The DISG ensures that DandI remains integral to our governance and decision-making processes. The group has achieved this by:

- Contributing to business-as-usual reports presented to the Executive Board, ensuring DandI considerations are embedded;
- Overseeing progress on the DandI strategy and providing accountability on outstanding objectives;
- Providing insight and recommendations for the People and Culture Strategy; and
- Establishing a DISG Sub-Group dedicated to improving communication and engagement with diverse communities, helping drive more inclusive campaigns and outreach efforts.

## **Procurement**

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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.

In October 2024, a member of the team 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.



## Security

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Our dedicated Members' Security Team is undertaking work to enhance both safety and accessibility within constituency and regional offices. For example, we have been installing partitions to create reception spaces. Whilst these are primarily in place as a physical security measure, we are also ensuring that appropriate accessibility requirements are in place, such as doorways large enough to accommodate wheelchairs and buggies, and the installation of induction loops.

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;
- Ensuring that our uniforms meet the needs of our staff; and
- Ensuring that visitors receive an inclusive welcome by adjusting procedures, anticipating the needs of visitors and undertaking inclusive customer service training.

## ICT and Broadcasting

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Our ICT and Broadcasting team continue to improve accessibility for digital platforms across the Senedd. We have aimed to ensure that information, services, and resources are available and usable by everyone. This has included exploring the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist with bilingual service delivery and testing generative AI to understand what support it can offer to those with diverse needs such as dyslexia.

The service works with colleagues to ensure that ICT meets the needs of all system users. Examples include working with colleagues to ensure that we keep pace with the changing needs of Members, Members' staff, our staff and visitors and use different technologies to help to address these needs.

The team also arranges British Sign Language (BSL) translation for formal meetings. This is provided retrospectively for each session of First Minister's Questions and is provided both retrospectively and live for debates that relate to hearing impairment. Over the past 12 months the service has provided over 46.30 hours of BSL interpretation over 44 different sessions.

We are working on a multi-year project to install new broadcasting systems and infrastructure, to be completed during 2026. One of the main drivers for this work is delivering significant accessibility improvements – for generating and providing subtitling and closed captions and displaying BSL interpretation.

## **Bay 2032**

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This is a large-scale, long-term project looking at our future accommodation needs on our Cardiff estate. Issues under consideration include:

- Incorporating wider inclusivity measures such as neurodivergent spaces, prayer rooms or zones that encourage focus, collaboration, acoustically insulated furniture, etc. Tied to this is the opportunity to invest into a holistic, estate wide approach, incorporating features such as wayfinding and accessibility consistently to provide a better overall user experience.
- One of the foundational themes of a future accommodation vision is that our space needs to be inclusive and welcoming, creating spaces that are accessible, culturally sensitive and considerate of the changing needs of building users.

## **Continuing Professional Development accreditation**

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We continue to review our internal courses through an inclusion lens. As part of our commitment to continuous learning and inclusive development, we 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.





Ennill iechyd eiddoedd  
Deddfu Ddiwydiol Wngylweddol  
Proff Anabwl

**Codi eich llais**

Cyda Mair Hareira a Rob Osborne

Tu ddechrau am 5.30

**Explore the Senedd**

Join the Public Viewing  
Experience take a peek at the

**Amplifying your voice**

With Mair Hareira and Rob Osborne

Starts at 5.30









# 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. Senior accountability for delivering this strategy is increased.

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, both as formal learning and informal awareness raising.

### **Inclusive Customer Service**

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This training was delivered by an external supplier, Sglein, to our public facing staff and focused on the customer journey and best practice in regard to inclusion, and helping visitors feel that they belong. We have built on this work by developing sessions on resilience and well-being in regard to engaging with the public, both in-person or online.

### **Cultural diversity and harmful practices**

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Delivered by BAWSO, this training raised awareness of the main cultures and religions within the UK. The course looked at how we define culture, gained an understanding of various cultural practices and values, and recognised how our belief system impacts on our perception of culture.

### **Institutional Racism**

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Members of our Leadership Team attended a workshop with the Vice Chair of Race Council Cymru, Professor Emmanuel Ogbonna CBE on "How can Senedd leaders embed an anti-racist culture in their organisation." The aims of the workshop were to gain an understanding of the skills, knowledge and attitude required to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and promote equal opportunities, and to learn how to embed an anti-racist workplace culture where people from all diverse backgrounds can thrive.



## Ramadan Workshop

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This session, delivered by MEND looked at:

- The five pillars of Islam;
- The history of Islam in Wales and Muslims in the UK;
- A brief guide to Ramadan, what it looks like and how its celebrated; and
- An introduction to workplace discrimination and what matters to Muslim employees.

## Neurodivergent-affirming language, communication, and spaces

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Delivered by Aûtentic, this session helped staff to understand how they can support neurodivergent colleagues in an affirming way.

## Endometriosis Action Month - Lunch and Learn

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This session, delivered by Endometriosis UK, focussed on what endometriosis is, symptoms, treatment, and management. It also delved into its impact in the workplace, and which is a way for employers to confirm their commitment to developing a work environment and culture that enables colleagues with endometriosis to thrive at work.

## Interparliamentary Learning and Development

We worked with our inter-parliamentary colleagues from the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Scottish Parliament and the Oireachtas to deliver a series of learning events throughout the year. The week-long programme for Learning at Work Week included sessions on acquiring knowledge as introverted leaders; overcoming imposter syndrome, the power of coaching, working smarter remotely and becoming confident empowering speakers. There were also sessions on British Sign Language, Scottish Gaelic, Irish Gaelic and Welsh.

During October's Inclusion Month, sessions included trans and non-binary inclusion with Genderspace; allyship; managing menopause in the workplace; inclusive recruitment; and racism awareness and cultural competency with Race Equality First.

There were numerous sessions delivered in February for LGBTQ+ History Month including an overview of the liberation movement, how to create safe spaces for LGBTQ+ people at work, and trans and non-binary inclusion. Staff, including members and allies of our PLWS network for LGBTQ+ staff visited St Fagans National Museum of History to see the Pride Exhibition and attend a talk with Mark Etheridge, Principal Curator of LGBTQ+ Collection Development at St Fagans.



◀ Mark Etheridge from St Fagans talking to Senedd staff about their LGBTQ+ collection

## Awareness raising for an inclusive culture

Throughout the year, we have continued to mark a range of different awareness events that help us to celebrate diversity and encourage inclusion, including Black History Month, International Women's Day, LGBTQ+ History Month, Neurodiversity Celebration Week, International Day of Disabled People, Ramadan, Holocaust Memorial Day, Chinese New Year, Holi and Mental Health Awareness Week.

In addition to our internally delivered Allyship workshop, we use our all-staff ENGAGE network to share regular *Top Tips on being a Diversity and Inclusion Ally* covering a range of topics such as challenging benevolent sexism; erasure; Ramadan; digital accessibility; Holocaust Memorial Day; Bi Visibility Day; Disability History Month; Trans Awareness Week; privilege and empathy; and redefining masculine energy.



◀ Library display for Pride



## Supporting Health, Safety, Wellbeing and Safeguarding

It's been another busy year for our Health, Safety, Wellbeing and Safeguarding team, whose work on implementing our Wellbeing Strategy continues, with actions including:

- Informing staff of the support, guidance, policies, and signposting resources available both internally and externally.
- Producing a quarterly newsletter to provide staff with tips, guidance, advice, sign postings, on how to stay well during the season.
- Delivering wellbeing information sessions to all service areas.
- Producing a Wellbeing Commitment. In Autumn 2024, we launched our Wellbeing Commitment, a key aspect of our Wellbeing Strategy. This commitment outlines how we champion a supportive and productive workplace by setting out expectations of managers and staff against the Wellbeing Strategy objectives.

The commitment was launched at an all-staff meeting, dedicated purely to staff wellbeing. A panel consisting of members of our Leadership Team discussed why wellbeing is important to them, and what they do to support their wellbeing both in work and in their personal life.

A wellbeing subgroup has been formed to implement the work needed to support the commitment, and Leadership Team have committed to four wellbeing training sessions a year as part of their leadership team meetings.

- Marking Endometriosis Action Month. In March 2025 we signed up to the Endometriosis Friendly Organisation Scheme as a way for us to confirm our commitment to developing a work environment and culture that enable employees with endometriosis to thrive at work. Several activities were planned throughout the month.
- Our teams have worked closely to update safeguarding policies for 2025. These updates expand upon the existing safeguarding principles and definitions to provide clearer guidance for staff, including outlining

the equal priority of all children and adults at risk regardless of their age, disability, gender, race, religion or believe, sex or sexual orientation. The policies streamline the reporting procedure for safeguarding concerns and disclosures to make it easier for staff to understand how to escalate and record safeguarding incidents.

- Safeguarding training for Members, Members' Support Staff and our staff is captured on the health, safety, wellbeing, safeguarding and inclusion training framework.
- Our Health, Safety and Safeguarding Manager continues to work closely with the Welsh Youth Parliament team to ensure robust health, safety, wellbeing and safeguarding arrangements are in situ for Welsh Youth Parliament Members including feeding into procedural documents and risk-assessing regional and residential meetings.

## Staff Engagement Network – ENGAGE

ENGAGE is our online network that is designed to enhance communication, foster employee engagement and promote a positive working environment. ENGAGE allows all our staff to be involved in shaping their work experience and to share and celebrate ideas to drive a positive change.

ENGAGE contributes to a positive and productive workplace environment, with our values at the heart; Passion, Pride, Respect and One Team. The ENGAGE platform has been used to share events happening throughout the organisation including our all-staff meetings and annual recognition scheme.



# ENGAGE

Our All-staff Engagement  
Network



## Workplace Equality Networks

Our networks continue to support the development of an inclusive workplace by:

- Being available to our staff for advice and support;
- Contributing to the development of corporate policies;
- Raising awareness of different inclusion;
- Promoting wellbeing for all;
- Attending training to further support their knowledge; and
- Attending celebrations of inclusion such as participating in the Pride Cymru parade and attending Black History Month events.



## Case Study: MINDFUL

MINDFUL, our mental health and wellbeing network, has continued to offer regular virtual and face to face drop-ins. During this reporting period, there has been extra 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, including 'wellbeing lunch walks' through our Staff 'Senedd Steppers' group.

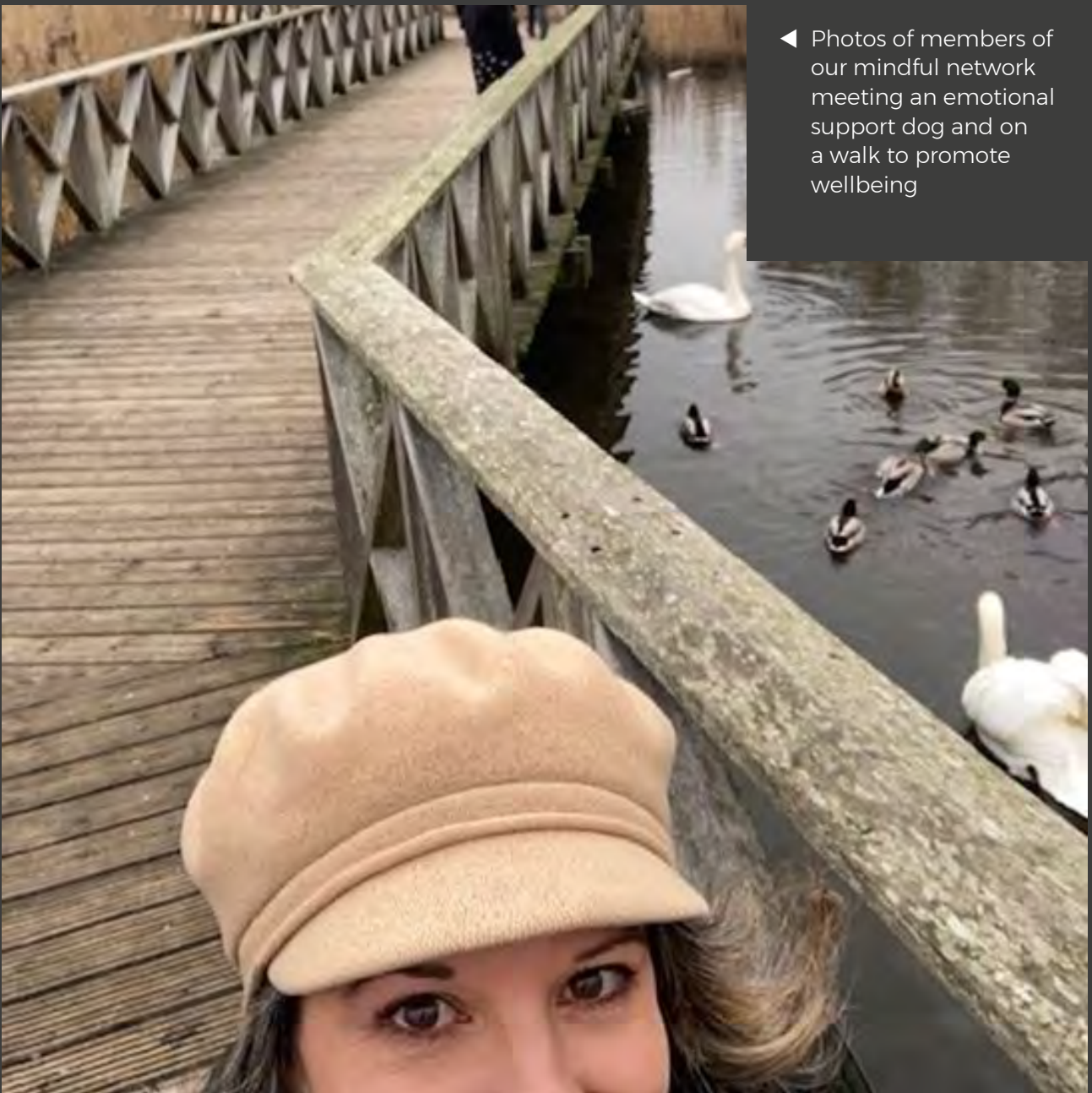
### Improving Wellbeing Support for security teams

One of the network co-Chairs joined security managers to discuss ways of improving wellbeing support for their teams and team managers. Recognising that their service does not use the intranet like other departments, we provided some materials to be used by the managers and to be on display in the mess room. We are also working to have security officers as Mental Health Champions for the department, appointed to stay connected with the network as a positive connection for the teams, to improve communication and have a better means of feedback for us and team managers.

### Awareness raising

The MINDFUL network promotes wellbeing throughout the year.

- Mental Health Awareness Week - In recognition of the theme of 'movement' for this year's Mental Health Awareness week, the Mindful network liaised with our Sustainability manager to organise some wellbeing nature walks.
- Wellbeing themed all-staff meeting - The network organised a bake sale raising £300 for Mind Cymru and encouraged staff to take time out after the meeting to re-connect and catch up with colleagues, and senior managers across departments.
- RED January - The network encouraged staff to move every day in January by recording all steps on their fitness app, competing as a team against other organisations to be the most active.
- Time to Talk Day - The network worked with our Wellbeing Manager to host a drop-in session to allow staff access to advice, support and information on wellbeing support available.



◀ Photos of members of our mindful network meeting an emotional support dog and on a walk to promote wellbeing



## Social Mobility

To mark Social Mobility Day in the UK, our Social Mobility Champion launched our newest network, RISE. 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, 51.7% of our staff disclosed their socio-economic background, compared to 47.5% in 2022-23 and 48.5% in 2023-2024. This increase, though modest, is a step forward. We 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 under-represented 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.

## The Senedd community – Belonging and One Team

Working in a more agile way, with some people working fully on-site and others who operate a flexible model, means that we have had to work hard to maintain our culture as a welcoming and friendly workplace and our sense of being a Senedd community. Our colleagues use regular team meetings, supportive networks, and online fora to stay connected with others. We have sports teams, a book club and many other ways for people to find a sense of belonging.

Below, we highlight some of the areas where we have continued to forge a strong Senedd community, bringing together people from across the organisation to meet our corporate value of being ONE TEAM.

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### **One Senedd: Senedd Golfers Retain the Mahogany Goblet**

On 12 April 2024, the Senedd's golfers took part in a highly anticipated "Ryder Cup" style match against a Welsh Government team. At stake, the prestigious Mahogany Goblet, which we are glad to say was retained by the Senedd team.



▲ Senedd golfers celebrate with the Mahogany Goblet.

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## One Senedd: Bringing People Together Through Football

There were a couple of high profile matches for our football team this year. Our Team Captain Colin Ashton has shared his thoughts on why having the team is important.



I started the Senedd football team with the vision of bringing together staff from across our entire organisation to bond over a sport we all love. Additionally, we aimed to raise funds for various charities. I'm proud to share that, in just over a year, we raised over £7,000 for three incredible charities: Tenovus Cancer Care, Mind Cymru, and in 2023, we raised over £1,000 for aid in Ukraine through the Nation of Sanctuary Fund.

Football has always been more than just a game to me—it's a way to connect people, build friendships, and foster a strong sense of teamwork. Leading the Senedd Football Team has been an incredibly rewarding experience, allowing me to bring colleagues together from across the organisation in a spirit of camaraderie and inclusivity.

One of the things I'm most proud of is how the team has evolved into a space where everyone feels welcome, regardless of background, department, or role within the Senedd. Football has the power to break down barriers, and through our matches and training sessions, we've created an environment where colleagues can come together, have fun, and support each other both on and off the pitch.

Our efforts extend beyond just playing the sport—we actively use our platform to give back to the wider community. Through various fundraising initiatives and charity matches, we've been able to support important causes, reinforcing our commitment to making a positive impact beyond our workplace. Seeing the enthusiasm and dedication of my teammates, not just in sport but in their willingness to make a difference, has been truly inspiring.

Last May, we introduced a Euros-style mixed 5-a-side football tournament, marking our first mixed friendly competition. The event was a fantastic success, bringing together players of all abilities to enjoy the game in a fun and inclusive setting.





▲ Footballers at the 5-a-side tournament

◀ Teams at Cardiff City Stadium

Ffion Edwards, one of the recipients of an award from the trophy night of the tournament has reflected on the day:

“

Having not played football since primary school, I was initially quite nervous to partake in the Euros football tournament.

However, from the moment we arrived at the football centre, I felt completely welcomed by everybody, and it was clear that we were all there to have a bit of fun. The tournament was a brilliant experience—I had so much fun and got to meet and connect with colleagues from across the organisation who I might never have interacted with otherwise. It was a fantastic way to break down workplace silos and just enjoy the game together, and I am looking forward to the next mixed games and tournaments ahead!

## **One Senedd: World Bee Day**

We have had bees at the Senedd for six years and what started as a project to improve their numbers in urban environments, the Pierhead Bees have been an important catalyst for wider biodiversity improvements on our estate.

The hives, situated on the roof of the Pierhead are maintained and managed by volunteers from across the Senedd.





## One Senedd: Celebrating Our Senedd Family

Initiatives like our ENGAGE platform, all staff meetings, our annual recognition awards, internal social platforms and groups, Workplace Equality Networks, St. David's Day celebrations, activities to mark Saint Dwynwen's Day, and our Senedd Eisteddfod competitions, all help to enhance a sense of belonging and sense of pride in our Senedd community.





## **Pride Cymru**

Members and allies of our PLWS network for LGBTQ+ staff were proud to again march in 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.



## Volunteering and community outreach

### Using volunteer days to support the community

Naomi Ewins, the Member Learning and Engagement Manager, (pictured centre) was granted special leave to spend two days volunteering at the St Mellons Christmas shop. This shop provides brand new free gifts for local families worried about the cost of Christmas. Each family can choose a main gift for their child, a book or craft, stocking fillers and a gift for themselves. In 2024, the shop supported 250 children and 100 adults. The shop provides dignity to families and alleviates stress at a financially difficult time of year. The hives, situated on the roof of the Pierhead are maintained and managed by volunteers from across the Senedd.



### Foodbank collection and toy drive

For Christmas, we again collected food and donations for foodbanks across Wales. Colleagues 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.

Thanks to the generosity of our staff, Members and their staff, and on-site contractors we collected nearly 100kgs of food and toiletries which were delivered to Cardiff Foodbank.







On Tuesday 3rd December, we celebrated the National Day of Giving with a bake sale raising money for Shelter Cymru, and a toy drive for Cancer Research Wales. The bake sale raised an amazing £145.88 for Shelter Cymru and all the toys were donated to Cancer Research Wales.

### **Reaching out to promote inclusion**

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Our Legal Services Team has hosted students through the Lord Edmund-Davies Legal Education Trust (LEDLET) scheme and the FAIRE scheme, and have established links with the organisers of those schemes over several years. 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. The FAIRE scheme aims to support social mobility, offering students equal access to paid work experience that can pave the way for a career in the legal sector.

### **Participating in Reverse Mentoring**

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Laurian Hubbard, Head of Engagement Services and Chair of our Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group, has shared her experience of being part of a reverse mentoring scheme to help develop an inclusive and diverse communication industry.





Participating in the Taylor Bennett Foundation's reverse mentoring programme has provided valuable insights and will help shape our approach to Diversity and Inclusion. The programme, delivered in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Public Relations, is a 10-month programme pairing senior leaders with Black, Asian and ethnic minority professionals to highlight the value of allyship, foster inclusive workplace cultures, and inspire fresh perspectives on how organisations tackle diversity, equity and inclusion at every level.

The programme has provided me with invaluable perspectives that I might not have encountered otherwise. Discussions delved into various aspects of communication, cultural sensitivity, and the challenges faced by underrepresented groups. These conversations were eye-opening and underscored the importance of understanding and embracing diversity in all forms.

Following the programme, I established an internal Diversity and Inclusion sub-group dedicated to enhancing our communications and engagement strategies and campaigns to ensure that our work resonate with and reflect the diverse population of Wales. By integrating diverse perspectives into our communication and engagement efforts, we strive to create a more inclusive environment and engage with the people of Wales in a meaningful and inclusive manner.

—

*Laurian Hubbard, Head of Engagement Services*

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Working with Laurian has been a great opportunity to share lived experiences both personal and professional. Our sessions were insightful, enjoyable, and provided a safe space to talk openly and honestly about what can be done to create more diverse, equitable and inclusive working environments, that help to cultivate change, increase a deeper sense of belonging for colleagues and clearly showcases the benefits both internally and externally.

—

*Matt Geer, Taylor Bennett Foundation Mentee*





# 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 2025	31 March 2024	31 March 2023
506 staff	503 staff	487 staff

## Sex and Gender

### Gender split

51.8% women and 48.2% men.

Women represent 50% of staff in our three most senior pay bands.

### Working Pattern

Women		Men	
Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
72.9%	27.1%	94.3%	5.7%

### Recruitment

#### External Job Offers

Women			Men		
2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
54.9%	57.7%	55.7%	45.1%	42.3%	44.3%

#### Internal Job Offers

Women			Men		
2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
58.3%	50.0%	53.8%	41.7%	50.0%	56.2%

### Gender Identity and Gender Reassignment

This year we have a small number of staff identify as trans non-binary, up from zero last year. 3.2% of total applications for external roles were from applicants who identified as trans compared to 2.2% of applicants in 2024.

0.7% of external job applications came from non-binary candidates but no job offers were made.

Age

Workforce

22.2% of our workforce is aged 51 and over. The average age is 42.

<21	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61>
0.4%	12.2%	32.2%	33.1%	17.4%	4.8%

Recruitment

External job offers

<20	20-39	30-39	40-49	50-59	60>
2.0%	39.2%	35.3%	13.7%	5.9%	2.0%

Internal job offers

<20	20-39	30-39	40-49	50-59	60>
0.0%	12.5%	25.8%	37.5%	4.2%	0.0%

Disability

Workforce

8.5% of staff declared a disability, which is an increase from 7.4 in 2024.

Disabled	Non-disabled	No data
8.5%	82.4%	9.1%

Recruitment

External job offers

2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
17.6%	7.7%	13.1%

Internal job offers

2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
4.2%	18.8%	7.7%



## Ethnicity

### Workforce

5.9% of staff identify as being of an ethnic minority, compared to 5.2 in 2024 and 4.5% in 2023.

Ethnic minority	White	No data
5.9%	89.7%	4.3%

33.3% of staff who identify as being from an ethnic minority are employed at our lowest pay band (TS grade). This has 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

There has been an increase in the percentage of total applications from ethnic minority candidates: from 13.0% of total applications in 2022-2023 to 16.2% in 2023-2024 and 20.2% in 2024-2025.

### External job offers

2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
7.8%	11.5%	4.9%

### Internal job offers

2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
4.2%	6.3%	0.0%

## Religion / Belief

### Workforce

Staff who identify with other religion / belief (Agnostic, Atheist, Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Zoroastrian) has risen from 10.9% last year.

No religion / belief	Christian	Other religion/ belief	No data
39.9%	27.5%	12.6%	20.6%

Recruitment

External job offers

No religion / belief	Christian	Other religion / belief	No data
45.1%	33.3%	11.8%	9.8%

Internal job offers

No religion / belief	Christian	Other religion	Prefer not to say / no reply
33.3%	37.5%	20.8%	8.3%

Sexual Orientation

Workforce

6.1% of staff identify as being LGBTQ+, compared to 5.4 in 2024 and 4.7% % in 2023.

LGBQ+ <sup>2</sup>	Heterosexual / straight	Prefer not to say / No reply
6.1%	80.2%	13.6%

Recruitment

External job offers

2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
15.7%	13.5%	13.1%

Internal job offers

11.3% of internal applications came from LGBTQ+ people

2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
0.0%	18.8%	0.0%

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

## Pay Gap Reporting

### Gender Pay Gap – Hourly Pay

	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
<b>Mean Gender Pay Gap</b>	<b>-3.94%</b>	-5.33%	-4.8%	-6.5%	-5.3%
<b>Median Gender Pay Gap</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	0.0%	0.0%	-9.75%	-9.8%

### Ethnicity Pay Gap – Hourly Pay

	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
<b>Mean Ethnicity Pay Gap</b>	<b>18.56%</b>	23.2%	23.5%	26.1%	28.1%
<b>Median Ethnicity Pay Gap</b>	<b>20.17%</b>	26.44%	23.6%	35.8%	38.9%

### Disability Pay Gap – Hourly Pay

	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
<b>Mean Disability Pay Gap</b>	<b>-6.34%</b>	4.17%	1.28%	-2.87%
<b>Median Disability Pay Gap</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%



## **Disability**

This year, we are providing additional and reaffirming information in this reporting cycle regarding disability, mental health and wellbeing which meets the requirements in the Voluntary Reporting Framework on Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing<sup>3</sup>:

- 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 and Mindful 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.

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

## Mental health

- Between April 2024 and March 2025, mental health absence as a percentage of total absence has increased slightly to 45.9% from 42.3% in 2023-2024.
- 9.3% Commission staff experienced a mental health condition leading to sickness absence between April 2024 and March 2025. 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 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**

### **Senedd Commission Staff Survey**

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Our staff survey gives us the insights to help understand and improve staff experience and engagement, and provides results and action plans tailored to key themes including Reward and Recognition, Information Sharing, Empowerment, Well-being, Instilling Pride, and Job Satisfaction.

With a response rate of 73%, the overall staff engagement score was 74% within the Six Steps to Workplace Happiness framework. This remains a strong indication of a positive workplace culture and engagement. The staff engagement index continued to reflect a strong organisational culture, comparable to other parliamentary and civil service bodies.

Key results related to Diversity and Inclusion include:

- I feel happy at work: 72% responded positively.
- My organisation cares for my well-being: 73% responded positively.
- I am treated with respect: 78% responded positively.
- My views are heard at work: 72% responded positively.
- The Senedd Commission is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace: 78% responded positively.
- I think that the Senedd Commission respects individual differences (e.g. cultures, working styles, backgrounds, ideas, etc.): 77% responded positively.

These findings demonstrate our ongoing commitment to fostering a workplace that is inclusive, supportive, and respectful of individual differences. While our results remain positive, we will continue to build on this progress by listening to staff feedback and taking action to enhance the workplace experience for all.



## Wellbeing Pulse Survey

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In addition to the staff survey, we conduct wellbeing pulse surveys which provide key information to help us understand if we are achieving the objectives of our 2022-25 Wellbeing Strategy. The overarching strategy objective is:

*'To protect, promote and support organisational capability by achieving a workplace culture and environment where health, safety and wellbeing is championed by all, where people are able to bring their whole self to work, and where staff are enabled and empowered to make choices that support them to live well and work well.'*

Over the past year, we have remained committed to fostering a healthy and inclusive workplace. Our average physical health rating stands at 3.49 out of 5, suggesting a consistent level across all pulse surveys. Similarly, the average mental health rating has increased to 3.31 out of 5, an increase since the last survey and maintaining a steady level over the past four years.

We are pleased to report a reduction in work-related stress, with 50% of respondents indicating they have experienced stress related to their job, down from 55% in Autumn 2023. The primary cause of stress remains workload, cited by 48% of respondents, but this figure has decreased by 13%. Of the 185 respondents experiencing work or partially related work stress, 55% identified as female, 30% as male and 2% preferring not to say, and 13% nil response.

Notably, 94% of our staff agree that their line manager cares about their wellbeing, a slight decrease but still a strong indicator of the supportive environment we strive to maintain.

Our workplace culture continues to be a source of pride. Seventy-seven percent of staff believe that the organisation does a good job of embedding wellbeing into the workplace culture. Inclusivity remains a cornerstone of our values, with 84% of staff feeling they can be themselves work. Furthermore, 94% of staff feel supported and connected to their team, an increase from 93%.

Looking ahead, we are committed to increasing participation rates across all service areas and enhancing awareness of wellbeing guidance. We will continue to offer organisational mental health awareness sessions on stress management, resilience, and mindfulness. Additionally, we will provide targeted wellbeing training for managers, focusing on empathy, active listening, mental wellbeing, menopause, and other menstrual health issues, and general wellbeing.

## **Dignity and Respect Survey**

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The Dignity and Respect survey was open to all Senedd Commission staff as well as Members and their staff. The information below relates only to the Commission staff and our response rate was 66%. The results show:

- 82% of staff agree with the statement that they know how to report inappropriate behaviour.
- When asked if people have experienced or observed inappropriate behaviour but not reported it, the most cited reason was that it was dealt with at source, so there was no need to report it. The results show that there is more work to be done to make the information on reporting inappropriate behaviour easier to access.
- The percentage of respondents stating that they had never experienced inappropriate behaviour in the workplace in the previous 12 months remained the same at 83%.
- Compared to 2023, the number of respondents observing inappropriate behaviour on multiple occasions has increased.
- 7% of respondents overall had experienced inappropriate behaviour by members of the public at work.
- Compared to 2023, there has been an increase in the percentage of staff who have said they have been called out on inappropriate behaviour, from 1% in 2023 to 5% this year. The percentage of staff saying they have called someone out on inappropriate behaviour has increased slightly to 9% of respondents.
- Although the overall percentage of respondents noting inappropriate behaviour linked to any protected characteristic is low, work needs to particularly focus on behaviours related to gender / sexism. Work is planned to introduce sexual harassment training and greater awareness about routes available to staff for sexual harassment at work.

Following the survey, work continues on a number of related areas, including:

- Providing service area specific results to each Head of Service
- Continuing with the review of dignity and respect training, to ensure there is a framework which delivers some form of training annually, including what is inappropriate behaviour and identifying the informal and formal reporting mechanisms.
- Continuing to regularly promote informal options for resolution, including attendance at service areas meetings to promote these and including this in training. Including what to do in the moment if someone acts in a way that someone feel uncomfortable / disrespected. More frequent communications about the process and how to access advice will also be provided.
- Making links between dignity and respect and competency framework development, as well as promoting initiatives such as 360° feedback, insights profiles etc, to seek to increase staff awareness and pre-empt issues.



## **YMLAEN – our Ethnic Minority Graduate Internship**

Our Ethnic Minority Graduate Internship Programme, Ymlaen, welcomed its third cohort of graduates in March 2025. This initiative is a key part of our commitment to fostering a more diverse and representative workforce within public services. We are proud to have once again partnered with the Windsor Fellowship, a charitable organisation that designs and delivers innovative personal development and leadership programmes to support talented individuals from diverse communities in reaching their full potential. To expand our outreach, we promoted this year's internship at our Black History Month event, Reclaim the Narrative, where we connected with local community leaders. Through our continued collaboration with the Windsor Fellowship and their networks, we are strengthening our efforts to create accessible pathways into our organisation and empower underrepresented voices in the public sector.

Throughout their internship journey, our interns are encouraged to participate in various projects, engage with stakeholders, and contribute their unique perspectives to our work. By fostering an inclusive and supportive environment, we strive to empower them to thrive and make meaningful contributions, not only during their time with us, but also in their future careers.



What attracted me to the Ymlaen Internship Program was the opportunity to learn in the right environment. I have also heard great feedback from previous interns who benefited greatly from their time at Senedd.

—

*Saeed, ICT Intern*

I'm hoping that through this experience I will learn a lot about myself and develop skills that will hopefully give me a clearer vision of what I want for my future.

—

*Megan, Communications Intern*

I was drawn to the Ymlaen Internship because it's a great opportunity to develop my skills and be embedded in a close-knit team that shares a passion for Wales and its people. This internship offers me the chance to gain insight into Welsh politics and engage with many staff and stakeholders—an opportunity I didn't want to miss!

—

*Shoruk, Estates and Facilities Intern*

I am really excited to use my time in the Senedd to learn as much as I can about how to meaningfully engage with a representative cross section of society, and to contribute to the engagement strategy ready for the upcoming election.

—

*Fahadi, Engagement Intern*

## **Inclusive policies**

We continue to review and develop people policies that value diversity and ensure fairness and inclusion. Accordingly, all new or updates policies are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment, as well as extensive consultation through our Trade Unions and internal networks. Examples of policies developed or updated during 2024-25 include the Grievance policy, Flexible Working Policy, Maternity Policy, Paternity Policy, Hybrid Working Policy, Short Term Sickness Policy, Long Term Sickness policy, Home Working policy, Dignity and Respect policy and Appeals policy. Policies have been developed to support the introduction of the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act.

### **Enhancements to maternity and paternity leave and pay**

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From 1 January 2025, our maternity pay entitlements increased from six months full pay to nine months full pay, with paternity / co-parental pay increasing from three weeks full pay to four weeks full pay. These entitlements apply as from the first day of employment (i.e. a day one right, with no qualifying service required).

### **People and Remuneration – HR/Payroll system**

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In January 2025, a new HR self-service platform was introduced and offers greater functionality such as Total Reward Statements and Interactive Payslips. This system allows the collection of D and I data, supporting us to meet our statutory obligations to monitor and analysis the demographics of our workforce.

### **Pay Award**

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Following the completion of a benchmarking exercise, which identified a pay lag at the lower grades in relation to comparable grades within the Welsh public sector, the Commission agreed a targeted, consolidated uplift in pay for our colleagues in the lower pay bands for 2024-25. As well as ensuring fairness across all grades, these pay uplifts support the Commission's commitment to continue to be a Real Living Wage employer.





In September 2024 I switched from a standard full-time week to a full-time compressed week, with 37 working hours in four working days, for childcare reasons. My team have been fantastic in accommodating my needs, and I'm very grateful for the policy and the commitment to its use.

Returning to work after maternity leave was a significant transition for me. The understanding from my line manager and senior team has been invaluable. I was fully supported in my request for reduced hours, which has made this period manageable and enjoyable. The flexible arrangements and encouragement I received have been crucial in helping me balance work and life responsibilities.

I suffer from a degenerative rheumatological condition. One of the symptoms is early-morning fatigue that had gradually worsened until I was finding working before 10am to be a struggle. Following discussion with my managers we agreed that partial retirement would be an excellent solution for me. I have now reduced my working hours without affecting my income. I now have more energy for my work and for family responsibilities and activities at weekends. I am very grateful for this understanding and care for my welfare, which will help ease me towards full retirement in 18 months' time.

During my time in security I have been made to feel comfortable about my religious beliefs and practices. My managers have always been understanding and enable me to take breaks throughout my shift to complete my 5 daily prayers. During the holy month of Ramadan I have been able to change my shifts to make it easier for me to get through the challenge of fasting throughout the day. I have been able to take time off to shorten my week, allowing me to get enough rest and to make the most of this important month by spending time with family and in the mosque.

## Accreditations

During this reporting period the Senedd Commission has been recognised as a Top Thirty Employer for Working Families and reaccredited as a Disability Confident Employer. Both accreditations involve analysis of our inclusive staff policies and the support that we have available for staff.



In 2024, we signed the 'Dying to Work' charter, which sets out the way in which an employee should be treated and supported in the event of a terminal diagnosis.



I am pleased to have signed the Dying to Work Charter on behalf of Senedd Cymru to confirm our commitment to protect and support staff during any terminal illness. At a time of crisis in people's lives, the last thing we want is for them to worry about work.

—

*Manon Antoniazzi,  
Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd*











# An Accessible, Inclusive and Global Parliament



## An inclusive, accessible Parliament

The Senedd is an inclusive, accessible Parliament that identifies and removes any barriers that prevents citizens from participating in its work in a way that is meaningful to them. The work of the Senedd is understood by people and how it might impact them and their communities

### Future Senedd Committee

The Future Senedd Committee was established on 16 October 2024, with a remit (amongst other things ) to consider “[...] *the accessibility of parliamentary business to Members in the Seventh Senedd [...]*”, and “[...] *solutions to barriers (real and perceived) which may, or have the potential to, impede the Senedd’s ability to represent people of all backgrounds, life experiences, preferences and beliefs, including consideration of the draft and final Diversity and Inclusion guidance for political parties [...]*”.

Commission staff have been supporting the Future Senedd Committee with its work, including in these areas.

### Communications and Engagement Strategy

#### **“Your Voice” – working with vulnerable communities**

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This was the third year of our current Communications and Engagement Strategy, which aims to raise awareness, increase understanding and encourage participation.

This year our teams advanced efforts to reach audiences who may not feel their voices are traditionally heard by the Senedd – a key aim of our strategy.

- We have worked with disabled people from across Wales to gather their views on the barriers they face to employment using a range of inclusive methods, including online and in-person focus groups and one-to-one interviews.

- We supported members of Gypsy and Traveller communities to share their views on the provision of sites. By hosting a follow-up, hybrid focus group at the Senedd, we gathered the lived experiences of community members.
- To support the work of Senedd Committees we have also ensured that the voices of other marginalised groups, such as missing and criminalised children, people with chronic health conditions and BSL signers have been at the centre of discussions.

## **Member support - Committees, Research and Senedd Business**

### **Committee Engagement**

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Our Citizen Engagement Team supports Senedd committees by designing and delivering engagement programmes that bring diverse perspectives into policymaking. Our committee teams work with our engagement 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.

#### **Disabled Children's Access to Childcare and Education: Online Advisory Group**

Our Citizen Engagement Team established an online advisory group to support the Children, Young People, and Education Committee's inquiry into disabled children's access to childcare and education. The group included 14 members from 11 local authorities across Wales, aged 17 to 55. It brought together young disabled people and parents or carers of children and young disabled people. Participants shared first-hand insights into the barriers to accessing childcare and education.

To ensure accessibility, a comprehensive support programme was in place. Before the first meeting, members attended an online 'Welcome Workshop' to introduce themselves, raise concerns, and learn about the group's structure. All information was in plain language, including FAQs, participant guides, and updates.

Our Citizen Engagement Team worked with third-sector organisations to ensure accessibility, offering written materials in advance, regular screen breaks, and digital support where needed. The group met at five key stages during the inquiry, reviewing evidence and shaping recommendations. Their input influenced the



Committee's final report and the government's response, ensuring the voices of disabled young people and their families were heard in decision-making.

### **Health and Social Care Committee's Inquiry into Supporting People with Chronic Conditions**

Our Citizen Engagement Team worked closely with a range of organisations and charities, including Alzheimer's Society, the Rare Autoimmune Rheumatic Disease Alliance, the British Heart Foundation, and Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales. By collaborating with these groups, we enabled people across Wales who live with chronic conditions or care for someone with a chronic condition to share their experiences.

To ensure a wide range of voices were heard, we conducted 31 individual interviews and facilitated three focus groups, representing over 20 different chronic conditions. These included autoimmune diseases such as scleroderma and lupus, various forms of cancer including breast cancer, leukaemia, melanoma, and prostate cancer, as well as chronic kidney disease, dementia, diabetes, endometriosis, fibromyalgia, inflammatory bowel disease, long Covid, mental health conditions, musculoskeletal conditions such as arthritis, myalgic encephalomyelitis, and respiratory diseases including asthma.

Building trust was key. Many interviews were held, with some participants visited in their homes, particularly in rural areas. This approach helped remove barriers and enabled many individuals to engage with the Senedd's work for the first time. Participants' experiences played a key role in shaping the Committee's recommendations to the Welsh Government, ensuring lived experience influenced policy decisions.

### **Equality and Social Justice Committee Inquiry into Disability and Employment**

The Committee examined the progress made in reducing barriers to employment for disabled people and explored what more could be done to improve access to work. To ensure that lived experience shaped this inquiry, our Citizen Engagement Team facilitated a series of focus groups and one-to-one interviews with disabled people across Wales. These took place both face-to-face and online, allowing participants to engage in ways that suited their needs.

Making the engagement process fully accessible and inclusive was a priority. Our Citizen Engagement Team worked closely with contributors and specialist organisations to identify the best ways for people to take part. This meant

adapting focus group formats to remove barriers to participation and ensuring that all materials were available in Easy Read format.

Engagement with disabled people began at an early stage in the inquiry, so that their experiences and insights could shape the direction of the Committee's work from the outset. The evidence gathered directly influenced the Committee's report and recommendations, ensuring that the voices of disabled people were at the centre of discussions on how to improve employment opportunities.

### **Children, Young People, and Education Committee Inquiry into Routes into Post-16 Education and Training**

The Committee examined the quality of information and guidance available to young people considering post-16 education and training. Our Citizen Engagement Team designed two surveys, one for parents and guardians and another for young people, to capture their experiences.

Working closely with academic experts who work closely with young people with additional needs, the Citizen Engagement Team sourced an Easy Read version of the survey. To ensure it met accessibility requirements, the team consulted the expert on its format and clarity. This collaborative approach aimed to remove barriers to participation and ensure that all young people, regardless of their abilities, could engage with the survey and share their views.

To remove barriers, the deadline for survey responses was extended, allowing those using the Easy Read format additional time to participate. By taking these steps, the Citizen Engagement Team ensured young people of all abilities could contribute, making their voices a key part of the Committee's work on improving post-16 education and training guidance.

### **Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee has consulted as part of its statutory review into the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019 and for the first time is accepting oral submissions as part of the exercise. This reflects provisions introduced by the 2019 Act which gave the ability for persons to submit complaints to the Ombudsman orally, as well as in writing, with the aim of improving the accessibility of the service. Respondents were invited to phone the Senedd's information line to arrange an appointment with a member of the committee clerking team. A transcript of the meeting with the clerks was then produced, checked for accuracy, and sent to the consultee. Respondents had 14 calendar days to comment, although more time can be requested if necessary. The

clerking team also made it clear that respondents are not required to confirm that they are content for their evidence to be used after being sent the transcript, as this may undermine the reasons for collecting an oral response in the first place given that the intention in adopting this approach is to do away with the need for persons to communicate in writing. The transcript will then be published alongside other consultation responses and used in the report as appropriate.

### **British Sign Language (Wales) Bill**

When Mark Isherwood MS proposed the British Sign Language (BSL) (Wales) Bill, he had integrated support from Senedd officials across multiple service areas. That 'Bill Team' therefore had to plan and manage the consultation (on Mark's behalf) to ensure that the Deaf community was at its heart. Our Citizen Engagement Team designed a programme to gather the lived experiences of BSL signers and their families. To ensure accessibility, the team worked closely with BSL signers to design the engagement process. Their input shaped how participants took part, ensuring communication methods and settings met their needs.

In addition to the standard consultation documents, we also launched an online consultation platform which was specifically developed to provide a mechanism for BSL responses to be uploaded directly. This was the first time that an online consultation in BSL has been hosted by the Senedd, and this process took substantial development work and collaboration to ensure the process worked effectively.

A qualitative approach was used, with focus groups and interviews. This approach ensured flexible, inclusive, and accessible engagement, capturing diverse perspectives in settings that best suited participants. 77 people took part in the programme, ranging in age from three to 84 years. Participants included Deaf BSL signers, parents and family members, older adults, people with physical disabilities, and individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds. To remove barriers, qualified BSL interpreters were provided, and participants could engage in person, online, or via email.

Findings from the engagement are translated into BSL, ensuring accessibility at every stage. By working in partnership with Deaf people and embedding inclusive practices, BSL signers' voices are central to its development of the Bill.



## Research and Information for Members of the Senedd

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Mainstreaming equality, inclusion, and human rights issues is a fundamental part of Senedd Research's work. The team provides research and analysis for Members of the Senedd and their staff, which is also widely accessible to the public via the website and social media.

Research articles relating to equality have included: **the barriers facing women standing for election, implementation of the anti-racist Wales action plan, the cashless society and its impact on people with learning disabilities and vulnerable adults, governance arrangements of Welsh Fire and Rescue Services following sexual harassment, racism and discrimination claims, home aids and adaptations, international law at the Senedd, addressing gynaecological cancer care, violence against women and girls, and accessible tourism.**

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

As well as publishing research articles, 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 **Anti-racist Wales Action Plan**, the **EU Settlement Scheme, childcare, the disability employment gap in Wales**, the governance of the **Fire and Rescue Service** and its inquiry into **social cohesion** and **fuel poverty**;
- Local Government and Housing Committee's reports on the **provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers, social housing supply** and ongoing inquiry into **housing support for vulnerable people**;
- The Children, Young People and Education Committee's report into access to education and childcare for **disabled children and young people** and **children on the margins**;
- The Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee ongoing inquiry into **the Welsh Rugby Union following allegations of sexism, misogyny, homophobia and racism**;
- The Petitions Committee's report into **the cashless society** and the impact on vulnerable groups;

- The Health and Social Care Committee's inquiry into the prevention of ill health and obesity; and
- The Reform Bill Committee carried out scrutiny of the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill which focussed on the **introduction of gender quotas** to improve the representation of women in 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.

Senedd Research also hosts the **Knowledge Exchange Programme**. The programme works 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.

### **Inclusive Senedd Business**

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Our central Business Coordination Unit provides support to enable the efficient and effective running of Senedd Business (plenary and committee meetings).

- Maintaining and promoting accessibility standards in committee outputs, including producing reports with metadata and accessible templates; some reports published as Word versions (with guidance) to improve available accessible reading options; and promoting good practice for accessible document production in other published committee papers through training for clerking teams.
- Encouraging third parties to submit accessible written content to Senedd committees.

- Using Microsoft Forms to receive consultation responses so that we control the formatting of text based responses and can improve the accessibility of the resulting outputs.
- Procedural scripts taking advantage of the benefits of an accessible template based approach. Making wider range of outputs consistently available by starting from a structured accessible template.
- Receiving responses in English, Welsh and BSL for a pre-introduction consultation on a proposed Member Bill with a single point of entry for all responses regardless of the language. Making a streamlined process for the submission of BSL video responses and an internal process to ensure these were treated equally alongside any written submissions.
- Maintaining a reasonable adjustments log across committees to better understand what provisions we have made for witnesses and our Members to fully participate in Senedd proceedings.
- Update to the online guides for “Getting involved with committees” for both written and oral evidence witnesses, including making clearer where reasonable adjustments to processes can be requested and that we actively seek to accommodate these.

## **Members’ Learning, Engagement and Support**

Our Members’ Business Support and Member Learning and Engagement Teams provide Diversity and Inclusion 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. This includes launching revised toolkits covering menopause and domestic violence issues. We have also developed guidance and a toolkit of documentation to support Members to comply with their duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment.

The Member Learning and Engagement team (MLE) have provided a range of courses to Members and support staff on Diversity and Inclusion. Conduct and Respect training has been provided biannually. Courses have been provided on understanding poverty, supporting wellbeing in others, race awareness training, active bystander training, unconscious bias, and safeguarding adults at risk. 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.



## **Inclusive proceedings**

British Sign Language interpretation is made available for every First Minister's Questions and each meeting of the Welsh Youth Parliament. BSL interpretation has been proactively provided where the subject is discussed, such as a 90-Second Statement by Julie Morgan on 8 May 2024 and for a Member Debate being led by Mark Isherwood on 5 March 2025. Interpretation is also available, upon request and with reasonable notice, for anyone wishing to watch a specific debate or Committee meeting, for events and for Senedd Tours.

## **Exploring the visitor journey**

During this reporting period, we commissioned a research company called Bramcote to provide insights into visitor engagement. To understand the overall customer journey for visiting the Senedd and to map out all customer touchpoints, they developed a customer journey map, conducted interviews with frequent visitors, and provided expert recommendations. This approach was designed to highlight the challenges that visitors might encounter and to support an evidence-based focus on key areas of improvement in the Senedd's visitor experience.



I visited the Senedd to meet with Joyce Watson MS and the Diversity and Inclusion team, to discuss accessibility and support for neurodivergent staff working at the Senedd. I was greeted politely and asked who I was meeting, and then security stepped forward and explained to me, clearly and directly what I needed to do next. I really appreciate clear instructions, as security and reception staff at some of the buildings I visit, use banter as a way to try and help you feel relaxed, but actually this always makes me feel more anxious as I have to work really hard as an autistic person to figure out what is being said and how or whether I should respond.

I asked a lot of technical questions about the body scanner, which I found really interesting, and security were extremely patient, answering my questions and explaining. I was given clear instruction to wait for staff to collect me and where to wait, and was really pleased to find the 'Visiting Ty Hywel: Sensory issues guide for neurodivergent people' in the waiting area, giving me details about sources and times of sensory intrusive events, alarms etc.

The D and I team met me and I was very relieved that they led the way through the building so that I could follow. Often when I visit new places, I'll be taken to meeting rooms with the host expecting me to walk ahead and ushering me through doorways first, which makes me really anxious as there is so much uncertainty and awkwardness. I was asked if it was ok to use the stairs and no-one tried to shake my hand or ask me how I was – a huge relief. Like many other autistic people, I have tactile sensory issues and health anxiety around cross-infection, exacerbated by the covid pandemic, and also when I'm intensely focussed on the purpose of my visit I can be really 'thrown off' by social questions and chit-chat. I also really appreciated being instructed to take a seat where I was comfortable at the meeting table and being able to get straight into the discussion I was there for. I wish everyone didn't automatically try to shake hands and engage me in chit-chat – a really great experience during my visit.

—  
*Catherine Leggett,  
 Aûtentic Autism Consultancy and Training*

## **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, including:

- Lesbian Visibility Week
- Privilege Café
- Reading Well for Dementia
- Pentecost Celebration
- National Windrush Day
- Disability Pride
- Butetown Carnival
- Black History Month
- Carer's Rights Day
- Holodomor Memorial Event
- Sanctuary in the Senedd
- Chanukah Menorah Lighting
- Neurodiversity in a Neurotypical World
- LGBTQ+ History Month
- International Women's Day
- Iftar celebration

## Senedd events and exhibitions

We organise and celebrate many events throughout the year to showcase achievements of the people of Wales, to celebrate our diverse national identity and to mark important days in the calendar. Below we share some of the events that we have organised during this reporting period.

### International Day of Disabled People, December 2024

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Our Events Team partnered with Disability Wales to hold an accessible programme of talks and workshops in the Senedd. Called **'Your Voice - Your Senedd'**, the day included talks from those with lived experience with an overarching aim to empower attendees by highlighting disabled people's success in a variety of different fields such as sport, media, local government and business.

The day included a wonderful performance by Shiny Happy People, an all-inclusive choir. All of the panel discussions were streamed on Senedd TV, and accessibility needs identified and accommodated from the outset for those attending, collaborating with the Wales Council for Deaf People (2 BSL interpreters and 2 palantypists).

There were a variety of sessions on offer with speakers from different backgrounds and different disabilities, all aligning with the theme of 'Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future'.

One of our main aims here was to promote and celebrate the work of the Senedd. One of the sessions titled 'Engage with, and influence the Senedd' collaborated heavily with our Citizens Engagement team who organised focus groups as part of their BSL Bill engagement work.

We also invited some organisations to do a themed Marketplace in the Oriel over lunchtime, where we also had a Senedd themed stand with colleagues from the Petitions Committee and Senedd recruitment to promote engagement and applications.

The team received lots of supportive feedback from the day, where it was clear that efforts made in the preparation and on the day were very much valued.





What can I say? Yesterday was probably the most accessible event and the easiest to attend due to all the information shared in advance. However, the thing that made it for me was the events team and all your support and your approach. Thank you! You're all superstars.

—

*Julian John, Panellist*

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We just wanted to say a huge thank you from us, our choir and all their support staff. We really enjoyed the inspirational speakers and the choir absolutely loved their opportunity to perform in your fabulous venue. Thanks again for the invite.

—

*Shiny Happy People Choir*

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I just wanted to say thank you on behalf of myself and Disability Wales, and well done on a fantastic event. There were some wonderful speakers and range of views on offer and was organised so well. I hope you all enjoyed as well; you really need to give yourselves a pat on the back.

—

*Kat Watkins, Disability Wales*

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All the information beforehand was really helpful and the fact that we were able to have a Teams call a couple of weeks prior to the event was really useful. It set the scene perfectly and gave me time to fully understand everything. The event was really empowering. I thought the panel session had a nice, relaxed feel.

—

*Sara Pickard, Panellist*

## Inputs



We shared a total of 40 posts across Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and X about the event. This included 20 posts published prior to the event to encourage attendance.



We created a new event landing page on our website to share information about the event and how guests can attend.

## Outtakes



- We received 15,333 impressions from content across our social media channels and had 666 engagements with our content.
- The engagement rate was 4.6% per impression.
- 202 people clicked through to our event landing page.
- We received highest engagement on our LinkedIn post after the event, sharing photos and highlights from the day.



## Black History Cymru 365, October 2024

Chaired by Lloyd Lewis, our Black History Cymru 365 month event in October included a panel of Mel Owen, Yusuf Hussein Ismail and Jessica Dunrod. The discussion delved into what 'Reclaiming the Narrative', the official theme for Black History Month 2024, meant to them and discussed the power of community, the importance of identity and how to celebrate and promote a multicultural society here in Wales. The event also included a musical performance by Sage Todz. Over 70 guests attended the event, with 37 of these from youth groups that had not previously engaged in the Senedd's work.



Thanks so much for having me, I thought the event was brilliant. In terms of feedback

I have nothing but positive things to say; the communication and briefing prior to the event was spot on - I felt well equipped and fully understood what was expected of me prior to the event. The questions were very poignant and well laid out, allowing for a great discussion. Diolch yn fawr iawn a gobeithio allai weithio da chi eto.

—

*Lloyd Lewis, Chair of panel*

It was fantastic to see so many young people there! Them having access to see these kinds of conversations is key so it made me proud that so many were there to be a part of it. I thought that the length of the discussion was ideal, especially as it gave time for QandA. Lloyd was a great chair. The fact that we all come from different backgrounds was brilliant - none of our viewpoints were exactly the same which is vital.

—

*Mel Owen, Panellist*





## Christmas, December 2024

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We brought generations together for a special Christmas event as we invited Age Cymru guests to enjoy a performance by Eveswell Primary School in the Senedd. As well as the service with Members and our staff, both groups also got to tour the building and learn more about our work during their festive visit.





## **Senedd 25 Celebrations**

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The 25th anniversary of the Senedd provided us with an opportunity to mark this significant milestone by celebrating the people of Wales who have helped shape our democracy.

During the Summer months, we celebrated through a series of events that included a Royal visit by King Charles and Queen Camilla, a panel discussion event and a partnership event with National Library of Wales's Political Archive project. We invited individuals and groups from a variety of backgrounds to take part in the celebrations and provided a place in our celebrations for those who are a part of our history and inspiring those that will shape our future.



## Olympic and Paralympic Homecoming

Working in partnership with the Welsh Government, Sport Wales and Disability Sport Wales, we hosted a homecoming reception and event for the Welsh Team GB and Paralympic GB athletes that took part in the Paris Olympic and Paralympic games during the summer. 20 athletes attended representing sports including Rowing, Boxing, Archery, Gymnastics, Taekwondo, Boccia, Swimming and Athletics. The Llywydd, First Minister and Chair of Sport Wales Dame Tanni-Grey Thompson greeted and congratulated the athletes before they took part in a question and answer session and celebration in front of the Welsh public on the Senedd steps. We also welcomed their families, coaches and governing officials and staff to celebrate their fantastic and inspiring achievements.



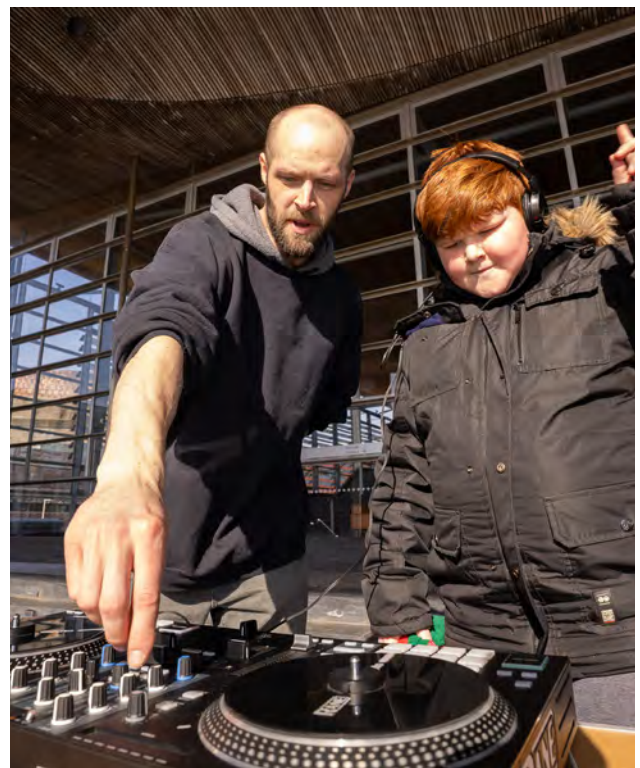
## **Dydd Gwyl Dewi – St David's Day**

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The Senedd was bursting with Welsh pride on 1 March to celebrate St. David's Day! We welcomed over 2,000 visitors to the Senedd 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 planting daffodil seeds and practicing their Welsh to perfecting Welsh-themed nail art.

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The programme included a performance by Cwmbran Deaf Choir and One World Junior Choir, a draw along poetry workshop with the Welsh Children's Laureate Alex Wharton, and music performances in partnership with Ministry of Life Education.

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## International Women's Day

To mark International Women's Day 2025, the Senedd hosted an exhibition launch event in partnership with Monumental Welsh Women and artist Meinir Mathias celebrating the unveiling of the first four statues of Welsh women in Wales, ahead of the unveiling of the fifth and final statue – of Elizabeth Andrews – in 2025.

Meinir Mathias has painted original portraits of the five women honoured by the Monumental Welsh Women project, accompanied by photographs of the statues, and profiling the histories of these monumental Welsh Women and bringing their stories to a new audience.



## Monumental Welsh Women

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For this exhibition, Ceredigion-based artist Meinir Mathias has painted original portraits of the five women honoured by the Monumental Welsh Women project.

Meinir said:

“

I believe that the work by the Monumental Welsh Women team in addressing the need for monuments of women in Wales is an incredibly important step forward for our society as a whole. Recognising and honouring female historical figures in art is essential as it helps to correct the gender imbalance in our historical narratives.

The Llywydd said:

“

The theme for this year's International Women's Day is "Accelerate Action" towards gender equality, so it is apt that we're celebrating five Monumental Welsh Women who were pioneers in their field.



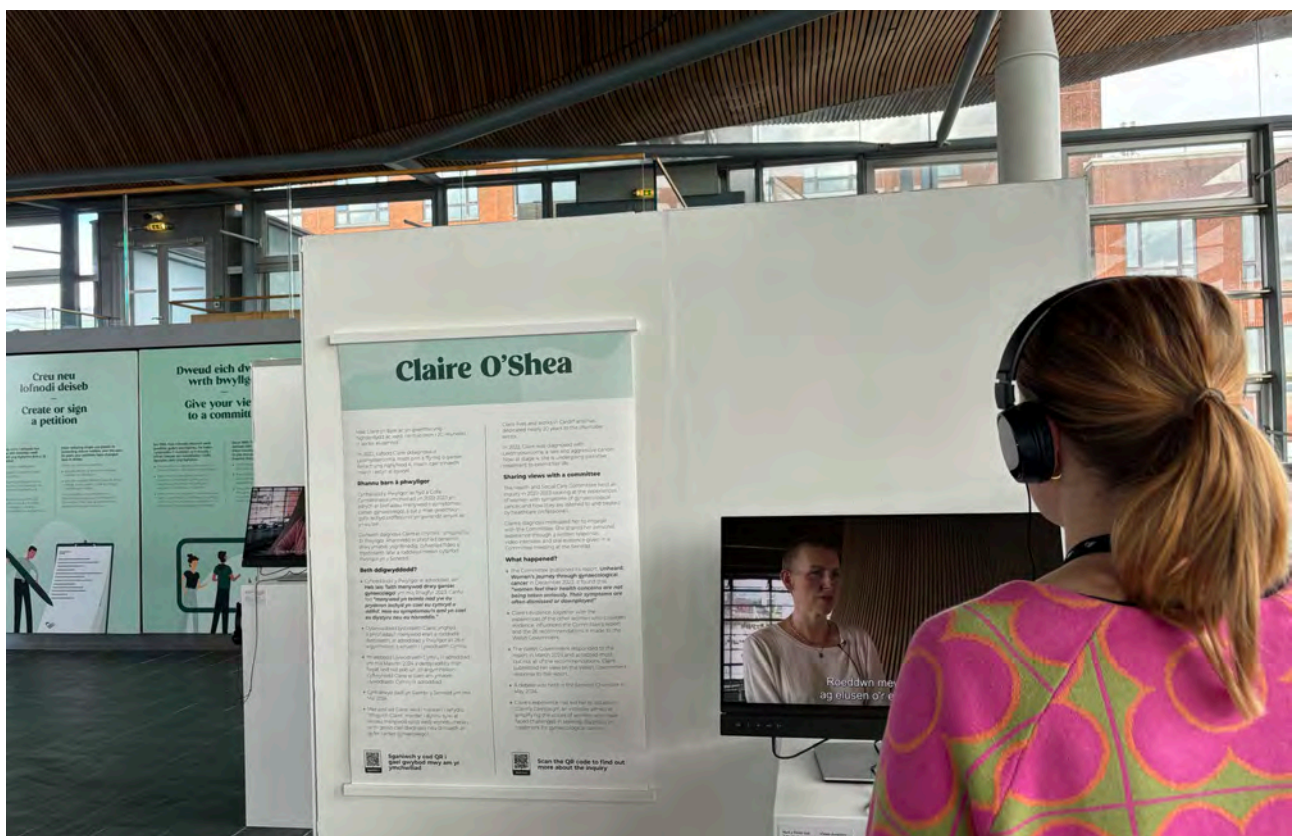
## Am Olygfa - What a Scenery - Çî Nemayane

The Kurdish All Wales Association (KAWA) is a Cardiff-based organization committed to enriching the lives of the Kurdish community in Wales. Their mission revolves around providing essential services, fostering cultural understanding, and establishing strong bonds with diverse communities across Wales.

The exhibition brought together the works of twenty highly acclaimed Kurdish artists, hailing from Canada, America, Europe, and Central Kurdistan. Inspired by the vivid imagery found within the verses of Goran, one of the Kurdish nation's most eminent poets, the artists created a dialogue between the poetic traditions of Kurdistan, Wales and the broader literary influences that have shaped cultures worldwide.

## Your Voice

An exhibition celebrating the stories of people who have used their voice to campaign for change since the start of devolution in Wales 25 years ago. Interviews with participants of the project were played as videos in the Oriel, highlighting an array of issues such as: violence against migrant women; women's health; opportunity in rural areas of Wales; bereavement; and racial equality.



## A Great British Welcome

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This exhibition by UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, was displayed outside the Senedd and told the story of how communities across the UK welcome people who have been forced to flee.

Through cooking in Cardiff, singing in Greenwich, volunteering in Rothesay, and in many other ordinary and extraordinary ways, A Great British Welcome highlighted how refugees and asylum-seekers can thrive in their new communities, and how communities benefit from new talents and perspectives.

The exhibition featured photographs of local organisation Oasis Cardiff, and their 'Global Eats' food truck initiative, which brings the vibrant and varied cuisine of people seeking sanctuary to life through street food pop-ups, catering, and supper clubs.





## **From Migration to Resilience**

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From Migration to Resilience told the story of forced migration and of lives rebuilt after the expulsion of Asians from Uganda in 1972; and celebrated the vibrant religious and cultural heritage of Welsh Asian communities.

The exhibition showcased testimonies of expulsion, life in Tonfanau, early challenges and the amazing personal journeys of resilience in re-establishing families, communities and economic stability whilst negotiating the trauma of separation, loss and bearing witness to human atrocities.



## **Witnessing Wales**

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‘Witnessing Wales’ is a long-term study of community and nationhood, created by photographer Mohamed Hassan through taking a series of journeys across Wales. The work contains both landscapes and portraits, the latter made collaboratively with multiple communities; from newly arrived refugees to members of historic choirs.

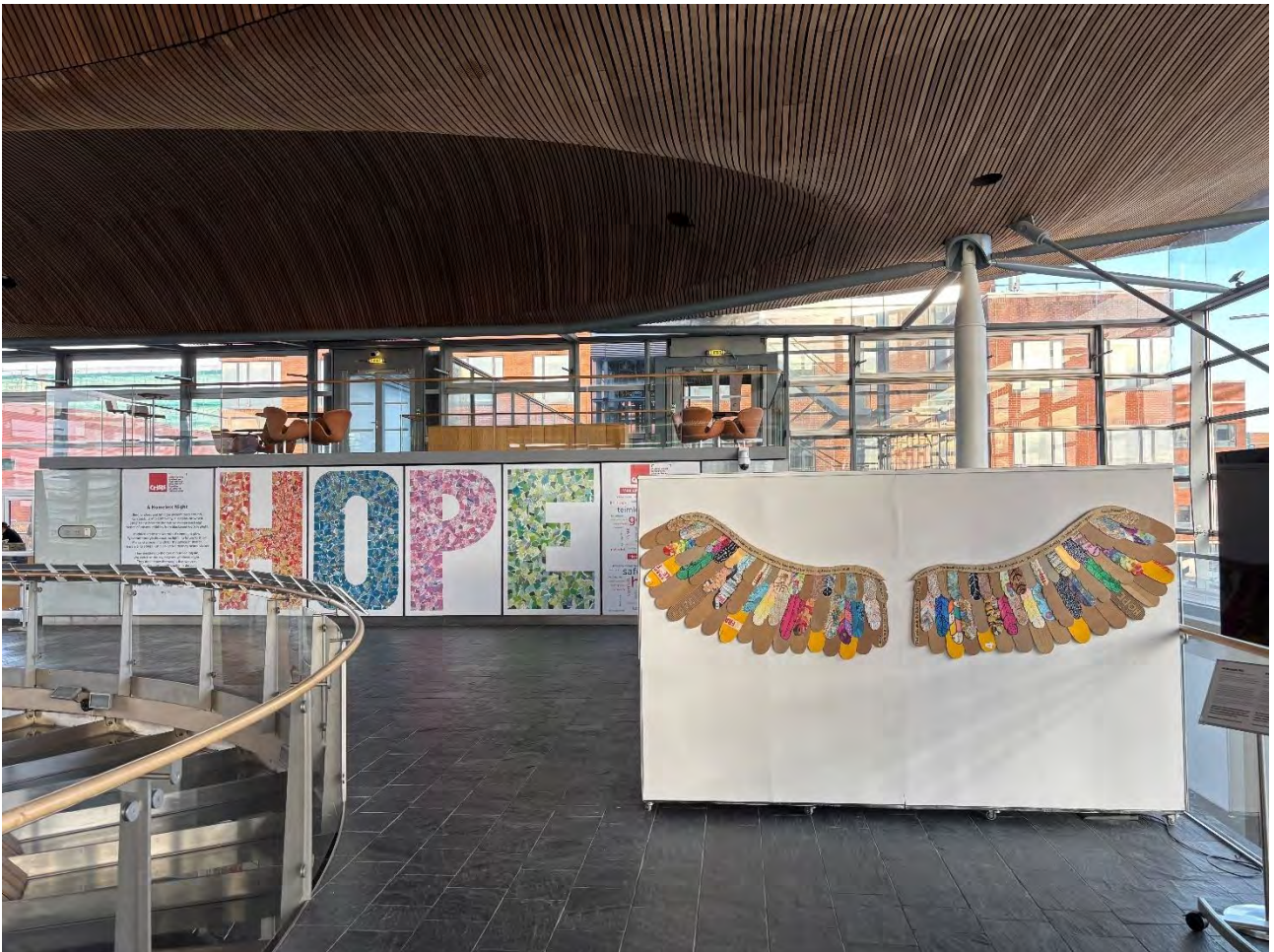


## Home: The Key to Hope

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This exhibition by members of Crisis Skylight South Wales emphasised that for people experiencing homelessness, the prospect of having a place to call home is often the key to hope. Created by people with lived experience of homelessness, the exhibition comprised a range of artforms including photography, Gelli printing, pyrography, crafting and creative writing. It invited viewers to stand in the shoes of a person experiencing homelessness and reflect on the barriers faced by people who don't have a stable place to call home.

The exhibition included an activity for visitors to reflect on their ideas about what home meant to them, and a snakes and ladders style floor-based artwork, where visitors could play to understand some of the challenges homeless people face on their journey to finding home again.



## **Community engagement: inviting people in**

### **Y Farchnad**

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In response to information about Members' appetite for events, Commissioners agreed to move towards using one premium event slot a month (Tuesday or Wednesday lunchtime) to pilot Y Farchnad.

Y Farchnad brings together voices from across Wales to the Senedd each month in a marketplace-style set-up at the Senedd. 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.

### **Butetown Carnival**

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We have partnered with the Butetown Carnival and Wales Millennium Centre for several years in hosting the parade and celebratory event over the August bank holiday weekend. This year, the stage relocated to the front of the Pierhead and the workshops were held inside the building. The event increases the meaning of the estate as a place that people use to meet and enjoy. The Senedd was open for the weekend, where visitors could learn about the organisation, explore the public spaces, and take part in craft activities. Many visitors told us that they had visited while attending the Carnival, and that they hadn't visited the Senedd before.

### **Winter Trail**

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The Senedd is a part of the Waterfront Partners, which is a group of organisations in the local area which look to promote tourism through collaboration and combining resources. The group worked together to deliver a trail for families to follow where participants can enter to win prizes, donated by the Partners. This year, the trail followed a reindeer theme, which alongside other activities around Christmas, saw an increase in visitor numbers compared to the year previous, with feedback telling us that over 70% of visitors had not engaged with the Senedd before.

### **Passport to the City**

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We have worked with Cardiff Council's Passport to the City initiative which enables and encourages young people and families living in Cardiff, particularly in south Cardiff, to visit and use places in the city, such as the libraries, universities, and the Senedd. The initiative is about increasing social capital through providing



the resources that might otherwise stop these environments being used, such as by providing transport, food and drink.

In October, we worked with Passport to the City in planning a visit for families from Caerau and Ely to visit locations in the Bay that included the Pierhead, Senedd, and Wales Millennium Centre. Around 60 people attended the tour and learned about the area and the organisations, most had not visited the area before. Through the visit, they learned what is available to them on the estate and were encouraged to visit again.

The connection made with Cardiff Council through this work enabled us to create links with other initiatives previously unexplored. In December **Cardiff Council Democracy Ambassador Programme** and the Senedd Education team teamed up so that schools visiting County Hall also got to visit Siambr Hywel to learn about the Senedd. The programme is bringing schools to the Senedd that do not usually visit, and broadens the civic education provided to young people that have shown an interest in the subject.

### **Community Workshops**

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After previously working with the Heritage and Cultural Exchange on the Tiger Bay and the Docks exhibitions, we arranged to host a part of their series of community workshops that looked to find the names of the people included in the group's photography archive. This interactive project also acted as a way to add meaning to the exhibition and Pierhead as a community space.

### **Craft Activities / Family Friendly**

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Building on previous years, the craft activities continued to be organised with new activities added regularly. Craft tables are now a regular feature for the visit on Saturdays and through recesses, with content themes changing often.

Over the summer recess, we worked with local partners Craft in the Bay and the Wales Millennium Centre, to develop and deliver a trail of craft activities between the venues that followed the theme of ocean waste, reusing and recycling, which linked the exhibitions that were being hosted in each venue. At the Senedd, a participatory activity asked for visitors' thoughts on the subject, which provided evidence for a committee.

## Senedd Engagement feedback

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Had a great time here today with my children. I live in Butetown and have never been here before. The girls have played for hours and it was so nice for them to explore and learn about here. Thank you so much for having this space. The girls were given stickers when we left. They loved that. I will be back during the week to enjoy the space when the girls are in school.

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We came here as we heard that there were activities for the children and were told about the craft trail. We are here with our grandchildren and we have enjoyed every moment of the visit. The kids made their jellyfish and played in the play area while we had a lovely coffee in the cafe. What a great way to spend our time with our grandchildren, thank you so much for making it possible and for spending time talking to us and the children. They have had the best time possible. Diolch

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I'm 11 years old and I think that this place is fantastic.. I wasn't really interested in politics before but now I'm starting to learn a bit and maybe in the future I might be involved more in politics. Thank you



I enjoyed the Pierhead exhibition reminding us that multiculturalism, immigration and diversity are not new phenomena.

We had an excellent afternoon. I was grateful for the very helpful disabled parking including directions and the information and contact prior to our visit.

I wanted to say a particular thank you to the security team, we had several students (year 9s) very nervous about going through security (it was the first time they'd ever been through such a system). But the team kindly took the time to explain the entire process to them and go through the security process step by step which really reassured them - thank you!

The whole experience of the tour at the Senedd was exceptional. All members of staff from the security team to the reception were friendly and welcoming. Our tour guide was outstanding and really catered to the language level of the group. He explained things very well and clearly and in an animated, engaging way. I've run many different activities and events with my group and this was definitely one of the best experiences we have had. It is the most engaged I have seen some of the group members, and the feedback from them was very positive. For most of the group, it was their first time in Cardiff Bay, first time in a Parliament and the first time on a tour of this kind in Wales. I think the positive experience they had on this tour will materially change their engagement with the city and country that is now home.



## **Education service and Welsh Youth Parliament**

### **North Wales Education Outreach**

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Below we highlight some of the activity of our North Wales Education Outreach Team.

- At the Flintshire schools Being Me (Pride) event, we supported a Welsh Youth Parliament Members to give an address on behalf of the Youth Parliament. We attended with an information stand and networked with stakeholders and other organisations representing the LBGTQ+ community to promote Senedd engagement and the Welsh Youth Parliament.
- Presented to a group of young people in Gisda, a charity providing accommodation, support and opportunities for 16-25 year-old homeless and/or vulnerable young people in Gwynedd.
- Held discussion sessions on the Welsh Youth Parliament consultation about the school day, including a special learning needs school
- Held a workshop featuring a mock election for Independent Living Skills students at Coleg Menai, Llangefni.

### **“Democracy the Musical” - A collaboration between the Senedd Education Team and Tanio Youth Project, Bettws, Bridgend.**

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During 2024, through a series of workshops, discussion and a visit to the Senedd, the young people of Bettws and surrounding villages to the north of Bridgend heard directly from people who are active in Welsh democracy. They learned about the importance of voting; how they can make a difference and why having your say is a human right. The young people then went on to work with professional artists to create a piece of musical theatre. They wrote the songs, lyrics and scenes that tells the story and the challenges of growing up in Wales.’

The new musical theatre piece, DEWIS / CHOOSE was performed at the Sardis Media Centre, on Saturday 25th January 2025.

### Windsor Clive Primary

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This was a large group of around 66 students from the most ethnically diverse primary school in Wales with most pupils coming from Islamic faith and the remainder being largely of Irish and Polish heritage. The students had a 40 minute debate on how to improve community relations, considered plans to regularly invite the community of Ely to their school to learn about different faiths and cultures, and stressed the importance of a fixed prayer room in schools to accommodate all faiths.

### Cardiff ILM School

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In February 2025 we welcomed the newly formed Cardiff ILM School to the Senedd; ILM is an Arabic word that means 'Knowledge'. As part of their visit, the students met with Julie Morgan MS and were able to quiz her on her work in the Senedd and in the community.



## **Welsh Youth Parliament – Third Election Campaign**

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The Welsh Youth Parliament (WYP) held its third election in November 2024 to elect 60 Welsh Youth Parliament Members (WYPM). Throughout the election campaign, young people from a range of different backgrounds were engaged through school and college visits and events to encourage as many young people as possible to get involved with the Welsh Youth Parliament election.

As well as targeted outreach work across Wales, and inbound education sessions to the Senedd, the Welsh Youth Parliament also works with a range of partner organisations to ensure the representation of diverse groups of young people. The selection of 19 partner organisations takes place every election. 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 WYPs work.



The WYP also has a representative for every electoral constituency in Wales, with each of those 40 young people democratically elected by their peers.

The WYP is committed to work inclusively and support its Members to access information and engage with our work effectively. As a result, at our recent first Plenary Meeting in the Senedd we had various support in place to ensure WYPM could engage effectively with our work. This included speech to text capacity, BSL interpretation and Turkish translation. All 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.

The priority issues chosen by the Third Welsh Youth Parliament are:

- Cost of living and poverty
- Public transport and active travel
- Crime and safety

The WYPM will work in committees during their term to explore the issues in detail, and prepare consultations, reports and recommendations.

## **Senedd Women's Caucus**

The Senedd Women's Caucus met formally four times this year, to discuss a range of issues from legislation, member safety to international engagement . The Caucus was also invited to give evidence to Senedd Committees and to receive technical briefings from Government Officials.

In April 2024, the Women's Caucus was consulted on Gender Quota Mechanisms as part of the Reform Bill Committee's scrutiny of the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidates) Bill. Joyce Watson MS, Rhianon Passmore MS, Sioned Williams MS, and Janet Finch-Saunders MS appeared before the Committee to give their views.

The Caucus also invited Welsh Government Ministers to a meeting, to discuss issues of gender representation in relation to the 2026 election. At its meetings this year, members of the Caucus agreed to table a cross-party motion to mark International Women's Day which was debated in the Siambr on 11 March.

To celebrate International Women's Day 2025, the Caucus held a speed networking event in collaboration with Elect-Her. The event, Inspire-Her, invited 20 young women to meet with members of the Caucus to discuss what it means to be an elected member of the Senedd, and to raise issues of importance to young people in Wales.

## A Global Senedd - International Engagement



In June 2024, the Llywydd hosted a visit from the Assemblée Nationale du Québec, lead by their Speaker Mme. Nathalie Roy.



The Llywydd also welcomed H.E. Pedro Serrano, EU Ambassador to the UK, along with the Austrian Ambassador to the UK (H.E. Bernhard Wrabetz) and the High Commissioner of Cyprus to the UK (H.E. Kyriacos Kouros).



In December 2024, the Llywydd and Senedd Commissioners welcomed a delegation from the Catalan Parliament, including M. H. Sr. Josep Rull, President of the Catalan Parliament.



Hon Curtis Pitt MP, Speaker of Queensland Parliament visited the Senedd in June 2024.

### **British Isles Mediterranean Regional Conference (BIMR)**

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The 2024 BIM Regional Conference was hosted, for the very first time, by St Helena (18-25 May 2024). The Senedd Branch was represented by Natasha Asghar MS.

### **Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Regional Conference (CWP)**

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The Senedd was represented at the 2025 Regional CWP conference in Edinburgh by Sioned Williams MS, Natasha Asghar MS and Rhianon Passmore MS.

### **Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC)**

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The CPA's Annual flagship conference was hosted by the New South Wales Parliament in Sydney, Australia (3-8 November). The Senedd was represented by the Llywydd and Branch Chair, Rhun ap Iorwerth MS.

### **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA): Artificial Intelligence and Disinformation**

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A CPA Conference on AI and Deepfakes, held in Singapore (18-20 June), was attended by Lee Waters MS.

### **Commonwealth Youth Parliament (CYP)**

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The Senedd was represented at the 12<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Youth Parliament by former Welsh Youth Parliament Member, Tegan Skyrme. A report of Tegan's participation at the CYP which was hosted by the New Zealand Parliament in Wellington (2-6 September) can be read on the Welsh Youth Parliament website.

<https://youthparliament.senedd.wales/blog/the-12th-commonwealth-youth-parliament-wellington-new-zealand-september-2024/>

### **British Irish Parliamentary Association (BIPA)**

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A BIPA Plenary was held in Co. Wicklow between 14-16 April on the theme of Tourism. The Plenary was attended by Darren Millar MS, Heledd Fychan MS, and Sarah Murphy MS. Following Sarah Murphy MS's appointment to the Welsh Government, Carolyn Thomas joined the Senedd's BIPA delegation in her place. Carolyn will sit on BIPA's Committee for Economic Affairs.

All other BIPA business was paused following announcements of both the UK and Irish General Elections in 2024.



## **Wales and the EU**

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The Senedd continued to engage in the UK-EU structures for parliamentary relationships. Senedd Members attended both the UK-EU Parliamentary Partnership Assembly and the Committee of the Regions-UK Contact Group.

Senedd Members attended the European week of cities and regions in October 2024 to raise key issues of importance to Wales on a range of policy areas.

The Senedd's Brussels office has supported and facilitated Senedd committee and Senedd Member engagement with the EU institutions.

The Senedd Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, International Relations and Sport Committee launched its Culture Shock report on the effects of Brexit on the culture sector in Brussels in November 2024.

Senedd officials maintained their engagement with the prestigious European Union Visitors Programme; a training programme for young professionals working in relevant fields.

## **Senedd Business taking on an international focus**

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The evolution of the Senedd's work on international law was outlined as part of the *25 years of Welsh law-making* article series to celebrate the Senedd at 25. The article attracted academic interest and Senedd officials were invited to present findings at conferences and seminars.

Scrutiny and engagement of international affairs remains a priority area for Senedd committees including the following activity: a cross-committee delegation of Senedd Members, led by the Deputy Presiding Officer, visited the Oireachtas National Parliament as part of a commitment to deepen Wales-Ireland parliamentary relations; the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language and International Relations Committee published its report on the impact of Brexit on the culture sector; the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee monitored post-Brexit trade arrangements between Wales and the island of Ireland; the Equality and Social Justice Committee published an annual report in April 2024 on EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) and European citizens' rights in Wales and key stakeholders attended the Plenary debate on the report; August 2024 saw the launch of a cross-committee inquiry on the implementation review of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement with a stakeholder event, held in the Senedd in September 2024, to support engagement with the inquiry.

Further information on the Senedd Commission's International Framework and recent activity is available on our website:

**<https://senedd.wales/commission/international-relations>**





# What next?



We will continue to work towards our Diversity and Inclusion strategic objectives by:

### **Being an inclusive parliament**

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We continue to strive towards being an inclusive, accessible Parliament for the People of Wales, championing values-led leadership and culture. We will do this by working closely with our Diversity and Inclusion sub-group who will focus on engagement and citizen participation with our diverse audience, as well as continuing to support Members of the Senedd with provision of information to build Diversity and Inclusion into their work both in the Parliament and as employers.

### **Being an inclusive employer**

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We are committed to being a representative, inclusive place to work, where Diversity and Inclusion underpin our everyday activity and strategic planning. We will do this by ensuring that staff feel supported to realise their full career development and progression aspirations and extending the commitment, currently held by Executive Board, to have DandI objectives within Personal Development Reviews to the wider Leadership team.

### **Workplace Equality Networks**

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Work will continue into 2025/2026 to review and refresh our Workplace Equality Networks to ensure they are equipped to support and develop staff in a way that reflects our current ways of working. We will do this by working with Network Chairs, Senior Diversity Champions and a range of relevant stakeholders to design and develop a renewed approach to Workplace Equality Networks at the Senedd.

### **Recruitment**

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We are committed to ensuring that our recruitment and employment practices are inclusive and that talent pipelines for Public, Crown and senior appointments are diverse and inclusive. Our newly accredited Inclusive Recruitment training module will be mandatory for all Senedd Commission panel members from 2025/26.

## **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

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Plans are underway to create a package of wellbeing training for all staff to underpin the pledges set out in the commitment and ensure that managers are equipped to support the wellbeing of staff.





**Senedd Cymru**  
**Welsh Parliament**

[www.senedd.cymru](http://www.senedd.cymru) | [www.senedd.wales](http://www.senedd.wales)