

Diversity and Inclusion: Annual Report 2023-24

June 2024



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.

An electronic copy of this document can be found on the Senedd website:
www.senedd.wales

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Diversity and Inclusion: Annual Report 2023-24

June 2024



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Foreword

We recognise that a diverse and inclusive environment is not just a moral obligation but a strategic necessity. It is an acknowledgment of the unique strengths each individual brings to the table and an affirmation of our shared values as a democratic institution. Creating a respectful, diverse, and inclusive workplace not only benefits our employees but also enhances our ability to better represent and engage with the people of Wales, and to support the effective running of the Senedd.

This report provides an update on activities related to diversity and inclusion over the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and showcases our work to promote diversity and inclusion within the Parliament. Our commitment to these principles aligns with the rich tapestry of the Welsh people, and the varied and vibrant communities we represent.

We detail the initiatives we have undertaken to ensure that diversity is embedded in our organisational culture in line with the Senedd Commission's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. Our ongoing progress is testament to the dedication of our staff, the support of our Members, and the collaboration of our partners.

We also acknowledge that there is more work to be done. We remain steadfast in our commitment to continuous improvement, guided by the principles of fairness, openness, and transparency. We recognise the importance of listening to the experiences and perspectives of our diverse workforce, and we value the input of external stakeholders who hold us accountable to our goals.

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



Manon Antoniazzi

Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd

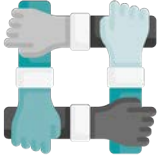


Joyce Watson MS

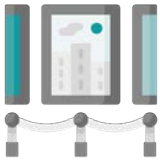
Senedd Commissioner with responsibility for employees and equalities

Our Year in Highlights

OUR WORK



Established our **Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group**.



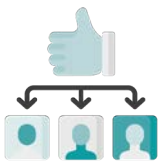
Held events and exhibitions that **celebrate diversity and inclusion in Wales**.



Delivered a suite of training and awareness to **celebrate diversity and promote inclusion**.



Our **Workplace Equality Networks** have continued to provide peer support and inclusion advice.



Developed a comprehensive **peri/menopause toolkit**.



Reported on the diversity of committee witnesses and **engaged with diverse groups across Wales** as part of Committee inquiries.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS



Our café was the **first venue in Wales to meet the Kids in Museums Family Café Standard.**



Recognised as a **Top Ten Employer for Working Families**, and as a **Disability Confident Employer.**

OUR STAFF



Delivered mandatory **respect and inclusion training** to all staff.



Established our **ENGAGE workplace network** to better connect our staff.



Introduced a **Social Mobility Champion.**



Welcomed our second cohort of **YMLAEN interns.**



Reviewed our progress through **staff surveys.**



Concluded the second Welsh Youth Parliament.

Our Values

Our corporate values solidify our dedication 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 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 strategy¹ for the sixth Senedd sets out our commitment to diversity and inclusion. It outlines the following objectives for the rest of the Senedd term:

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

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

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

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



Diversity and inclusion underpin our everyday activities and strategic planning

Colleagues across the organisation work innovatively to build diversity and inclusion into their work.

Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group

This year, we established our Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Steering Group to provide strategic oversight of our priorities and help keep our D&I Strategy on track. The Group will:

- Bring together a cohesive D&I community from across the organisation and promote cooperation between all stakeholders in identifying, developing, embedding and implementing D&I practice;
- Help guide the delivery of the D&I Strategy and monitor our annual action plans;
- Involve and consult Commission staff and representatives on D&I matters; and
- Provide senior management with insight, challenge and a perspective that is based on lived experience and a diverse range of stakeholder voices.

The Group had its inaugural meeting in February 2024 and consists of a Chair who is a member of the Leadership Team; an independent adviser to the Senedd Commission; as well as representatives from our Workplace Equality Networks, human resources and trade unions.

Equality Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessments enable colleagues throughout the Senedd Commission 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 remind them to 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 working practices.

Accessible Estate

We continually review the accessibility of our estate by undertaking monthly maintenance audits, acting on feedback, adopting best practice and considering access requirements for all refurbishment work by undertaking Equality Impact Assessments. During this reporting period we have:

- Continued our engagement with the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) to review and plan actions from recommendations resulting from an accessibility audit of the Senedd;
- Attended an 'Inclusive Environments' workshop led by the RNIB;
- Continued with the programme of installing LED lighting to improve visibility in the Senedd and other areas across the estate for people with visual impairments and photo-sensitive epilepsy;
- Conducted an external audit on our induction loop provision in meeting rooms and common areas throughout the estate which will provide a basis to a wider project to review assistive hearing provision across the estate;
- Extended the timers on the automatic doors throughout Tŷ Hywel building to allow more seamless access through the doors;
- Undertaken regular weekly inspections of our external estate to pro-actively identify and repair potential obstacles that could present as an access hindrance.

The Senedd Café is the first venue in Wales to have achieved accreditation from the Kids in Museums Family Café Standard, a benchmark that recognises cafés at museums and cultural attractions that are great for families, providing a warm welcome for everyone.

Based on feedback from families, the standard rates cafés on the quality of their online information and promotion, facilities, choice of food, affordability, sustainability and staff training. It includes everything from children’s meals and activities in the café to food waste and sourcing sustainable and high welfare ingredients.



Below: A young visitor playing with building blocks by the Senedd café



Other ways Diversity and Inclusion are built into our work:

Senior accountability - To further advance senior accountability and ownership of our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, members of our Executive Board each have a diversity and inclusion objective in their performance reviews.

Training - Diversity and inclusion are cornerstones of our training provision, with specific courses such as Transgender Awareness and Mental Health for Line Managers. We also build related topics into other training to make sure that inclusion is considered always, in all ways.

Building partnerships - We have close working relationships with a number of external strategic partners who provide advice, guidance and resources on different topics to help us to further embed inclusion.

Recruitment - We have reviewed hiring manager guidance and training materials to provide an inclusive recruitment toolkit for staff participating in recruitment panels. The training will form part of our mandatory training framework. Candidate guidance has also been reviewed to provide clarity on existing processes and reassurance to disabled candidates as to the reasonable adjustments that can be made throughout the recruitment process.

On an ongoing basis, the Recruitment Team works using:

- A name-free recruitment system where possible which enables job applicants to have confidence that biases will be eliminated from the application process;
- An attraction plan, which includes strategies to widen the talent pipeline, attract candidates to hard-to-fill vacancies alongside the ongoing development of marketing materials and outreach activities;
- Bespoke advertising strategies for campaigns;
- Our online recruitment system to produce diversity and inclusion recruitment monitoring data which is analysed, and any insights used to adjust recruitment processes and enhance assessment design as necessary;
- A partnership with an executive search agency to diversify the talent pipelines and panels for senior Commission appointments and public and Crown appointments; and

- Candidate and hiring manager feedback to improve processes and guidance.

Procurement - Equality of opportunity is included as part of our sustainability risk assessments, which we undertake at the very start of our procurement process. In addition to this, our prequalification exercise 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 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. We seek to 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 via our terms & conditions.

Security - Our security service continues to promote inclusion by:

- Providing reasonable adjustments for staff, such as amending shift patterns and adjusting rotas to accommodate prayer and visits to a mosque;
- Working with Members to improve the accessibility of their offices around Wales; and
- Ensuring that visitors receive an inclusive welcome by making adjustment to procedures, such as allowing visitors with a cochlear implant or a diabetes monitor to bypass security scanners to avoid damage to their medical equipment. Instead, our security officers use a handheld wand to search them which allows us to complete the condition of entry check without the visitors having to worry about their equipment been affected.

Partnership Forum: TUS and Management Side meetings - Members of our recognised trade unions meet regularly with the Commission's Management Side to discuss strategic and operational issues. These partnership meetings ensure that there is a constant dialogue between Commission's leadership and staff representatives to help develop inclusive policies and further embed a sense of belonging for our staff.

Harassment Contact Officer training

A cohort of staff, including the chairs of our Workplace Equality Networks, have been trained as dignity and respect contact officers who can advise colleagues on the options available to deal with an issue informally (if appropriate), as well as the formal routes that they can follow if they want to make a complaint. They can also provide advice about the relevant support available to colleagues.

EQUALITY

for all...

Values-led leadership and culture

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.

Diversity and Inclusion training and awareness raising

We understand that the learning and development of our staff is key to developing an engaged and inclusive workforce. Inclusion training and support is available throughout the employment lifecycle, from providing guidance on how to complete an application form and inclusive recruitment, through to induction, career development, manager training, and preparing for retirement.

Inclusion Month

Throughout our annual Inclusion Month, we worked with our colleagues from the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Scottish Parliament, and the Oireachtas to honour diversity and foster reading diversely to broaden perspectives; inclusive recruiting to ensure equitable opportunities; 'Fighting with Pride' workshops to champion LGBTQ+ rights; and a session by Race Equality First on best practices for fostering an inclusive workplace culture. Building upon the theme "Take Action Make Impact" from National Inclusion Week 2023, we orchestrated a series of impactful initiatives, including reading diversely to broaden perspectives and inclusive recruiting to ensure equitable opportunities.

Interparliamentary Learning At Work Week

We also designed and delivered another interparliamentary celebration to mark Learning at Work Week, offering a diverse range of topics to cover the theme of 'Create the Future.' Sessions included motivation chemistry; the importance of digital accessibility; and getting insights into the experiences of our inaugural Welsh Youth Parliament Members. In acknowledgment of Mental Health Awareness Week, specific sessions were dedicated to nurturing mental well-being, underscoring our commitment to holistic development. Participants also heard from each legislature's Chief Executives and General Secretary.

Allyship at the Senedd Commission

Our Allyship workshop was designed to help create a more inclusive, compassionate, and culturally responsible workforce in line with our strategic D&I objectives. It encompasses allyship to all underrepresented groups and communities and promotes self-guided learning, reflective practice, and courageous dialogue. The 'whole allyship' principle recognises that allyship extends beyond the workplace into our personal lives, whilst reflective practice provides opportunities to improve self-awareness and in developing a better understanding of others and the work we do. The allyship programme does not profess to be a training course, but more a platform on which to colleagues build their own development towards becoming a better ally.

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, Nowruz, Chinese New Year, Holi and Mental Health Awareness Week.



LGBTQ+ History Month display in our library



Dignity and Respect

During this reporting period, we have delivered mandatory Dignity and Respect training to all our staff, with a specific session for members of our Executive Board. The training aims to inform staff about what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and how they can identify it, challenge it and report it. The feedback received indicates that staff who have completed the training have a renewed understanding and greater insight into how we cherish our culture of respect and the steps available to staff who encounter unacceptable behaviour. The training has also been offered to Members of the Senedd and their staff. To accompany this training, we have made improvements to our dignity and respect intranet pages and provided awareness posters across the Senedd estate.

“Very thorough, well thought-out training session. It offered a good opportunity to learn about sensitive issues in a friendly, open, and interactive environment.”

Insights and team development

Our Organisational Development, Learning and Inclusion (ODL&I) team have embedded Insights sessions into Corporate Induction and Team Development Days. These sessions help us to identify, celebrate and support the unique styles of working that people prefer to enable people to be treated as individuals and to get the best out of them. The training highlights people's strengths, communication styles and work preferences as an individual and a team. This information is valuable for line managers and colleagues to understand, adapt their communication styles to get the best out of people and to help people reach their full potential, further encouraging them to bring their whole selves to work.

Staff Engagement Network - ENGAGE

Our newly refreshed and relaunched staff engagement network, entitled ENGAGE, is already empowering people across the Commission to participate in a structured and collaborative platform for enhancing communication, fostering employee engagement, and promoting 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

Our All-staff Engagement Network



ENGAGE

Ein Rhwydwaith ymgysylltu
â'r holl staff

"A dynamic platform to connect, collaborate, and create a better workplace together"

ENGAGE promotes communication, collaboration, and employee engagement across staff members, contributing 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.



EMBRACE

Our Disability Workplace
Equality Network



TEULU

Our Working Parent
and Carer Network



REACH

Our Race, Ethnicity and
Cultural Heritage Network



PLWS

Our LGBTQ+ Workplace
Equality Network



MINDFUL

Our Mental Health
Support Network



INSPIRE

Our Women's Workplace
Equality Network

Workplace Equality Networks

Our networks continue to support the development of an inclusive workplace.

This year, our networks have:

- Continued to be available to all Senedd Commission staff. For example, MINDFUL, our mental health and wellbeing network, has offered regular virtual and face to face weekly drop-ins, with extra focus on adapting their support virtually for hybrid working, to continue encouraging connection and sharing of resources for better mental well-being and work performance;
- Contributed to the development of corporate policies. For example, all networks contributed to the development of our Menopause Toolkit to ensure that varied and intersectional voices were heard;
- Raised awareness of different inclusion days like International Day of Disabled People or 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;
- Promoted wellbeing for all. For example, network chairs have helped with the establishment and promotion of the 'Senedd Steppers' group to promote daily walks for better mental and physical wellbeing;
- Attended events and training to further support their knowledge. For example, the chair of EMBRACE, our disability equality network, attended an International Conference on Disability in the Workplace gaining an understanding on a range of inclusive subjects;
- Attended celebrations of inclusion such as participating in the Pride Cymru parade and attending Black History Month events;
- Contacted networks in other organisations to discuss how to continue to foster an inclusive environment and support network members.



Our Welsh learners practising their skills making Saint Dwynwen's Day cards



The Senedd Steppers head out for a chilly walk



Staff take some time for mindful crafting



Our mental health senior champion and Chief Executive supporting a MINDFUL network event



Members and allies of our MINDFUL network mark Time to Talk Day





Senedd and Welsh Youth Parliament attendees at the Pride Cymru march



Social Mobility

This year, as part of our commitment to identifying and addressing any barriers in relation to social mobility and socio-economic background, we have introduced a Senior Social Mobility Champion, with a view to establishing a social mobility Workplace Equality Network. In a blog introducing herself to the organisation in this new role, our Social Mobility Champion outlined her history of growing up in a working-class family on a council estate, what barriers she faced and what opportunities she took when they were made available to her.

The 2022-23 reporting year was the first year we asked Commission staff to determine to which of the recognised social economic backgrounds they belong. This data allows us to benchmark ourselves with other organisations and produce actions to ensure that we too have people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds at higher grades and not confined to the lower positions in the Commission.

Our current results show that based on the data collected, employees from a professional background are the dominant socio-economic group in our workforce at 58%, compared with the national benchmark of 37%. This is followed by the second largest socio-economic group of colleagues from a working-class background. In terms of the distribution of socio-economic background in our workforce management tiers, professional socio-economic background is the dominant group both at middle-management level and at senior level. Moving forward for future reporting purposes, we would like to use this baseline data to understand more about career progression and how that intersects with socio-economic background for our workforce.

Supporting belonging through Welsh lessons

Our Official Languages Team provides support for people to learn Welsh or improve their Welsh language skills, bringing together staff, Members of the Senedd and Member Support Staff. The team holds regular sessions for learners to meet and practice their skills. Learners can also choose to be paired with a mentor who is a fluent Welsh speaker to practice their skills outside the classroom. Many learners have described how the provision gives them an opportunity not only to invest in their own personal development, but also to form relationships with colleagues outside of their immediate team which in turn has had a positive impact on workplace wellbeing and mental health. Our learners have said:

"I have really enjoyed picking up Welsh lessons again since joining the Senedd Commission. I've found this has brought real benefits, not just for my professional development, but also the social and wellbeing advantages of doing something outside of the day job, meeting different people and building confidence in a new skill."

"An additional benefit of my lessons at the Senedd Commission is the great people I have met from different services – some I would never normally work with day to day. It's really helped me to learn about their work and, through the medium of Welsh, make new friends."

"Learning Welsh can give a sense of belonging, bring more meaning into living in Wales, allow cultural emersion and have a range of well-being benefits. Ever since the Covid pandemic, there has been a lot less casual interaction between colleagues, both in person and online, and Welsh classes seem to fill that void even better than before."

Supporting Health and Wellbeing

In another busy year for our Health, Safety, Wellbeing and Safeguarding team, work on implementing our Wellbeing Strategy continues with actions including:

- Holding regular wellbeing awareness sessions to inform staff of the support, guidance, policies, and signposting resources available both internally and externally;
- Launching new guidance for staff and line managers to support hybrid working, specifically on working whilst unwell. The guidance allows to staff and their line manager to consider some key questions to answer to see if the member of staff is well enough to work while at home, or if they need the time to rest, and recuperate;

- Updating our Display Screen Equipment (DSE) policy to accompany our new DSE online assessment tool. The assessment gives the user a set of questions and guidance around their DSE set up. It looks at hybrid working, so a member of staff can complete the assessment for both their remote working area and the office area on the Senedd estate. The assessment is compulsory for all staff who are deemed DSE users to complete;
- Procuring a new Employee Assistance Programme provider that provides both a 24hour counselling phone line for staff, Members and their support staff, and an online hub where all can get support, guidance, download self-help booklets, and listen to podcast on subjects such as relationships, finances, family difficulties, anxiety, bereavement, stress, depression, workplace issues and trauma;
- Procuring Occupational Health and Associated Services for staff, Members and their staff to expert advice applicable to the general wellbeing of service users and to support the development of a culture where service users feel valued, respected, and cared for;
- Raising awareness of a variety of health and wellbeing conditions, such as endometriosis through Endometriosis Action Week;
- Providing staff with information on financial wellbeing and the internal and external support available to them;
- Producing a regular Wellbeing newsletter for staff;
- Developed Wellbeing Action Plans for our different teams across the Senedd Commission.

New data dashboard and insights

A new refreshed quarterly dashboard was presented to our Executive Board in October 2023 with the aim of producing business relevant data and analysis that enables management to make evidence based and actionable decisions. This data is used to summarise key people insights that can support and inform the both the Wellbeing strategy and D&I strategies.

We have also started capturing causes of mental health-related sickness absences (whether personal, work-related or a mixture of both) to provide insight into further support that can be provided to individuals.

The Senedd community - One Team

Working in a more agile way, with some people working fully on-site, some who are fully at home, and some 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. To help build a sense of community, we have an online book club, photography group and cycling group called the Bike Shed.

Initiatives like our new ENGAGE platform, all staff meetings, our annual recognition awards, internal social platforms and groups, Workplace Equality Networks, St. David's Day celebrations, winter lantern making, 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.



Examples of staff engagement activities

Volunteering

Our staff have the opportunity to undertake volunteering days as part of our special leave policy. Staff can take up to five days a year for volunteering activity, and we also encourage staff to undertake volunteering work as part of team building and developing days.

Communications team building, volunteering and community work

During the past year, our Communications Team have been working to build better connections as a hybrid team. One way they have been supporting these efforts is through team volunteering activities. In August, the team volunteered half a day to walk the dogs at Cardiff Dog's Home. The centre is overwhelmed with unwanted dogs and struggle to get volunteers to give them their daily walks. The volunteering not only gave the team an opportunity to build connections outside of the office and away from computer screens, but it helped with wellbeing to encourage time outside and walking. A shared connection was also built with the charity and some people have been back to volunteer again.

This experience inspired the team to continue to explore ways to give back to the community as a team. In November, the Communications Team came together to donate food and treats to a very grateful foodbank centre.

Both opportunities have helped the team to connect with one another over a shared endeavour, while also building connections with our local communities.



Staff volunteering at Cardiff Dogs Home

A representative, inclusive place to work

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 have access to the raw data.

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

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 Wellbeing²:

- The personal details form on My View (employee self-service system) asks employees if they have a disability, and if so, the nature of the disability/disabilities;

² [Voluntary Reporting on Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

- 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.

Mental health

- Between October 2022 and September 2023, mental health absence as a percentage of total absence has decreased slightly from 40% to 37%;
- This year we have started capturing *causes* of mental health-related sickness absences (i.e. whether personal, work-related or a mixture of both) to provide insight into further support that can be provided to individuals.
- 9% Commission staff experienced a mental health condition leading to sickness absence between October 2022 and September 2023. A mixture of work-related and personal reasons is the largest cause, closely followed by wholly work-related.
- 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.
- Raised awareness of different inclusion days like International Day of Disabled People or 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 survey responses

Our regular wellbeing pulse surveys provide key information to help us understand if we are achieving the objectives of our 2022-25 Wellbeing Strategy which outlines our commitment to mental health and wellbeing as well as physical wellbeing, financial wellbeing and social wellbeing. This adheres to the core and enhanced standards for mental health as set out in the Thriving at Work (Stevenson / Farmer) 2017 report³. 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.'

Results from the Autumn 2023 wellbeing pulse survey show that:

- 3.47 / 5 average physical health rating. This has improved slightly since Spring 2023, and is only slightly below the average across all surveys (3.48);
- 3.25/5 average mental health rating. This is below the average rating over the last three years (3.31);
- 8% of people say they have poor/very poor mental wellbeing – this has increased by 5% since March 2023;
- 95% of staff agree that their line manager cares about their wellbeing;

³ [Thriving at Work: a review of mental health and employers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/614212/Thriving-at-Work-a-review-of-mental-health-and-employers.pdf)

- 73% of staff agree that the organisation does a good job of embedding wellbeing into workplace culture.
- The vast majority of respondents say they have not experienced or observed inappropriate behaviour on the workplace over the last 12 months;
- 50% of employees experienced work-related stress between April 2023 – September 2023, an increase of 10% from March 2023. The percentage of respondents saying they have experienced stress of any kind has increased from 58% to 66%;

Culture	Inclusivity	Social Wellbeing	Recommend as employer
73% of staff agree that the organisation does a good job of embedding wellbeing into workplace culture	81% of staff feel able to bring their whole self to work	93% of staff feel supported and connected to their team	89% of leavers who submitted exit interviews say that they would recommend the Senedd Commission as an employer
Down from 79%	Down from 83%	Down from 95%	Down from 90%

Data taken from wellbeing survey in October 2023 compared with wellbeing survey in April 2023.

Following the survey, work also continues on a number of key areas relating to wellbeing, including:

- Clearer information for staff and managers about what an organisational commitment to wellbeing means in practice and how this will be met;
- Further analysis of multiple wellbeing factors, to present a full picture of wellbeing across the Commission and at service level;
- Continue to develop and promote cohesive package of materials, support and training around wellbeing for staff and managers.

YMLAEN – our Ethnic Minority Graduate Internship

The second iteration of our YMLAEN programme has been another collaboration with the Windsor Fellowship who have enabled us to effectively reach out, advertise, and engage with a wide array of talented candidates across Wales. Once again, the response was remarkable, with a pool of outstanding candidates applying for positions. The scheme provides paid internship opportunities for four individuals in teams across the Senedd Commission. Whilst the internship does not guarantee a permanent job at the end of the scheme, one of the core components of our internship programme is the comprehensive training provided to the interns. Through tailored workshops and courses, mentorship opportunities, and hands-on experience, we aim to equip the interns with the necessary leadership and technical skills required to excel in their respective fields.

One of our interns shared their experience of the internship so far:

“During my Ymlaen internship at the Senedd Commission, I am working in the Information Governance and Legal Services team, and the experience has been nothing short of invaluable. I have had the privilege of honing my skills through various avenues, including obtaining the UK GDPR Practitioner certificate, undergoing ILM leadership and management training, and engaging in personal development sessions. However, the true highlight has been the opportunity to collaborate with amazing colleagues, whose expertise and insights have been instrumental in my growth. Beyond skill development, the internship has provided ample networking opportunities, fostering connections that extend far beyond the confines of the workplace.

This internship has been an enriching journey of growth and learning. Each day has presented new challenges and opportunities for development. As I continue to build relationships and absorb invaluable lessons, I am grateful for the holistic experience that has shaped me both personally and professionally.”

Throughout their internship journey, our interns are encouraged to actively participate in various projects, engage with stakeholders, and contribute their unique perspectives to our organisational endeavours. By fostering an inclusive

and supportive environment, we strive to empower our interns to thrive and make meaningful contributions, not only during their time with us, but also in their future careers.



Our Organisational Development Manager and our interns in the Siambur viewing gallery.

Inclusive policies

All of our new and refreshed staff policies undergo consultation with our trade unions and workplace equality networks to ensure they are inclusive. We always strive to have progressive policies that enable our staff to thrive, whilst also giving them the flexibility and opportunity to create a good work-life balance. Most of our staff have the option to work from home for some of their working week and some members of staff, where service delivery permits, have used this opportunity to relocate to be near their families.

One colleague shared the following feedback about returning to work after maternity leave:

“The beginning of my maternity leave was very difficult. I hadn’t been in my role for long before I developed a serious illness which led to pre-term labour. My line manager and Head of Service was a huge support all the way through my time away from the office. Upon my return, she put in place measures to help me transition back in to work including coaching with the Organisational Development Team and tapered hours so I could readjust gradually. I valued this support hugely and it made the first few weeks as a working mum-of-two much easier.”

Accreditations

During this reporting period the Senedd Commission has been recognised as a Top Ten 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.



Menopause awareness and toolkit

This year, we have developed a peri/menopause toolkit to offer practical guidance to those working or living with people experiencing the symptoms of menstruation, menstrual health conditions and peri/menopause. We recognise that adopting a few simple changes to the working environment can make a world of difference for those experiencing the peri/menopause and those who are supporting colleagues experiencing the peri/menopause.

The toolkit aims to:

- Inform our knowledge of the peri/menopausal health effects, identify misconceptions around menstrual and peri/menopausal health and its impact on individuals and the organisation;

- Outline the workplace adjustments and support provisions available to those experiencing peri/menopause, in order to create a more comfortable working experience for them;
- Help us to apply our understanding of the peri/menopause when providing support and addressing the consequential effects of it; and
- Enable us to use our acquired peri/menopause knowledge to evaluate job and workplace designs to make them suitable for all employees.

We are the first organisation in Wales to adopt the British Standards Institution's (BSI) standard entitled BS 30416 Menstruation, Menstrual Health and Menopause in the Workplace. The standard document offers practical guidance to support employees experiencing menstruation, menstrual health, or menopause in the workplace. We have worked with the BSI to promote peri/menopause awareness and our new toolkit on their podcast, via blog articles, and at their conference.

When launching the toolkit, we promoted a blog from our senior peri/menopause champion, held training and awareness sessions for World Menopause Day, and we included questions on peri/menopause awareness in our staff survey. 37% of survey respondents who said that they had experienced the peri/menopause whilst working in the Senedd Commission were satisfied that they knew where to go to access information on the menopause. Staff provided the following feedback on the toolkit:

"I'm in early perimenopause and the toolkit has given me more confidence to let my line manager know when I'm having issues. He has been really understanding and supportive."

"It's a much needed addition to our wellbeing support"

"I think it's amazing that the Senedd Commission is talking about menopause, and I'm grateful that there's a toolkit to help me when I get to that stage!"

"It's a useful document - good to have the signposting included. As someone who works from home it is easier to manage some of the symptoms so I'm not sure what it would be like working from the Senedd estate on a full time basis."

An Accessible, Inclusive and Global 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

Communications and Engagement Strategy

The fundamental tenet of our Communication and Engagement Strategy is to ensure that the Senedd is a place where voices from all backgrounds can be heard, and where all voices matter.

Over the past year our teams have worked with people from different communities across Wales to ensure their stories are at the heart of our work, and that we represent and celebrate people from all backgrounds.

Member support - Committees, Research and Senedd Business

Committee evidence diversity monitoring

In 2021 the Chairs' Forum (the body that brings together the elected chairs of Senedd Committees), and the [Stirbu review](#) into committee effectiveness, recommended that data should be collected on the people who engage with Senedd Committees and the diversity of committee evidence, with the aim to make sure that the evidence committees use "comes from a diverse and inclusive range of people, communities, sectors, groups and organisations, especially those that are affected by an issue under consideration."

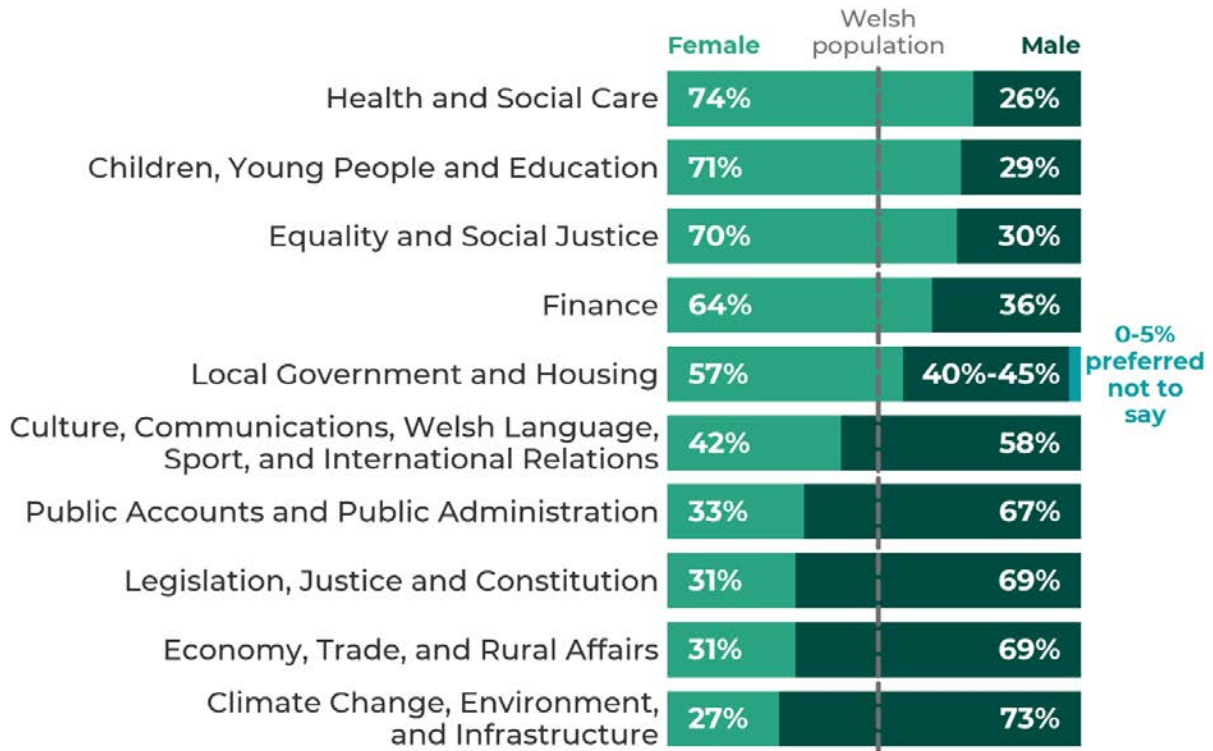
Since September 2023, Senedd Committees have been routinely monitoring the diversity of evidence they receive. This project came after the Chairs' Forum

considered two previous pilot schemes and agreed to make it part of committees' day-to-day work.

Gathering better data on who is giving evidence to Senedd Committees provides valuable insights into the approach to evidence-gathering and helps committees to spot any patterns, trends or anomalies. It allows committees to compare levels of participation against benchmarks, identify missing voices and explore what the barriers and incentives to taking part could be.

The data is collected through a voluntary survey sent to everyone participating in committee work. The results of the monitoring will be reported regularly, and inform the on-going debate about how the Senedd can better enable the people of Wales to have their voices heard. Below are some of the **main findings** of the data gathered in pilot 2, between September 2022 and April 2023. An in-depth analysis of pilot 2 can be found on the [Senedd's website](#).

- The majority of individual respondents (around 60%) and organisations (around 80%) had participated in committee work before;
- 26% of survey respondents participating in a professional capacity or on behalf of an organisation said they represented the public sector – a decrease from 33% in pilot 1;
- 55% of respondents identified as female, compared with 51% of the Welsh population. However, there were variations by committee:

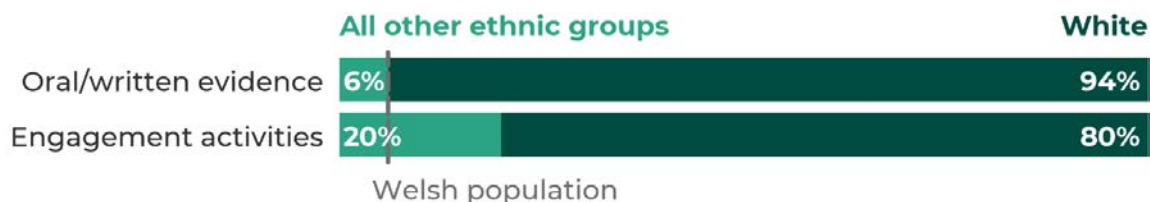


- In addition, females were roughly equally as likely as males to contribute oral evidence but were over-represented in written evidence and in engagement activities;
- No respondents identified as trans;
- 12% of respondents had a disability, compared with 21% of the population. Disabled people were more likely to participate in engagement activities, compared to contributing oral or written evidence:



- 92% of respondents described their ethnic group as 'White', compared to 94% of the population. Respondents describing their ethnic group as Asian, Asian Welsh, or Asian British made up 3% (in line with the population), and other ethnic groups (including Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean, or African, and

other ethnic groups) made up 0-5% each. The graphic below shows that people from ethnic minority backgrounds were more likely to contribute through engagement activities compared to contributing oral or written evidence:



- 88% of respondents described themselves as heterosexual/straight, compared with 89% of the population. 5% of respondents described themselves as gay or lesbian (compared with 2% of the population), and 5% as bisexual (compared to 1% of the population);
- Those educated to degree level or above remain overrepresented at 95% of respondents, compared to 32% of the population;
- 20% of respondents considered themselves to be from a disadvantaged background, an increase from 15-20% in pilot 1.

Committee engagement

To help reach new and more diverse audiences, each of the Senedd’s committees work closely with our Citizen Engagement Team. Below are some examples of our committee engagement work that show how we strive to make the work of Senedd committees accessible to all.

Health and Social Care Committee's inquiry into mental health inequalities

We facilitated an online advisory group with people who have first-hand experience with mental health disparities. These participants represented a range of over 18 different diagnoses, including ADHD, autism, Cerebral Palsy, dyslexia, postpartum depression, and psychosis.

To ensure that neurodivergent individuals could effectively engage in an inclusive way, a comprehensive support program was implemented. Before the advisory group began, participants attended an online ‘Welcome Workshop’ to offer a chance for everyone to get acquainted, address any concerns about participation, and become familiar with the group's proceedings. Additionally, each participant was paired with a dedicated contact at the Senedd, providing ongoing guidance

and support throughout the advisory process. To equip participants, an array of resources was provided, such as FAQs, video explainers, and a detailed fact sheet outlining available mental health services. All materials and communications were crafted in plain language, featuring clear action points in bullet-point format. Consistency was maintained with a light blue background for all documents and emails, ensuring accessibility across formats.

Arrangements were made to accommodate participants with specific accessibility needs or those requiring assistance with digital tools for full participation. To tailor support and accessibility, insights were sought from third-sector organisations specialising in the various diagnoses represented by participants.

Suggestions from participants helped shape the format of Committee and advisory group outputs. Published documents were shared in Word format, accompanied by a link to a guide explaining how individuals could adjust the documents to suit their preferences, such as using 'Read Aloud' features, altering background colours, adjusting text sizes, and modifying text colours.

Equality and Social Justice Committee's inquiry on child poverty



Focus group attendees

The Committee held a focused inquiry to consider the Welsh Government's draft child poverty strategy, with a view to influencing the content of the final strategy. In order to ensure its work was informed by lived experience, focus groups were held with parents and staff at Faith in Families, a charity with family centres which offer a range of services from childcare to lunch clubs. The Committee also heard from the Swansea Poverty Truth Commission – the only one of its kind in Wales -

which empowers those with direct experience of poverty to use their voice to influence key decision makers.

Powerful and insightful contributions were made by participants from a range of backgrounds, including parents with disabled children, asylum seekers, and parents with health issues. Our Citizen Engagement Team worked closely with contributors to understand and mitigate (as much as possible), any barriers to participation, including offering one-to-one conversations with contributors and sharing the discussion guide ahead of time. The views shared ensured that lived experience was placed at the heart of the recommendations made by the Committee to the Welsh Government.

Local Government and Housing Committee's inquiry on diversity in local government

As part of its inquiry, the Committee considered matters including the progress made to improve diversity in local government since the passing of the Local Government and Election (Wales) Act 2021 and the effectiveness of schemes established to promote and enable greater diversity among those standing for election.

At the outset of the inquiry, our Citizen Engagement Team conducted a series of online focus groups with councillors from across Wales to ensure that lived experience was central to the Committee's work and help influence the direction of the inquiry at an early stage. The participating councillors represented diverse demographics and political affiliations. Councillors of varying ages, genders, races, and sexual orientations shared their views and experiences directly with Committee members, enriching the inquiry process.

Children, Young People and Education Committee's inquiry *'Do disabled children and young people have equal access to education and childcare?'*

Our Citizen Engagement Team worked with 40 families across Wales to collect information about their experiences and to understand their needs and requirements to take part. The team listened to the advice from participants about how the whole family would like to take part, for example would they like to meet virtually or face to face, and considered the learning abilities of the children to ensure they were able to share their views where possible. For example, a game was used as an accessible and fun way to introduce discussion points.



Children playing a game with stacking blocks

Health and Social Care Committee's inquiry into gynaecological cancers

Our Citizen Engagement Team worked with Tenovus and Target Ovarian Cancer to enable women with lived experience of gynaecological cancers across Wales to share their experiences. This involved establishing a trusted relationship with the participants in order to facilitate interviews with them on a one-to-one basis, including visiting some of the participants in their own homes, in some of the most rural parts of Wales to enable them to take part. This ensured the Committee directly heard the views, and in some cases, devastating experiences of the participants, who were deeply moved by their contributions and, in turn, impacted the recommendations included in the Committee report.

Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee's inquiry into Welsh Government plans for a national contemporary art gallery

A series of online focus groups were conducted with artists, staff and supporters of art galleries across Wales, ensuring the Committee's work was informed by lived experience. Participants were sourced via a screening survey to ensure fair, diverse and inclusive representation in the focus groups. By liaising with relevant stakeholders such as Disability Arts Cymru and Race Council Cymru, our Citizen Engagement Team ensured a Wales-wide, diverse demographic, including emerging Welsh ethnic minority artists, who engaged with the work of the Senedd for the first time.

Research and Information for Members of the Senedd

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

There has been a focus on issues facing women and girls over the past year. In response, Senedd Research published articles on **Violence Against Women and Girls, women's health, women's experiences of the criminal justice system** and **Childcare**. To mark International Women's Day Senedd Research published an article looking at the **progress made to implement** a women and girls' health plan.

Articles have also been published on a range of equality issues, including: **access to work for disabled people, housing issues and homelessness, cost of living** and **diversity and political representation**. Articles on **support for Ukrainian refugees in Wales** and the **Nation of Sanctuary policy** continued the spotlight on issues facing asylum seekers and refugees.

As part of a series of articles looking at the Welsh Government's progress in delivering its Programme for Government Senedd Research published an article which explored the objective to '**celebrate diversity and move to eliminate inequality in all its forms**'.

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

- The Equality and Social Justice Committee's reports on **young people with speech, language and communication needs, debt and the impact of the rising cost of living, child poverty, preventing gender-based violence** and its inquiry into the implementation of the **Anti-racist Wales Action Plan**;
- Local Government and Housing Committee's report on **diversity in local government** and ongoing inquiry into **housing support for Ukrainian refugees**;
- The Children, Young People and Education Committee's inquiry into access to education and childcare for **disabled children and young people**;

- The Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee inquiry into **allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union**;
- The Petitions Committee's inquiry into the **use of pre-payment meters** and its impact on vulnerable groups **summarised in this article**;
- The Health and Social Care Committee's **report on gynaecological cancers** summarised in this **article**; and
- The Scrutiny of the First Minister session focussed on the **cost of living** and the unequal impact on different groups **summarised in this research paper**.

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.

The Finance Committee carried out citizen engagement work **which included exploring equality-related issues**, and its **scrutiny of the draft budget 2024-25** specifically covered equality issues including recommendations to progress gender budgeting.

Throughout the year, Senedd Research has carried out quality assurance audits to evaluate efforts to mainstream equality; and will continue to build on this to support scrutiny of equality issues by Senedd committees.

In September 2023, more than 60 parliamentary researchers from around the UK and Ireland gathered at the Pierhead building in Cardiff Bay to share ideas, experiences, and knowledge. Journalist, activist and researcher, Shirish Kulkarni led a discussion which included exploring how to ensure that the information provided to Members of the Senedd reflect the diversity of Wales.



Journalist, activist and researcher, Shirish Kulkarni speaking at an event in the Pierhead

Work on co-chairing committees

The procedural work conducted on co-chairing committees has helped with the research into bringing diversity and inclusion to committee work. For example one Chair has co-chaired a committee alongside another Member in order to balance their committee-work commitments with other life-based commitments.

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.

Following conversations with Member Support Staff and needs identified in our survey, our team that supports the HR needs of Members undertook Autism Awareness training. This training gave insight into the experiences of people with autism and explored interventions that can be used to support neurodiverse individuals, exploring steps that can be taken to make interactions and environments more accommodating for those with neurodiverse conditions so that their experiences are more positive and rewarding and their skills are appreciated and recognised.

Members and Support Staff have the benefit of an annual training programme to support them in their roles as parliamentarians, as elected representatives for their constituents and as leaders and public figures. Member Learning and Engagement (MLE) offer a range of courses to support Members' understanding and skills within the realm of D&I. These include introductions to diversity and inclusion, conduct and respect training, unconscious bias and policy briefings on specific diversity strands. This year has seen a focus on upskilling Members in areas of legal, governance and reputational risk areas. Within this Members have attended training on dignity and respect with further modules offered on tackling sexual harassment. Members and Support Staff also have access to workplace equality networks, as well as a series of dedicated intranet pages where they can access guidance and information on equality, diversity and inclusion.

Inclusive proceedings

Live British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation during Plenary proceedings

On **3 May 2023**, BSL interpretation was broadcast live on [Senedd.tv](#) for the first time during **Plenary**. Following a request from a stakeholder of the **Health and Social Care Committee**, arrangements were made for the live interpretation of the debate on the Committee's report **Connecting the dots: tackling mental health inequalities in Wales**. Part of the report discussed mental health provision for deaf people and included a recommendation to Welsh Government on the matter, and therefore making these proceedings more accessible was particularly important. Commission staff across teams worked together to put the interpretation in place and, with co-operation from the Members of the Senedd participating, their support staff and the Minister and government officials, information was provided to the interpreter in advance to ensure a successful interpretation. We aim to build on this in future and to enhance the accessibility of live Senedd proceedings.

Strategic Communications – Audience Insight Catalogue

Our Communications and Engagement Strategy focuses on reaching audiences which have not traditionally engaged with the Senedd. To achieve this, we first needed to make sure those audiences feel reflected and celebrated in our work, and that we are using communications and engagement methods that they are most likely to see, rather than expecting all audiences to find us in the same way.

Since developing our Communications and Engagement Strategy we have taken a critical look at our methods of communication, questioning where we need to

strengthen and explore new methods to make sure we are adapting to the needs of our audience. This has included a channel review and the introduction of more robust evaluations.

We have also developed an Audience Insight Catalogue to support teams when planning their activities. It has been developed using the latest research into different audiences, including census data, news consumption habits, social media trends and data on visitor trends.

We are taking an audience first approach to planning our activity which means that we will think about the needs of the audience that we want to reach and plan activities with this in mind.

The catalogue is supporting teams at that early planning stage. They can research the audience they wish to reach and gather insight into where best to reach them – whether on social media, at an event in their community or through traditional news media, or a multi-channel approach.

Senedd exhibitions and events

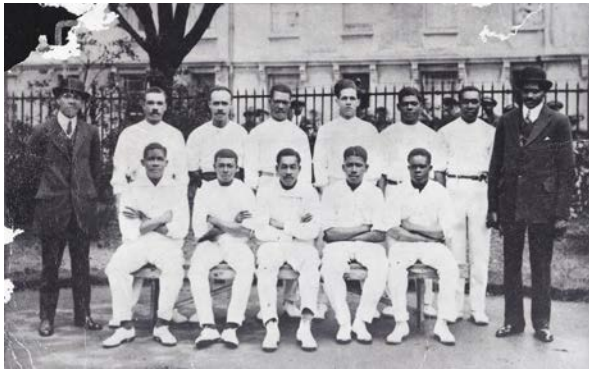
Exhibitions

Exhibitions at the Senedd showcase the very best of Wales, ranging from partnerships with key national organisations to projects developed with Welsh communities.

Tiger Bay and the Docks Exhibition

In partnership with The Heritage and Cultural Exchange (HCE), three new displays have been created in the Pierhead that give visitors a glimpse into life in Tiger Bay and the docks from the 1880s – 1950s. The HCE selected some of their favourite photos from their collection and other local archives to show what the area looked like in the past and how it has changed. Since its launch in March 2023, it has been visited by over 42,000 people.

<https://senedd.wales/visit/exhibitions/tiger-bay-and-the-docks-1880s-1950s/>

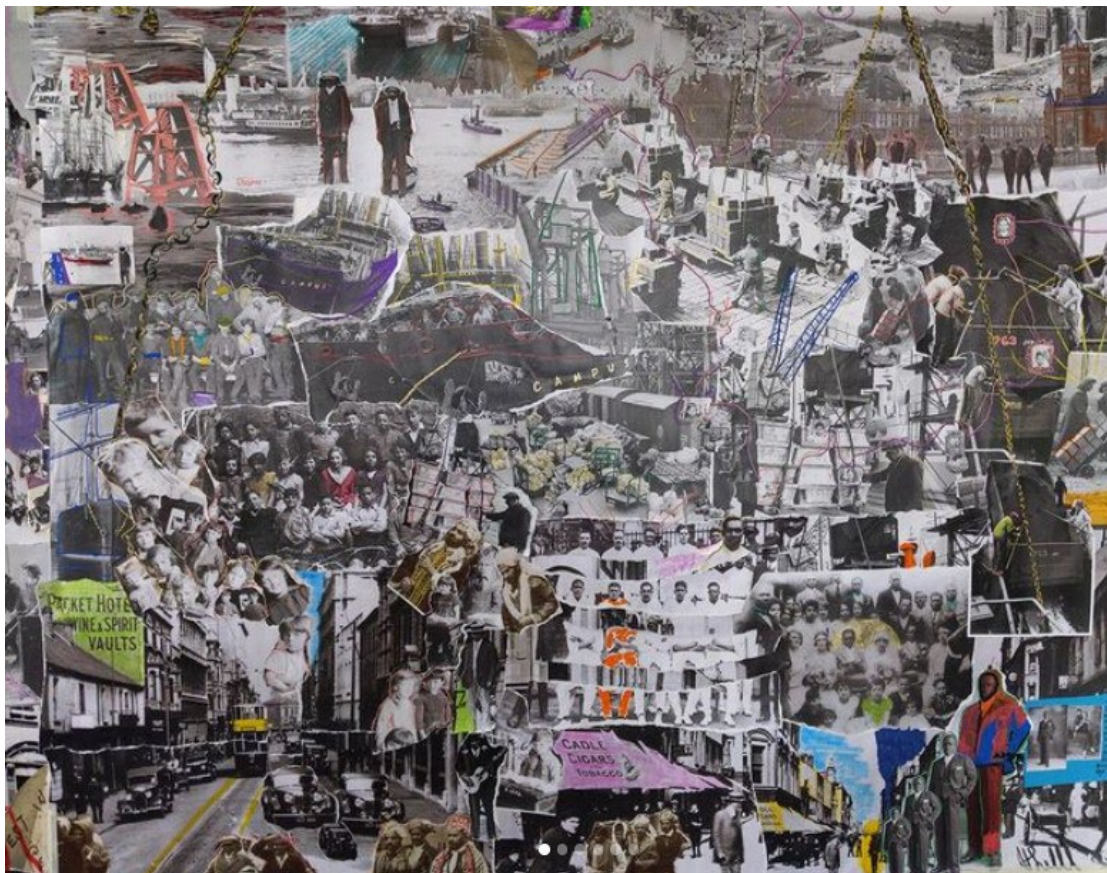


Cricket club photographed in Loudoun Square Gardens, 1927 © unknown OWLS000339-21



Wedding of Mohammed Hassan and Katie Link, c.1920 © unknown OWLS000339-13

Artists Kyle Legall and Prith B also ran a creative workshop in response to the exhibition where participants created their own Tiger Bay collages from the photos included in the exhibition This drop-in workshop was suitable for all ages and abilities.



Part of the collage created by participants

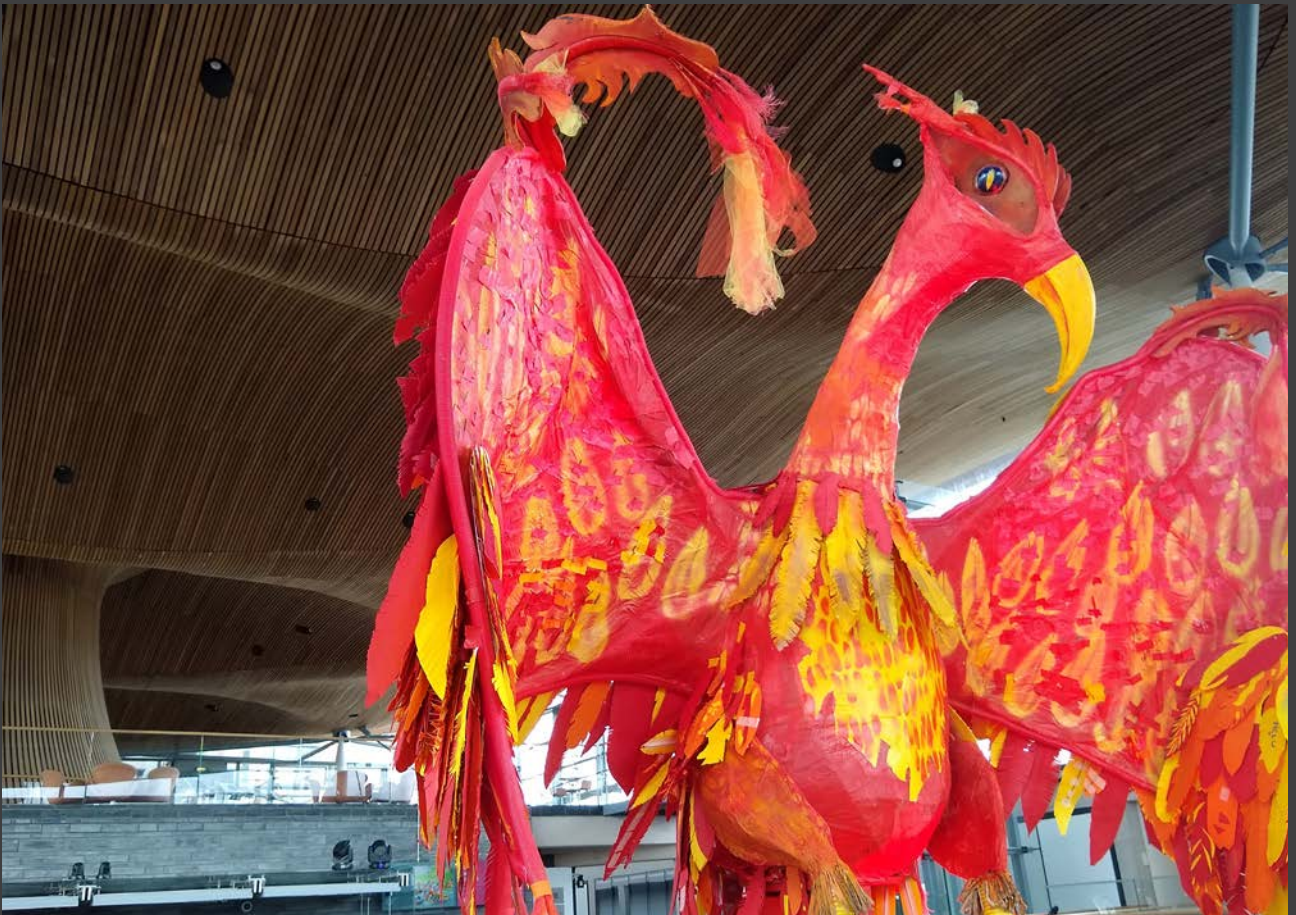
Butetown Carnival Archive

Keith Murrell, Creative Director of Butetown Arts & Culture Association, curated a selection of images and costumes from the Butetown Carnival Archive that were displayed in the Senedd and Pierhead. These images gave a snapshot of the joy of carnival over the years. A striking Phoenix sculpture, by Small World Theatre Aberteifi stood proudly in the Senedd's windows, with visitors adding to the sculpture throughout the summer. The Phoenix formed the backdrop for live music on the Senedd steps at the Butetown Carnival. The Butetown Carnival exhibition was seen by 12,000 across both buildings.

<https://senedd.wales/visit/exhibitions/past-exhibitions/budetown-carnival-archive/>

Below and opposite: Images celebrating the Butetown Carnival





International Day of Disabled People

As part of marking International Day of Disabled People, we displayed artwork by two Wales based artists. Ted Harrison painted a portrait of Rosie Moriarty-Simmonds OBE in her High Sheriff of South Glamorgan uniform. Rosie was the first person born disabled to undertake the role. She is also a disability rights campaigner and artist. Rosie's artwork, 'The Sun Beyond the Waves' was displayed alongside Ted's portrait.

<https://senedd.wales/visit/exhibitions/past-exhibitions/portrait-of-rosaleen-rosie-moriarty-simmonds-obe-the-sun-beyond-the-waves/>

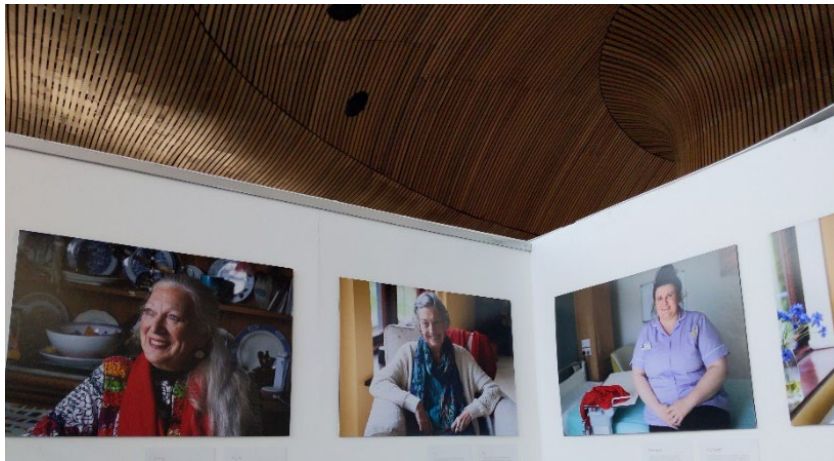


Artist Ted Harrison and Rosie Moriarty-Simmonds, the High Sheriff of South Glamorgan pose next to the portrait that he painted of her in her High Sheriff uniform

What Matters Most?

What Matters Most? gave an honest, raw, and inspiring account of what matters in life and in death, aimed at improving end of life care through sharing the experiences of those receiving and delivering care. Through photography, film, and written narratives, the exhibition introduced the experiences of those living with dying and the caregivers involved in providing care and support.

<https://senedd.wales/visit/exhibitions/past-exhibitions/what-matters-most/>



Portraits from the What Matters Most exhibition

Newport Community Champions

‘Newport Community Champions’ is the third in a series of exhibitions by Kamila Jarczak and Women of Newport. Through Kamila’s photography, the exhibition celebrates the achievements of local women who support others, connect their communities and bring positivity to Newport.

<https://senedd.wales/visit/exhibitions/newport-community-champions/>



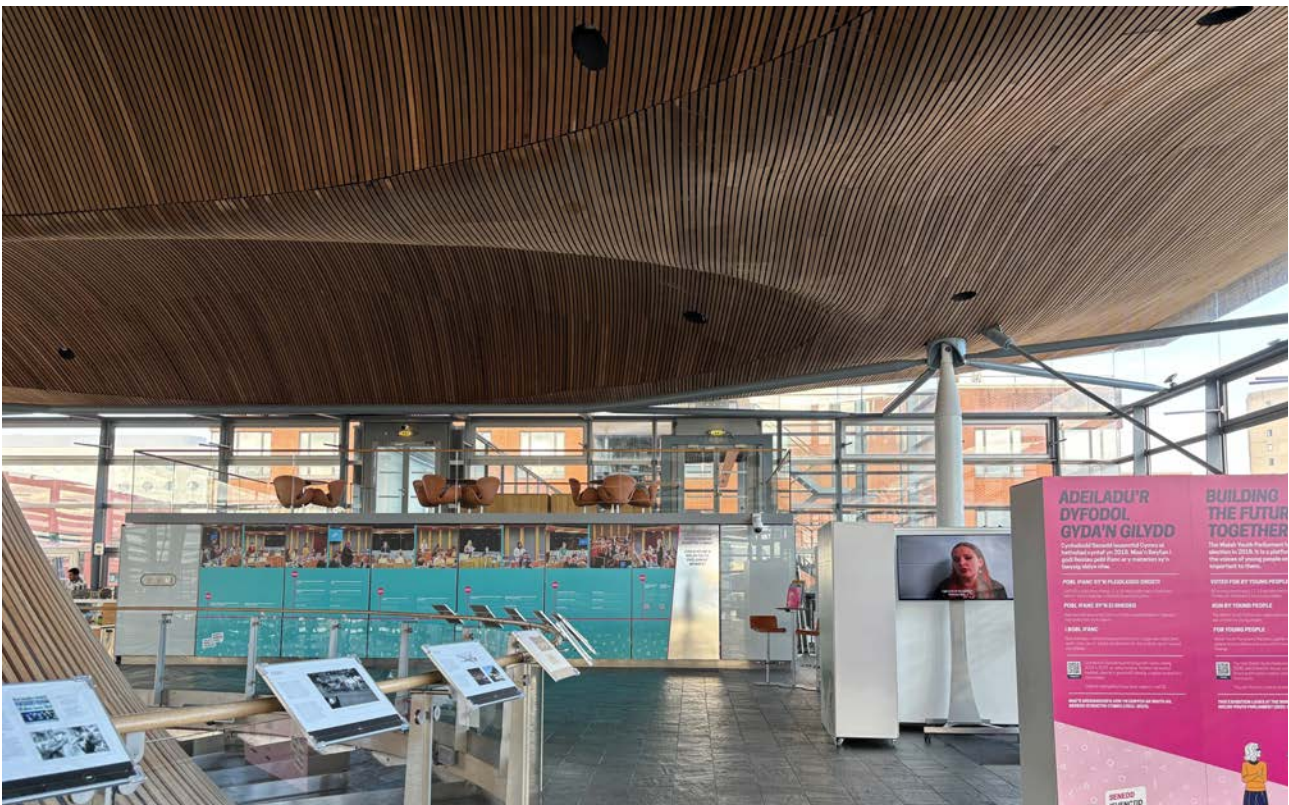
Examples of images displayed as part of the Newport Community Champions exhibition

The Welsh Youth Parliament: Building the Future Together

This new exhibition puts the voices of young people centre stage. Over two years, Welsh Youth Parliament (WYP) Members gathered views from young people across Wales. We invite visitors to find out what they had to say about their three chosen issues and follow the journey of the WYP so far. Visitors also have a chance to tell us what they care about by creating their own campaign banner. Responses are displayed on the Welsh dresser and will be considered by the next WYP to help inform the new topics chosen.

<https://senedd.wales/visit/exhibitions/the-welsh-youth-parliament-building-the-future-together/>

Welsh Youth Parliament exhibition. Opposite: An attendee at the exhibition considers if they could be a member of the next Welsh Youth Parliament



A ALLET TI FOD YN
AELOD O SENEDD
IEUENCTID CYMRU?

COULD YOU BE A
WELSH YOUTH
PARLIAMENT
MEMBER?



REPORT PUBLISHED!
Sustainable Wales: what would
to use sustainable transport

REPORT PUBLISHED!
My School Day: if extra time
should it be spent?

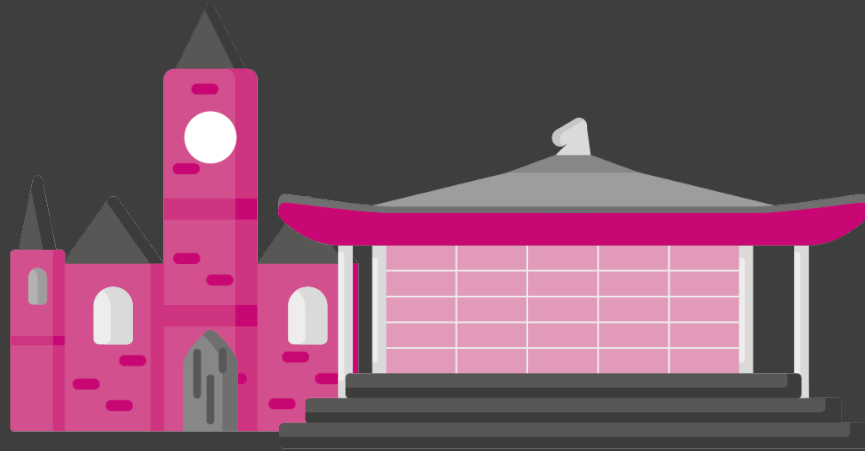
ALL GOOD THINGS...
The Second Welsh Youth

WELSH
PARLIAMENT

WELSH
PARLIAMENT



OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT



We welcomed over **150,000** visitors to the Senedd and Pierhead in 2023

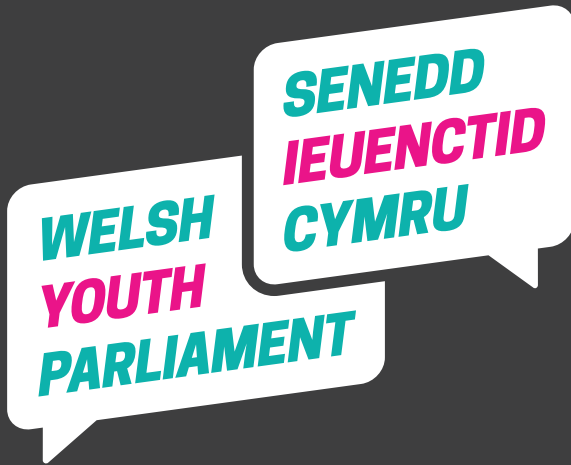


12,800 people joined us for **535** tours, either in person or online



764 people attended one of 10 Senedd-led events held on the estate

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



23,000

Number of young people we engaged with in person, through **577** education sessions and Welsh Youth Parliament events

-
- Over **75%** of those we engaged with told us their level of awareness and understating had increased following the activity. About **70%** of them had never engaged with the Senedd before.
 - We handled a total of **14,000** queries between phone calls and emails.
 - We supported **214 Member Sponsored events**
 - We had conversations with **6,159** people at the Urdd Eisteddfod, the Royal Welsh Show and the National Eisteddfod
 - We engaged with **3,140** people for Committee work and supported 46 Committee inquiries.
 - We facilitated a total of **232** focus groups, interviews, advisory groups, and questionnaires.

Senedd events

St. David's Day Celebrations

On 1 March, a group of new parents and their babies came to the Senedd to enjoy a bilingual story and song session to celebrate St David's Day. This informal event allowed us to introduce the building, café and play area to a new audience, many of whom had never been inside the building before.

During the session we discussed the various ways that they could engage with the Senedd and nearly half the group took part in the Childcare in Wales inquiry for the Equality and Social Justice Committee.

Pride Cymru 2023

Commission staff, Welsh Youth Parliament members and their families joined the annual Pride Cymru parade to promote both the Youth Parliament and the Senedd as inclusive parliaments.

Reception for the Welsh Deaf Rugby Teams

In July 2023, we celebrated the Wales Deaf Rugby men and women teams' double victory at the Deaf Rugby World Cup 2023 in Argentina by holding a reception to acknowledge and congratulate the squad. During the event, we heard from the Llywydd, the First Minister and three representatives from the team on their experience at the 2023 Deaf Rugby World Cup as well as had a photo opportunity with the squad. A British Sign Language interpreter was present to interpret the event

Opposite: Members of the Welsh Deaf Rugby teams are joined by the Llywydd, Senedd Members, the First Minister and Welsh Government Ministers to celebrate their successes



Above left: Attendees enjoying St. David's Day in the Senedd

Above right: Welsh Youth Parliament Members and Senedd Commission staff participate in the Pride Cymru march



We Belong Here

We worked in partnership with Elect Her and Workplace Equality Network (WEN) Wales to hold an event to take over the Senedd, aimed to inspire and engage with a broad and diverse range of Welsh women from all backgrounds. We Belong Here, was a creative day of community and discussion with talks, workshops and an opportunity to learn, share and inspire and workshops included:

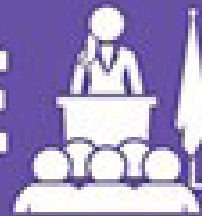
- Equal Representation Toolkit: How can I make my local political party more inclusive?
- Activism in Wales: How can I make my voice heard/fight for what I believe in?
- Women in elected office: How can we improve the culture around us?
- Ethnic Minorities in Politics.
- Parents in politics- the power of care.
- Why we need more LGBT+ people in Wales's politics.
- Disabled Women in Politics.
- Young Women and My Political Future.
- Midlife Revolution- claiming power in your prime years.

All participants also received long term access to the resources, training, and support that Elect Her and WEN Wales offer, as well as engaging with and starting a journey with us at the Senedd, giving a lasting legacy to this one-off event. A panel session was held in the Chamber and the recording was available to view online with British Sign Language interpretation.

Opposite: We Belong Here. Attendees gather for a performance and group photo on the Senedd stage



WE BELONG HERE



LLE I NI

**WOMEN'S TAKEOVER OF THE SENEDD
DIWRNOD MENYWOD YN Y SENEDD**



ELECTHER

Christmas Lantern Parade and Workshop

For our Christmas 2023 celebration we worked in partnership with the Wales Millennium Centre (WMC) to build on the relationship established during this year's Butetown Carnival. The event consisted of craft workshops and a lantern parade around Cardiff Bay, ending with congregational carols and readings by Senedd representatives on the steps of the Senedd building.

The target audience were primarily local, Butetown and Grangetown community stakeholders that the WMC have engaged with as part of their community engagement programme. Members, their support staff and Senedd Commission staff were all invited to join the parade after Plenary.

International Women's Day

To celebrate International Women's Day we welcomed Dame Amanda Blanc to the Senedd to take part in an 'In Conversation' event. Amanda, who is originally from the Rhondda Valley, is the Group Chief Executive Officer of insurance company Aviva, and one of only nine female leaders of FTSE 100 companies in the UK.

Led by host, Welsh journalist Betsan Powys, Amanda discussed her family's background and ties to the Valleys, how her bold early career choices led her to her current position and how she believes support from friends and family played a great part in her success.

During the honest and engaging conversation Amanda emphasised the importance of seeking opportunities for, and always championing, women.

Amanda was joined by over a 100 guests from diverse backgrounds and sectors in Wales, including a number of young women at the beginning of their professional careers who took the opportunity to network and build connections.

Earlier that afternoon, Amanda also met with a group of pupils from her former school, Treorchy Comprehensive School. The pupils enjoyed a tour of the Senedd followed by a session with Amanda, providing plenty of opportunity to ask questions and seek advice.

Education service and Welsh Youth Parliament

Our education service meets pupils from diverse backgrounds throughout the year, both in Siambur Hywel, our dedicated education suite, and in schools across Wales. This year:

- We attended the first Flintshire All Schools Pride Event along with Leola Roberts-Biggs (Welsh Youth Parliament Member for Alyn & Deeside) to engage with young people and education professionals in the area to promote the work of the Welsh Youth Parliament (WYP) and the Senedd's education offer.



School children engage with the Senedd stall at the Flintshire All Schools Pride Event

- Delivered five year assemblies, and a workshop with Ysgol Gwent Is Coead's 'Hawl i Hunaniaeth' group on Pride Day. Discussion focused on equality issues and inclusivity and equality within the Senedd, inclusivity and LGBT+ rights.



Photos from 'Diwrnod Balchder' Ysgol Gwent Is Coed, Newport, June 2024

- A number of Welsh Youth Parliament Members and Senedd staff joined the Pride Cymru parade in June 2023 to show their support.



Attendees enjoying the Pride Cymru parade

- The education team has engaged a variety of groups with Additional Learning Needs, including residential schools.

“All the learners showed an interest and worked together. The presenter was exceptional in the way the session was presented. The session raised learners' awareness of the importance of understanding the work of the Senedd and who represents them if they need to ask for help”. Coleg Menai, Llangefni (Grwp Llandrillo Menai)

Welsh Youth Parliament

The Welsh Youth Parliament (WYP) works with a range of partner organisations to ensure the representation of diverse groups of young people, including Race Council Cymru, EYST, Tros Gynnal Plant, Talking Hands & National Deaf Children's

Society, Carers Trust Wales, Learning Disability Wales, Boys & Girls Club, Digon (from Ysgol Plasmawr who promote equality for LGBT students and combat homophobia in their school and the wider community) GirlGuiding Cymru, Young Farmers Club Wales, Urdd, Llamau, Voices from Care, NYAS, GISDA, YMCA Swansea, Tŷ Hafan. Each organisation elects a young person from within their membership as a WYP Member, ensuring the unique perspective of young people from a range of diverse backgrounds is heard throughout the WYP's 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, all of our meetings have speech to text capacity, Kuwaiti translation, and key documents and consultations are translated into Easy Read. We also work closely with Learning Disability Wales to ensure the way we communicate with Members suits varied needs. Additionally, we always offer the option to translate our consultations into different languages.

A commitment from Welsh Youth Parliament Members

WYPMs made a commitment at the start of the 2nd WYP term to ensure that young people from diverse backgrounds were heavily involved in contributing to consultation and engagement activity connected to the WYPs three priority issues. WYPMs wanted to learn about how different groups of young people were affected by each issue.

The WYP ran focus groups with young people with additional learning needs, disabilities, care experienced young people, from different ethnic backgrounds and LGBTQ+ communities across all WYP priority issues, and targeted schools based in more deprived areas as part of this work.

Contributing to Senedd Business

Welsh Youth Parliament Members used their lived experience to give formal evidence to the Children Young People and Education Committee to inform its work into Care Experienced Children and Disabled Access to Education.



Above: The Llywydd and First Minister join Welsh Youth Parliament Members at the launch of the Welsh Youth Parliament exhibition in the Senedd.

Below: 1- Young people engaging with members of our Education and Welsh Youth Parliament Team.

2- Senedd Members join an engagement session with our Welsh Youth Parliament Team



Senedd Women's Caucus - Official Launch

The Senedd Women's Caucus was launched on 7 June 2023 as a cross-party forum for Members which brings together women parliamentarians across party lines to provide peer support and advance gender equality.

The Caucus is made up of all women Members of the Senedd, chaired by Joyce Watson MS and a Steering Group of representatives from each party.

The launch event explored the role of parliaments in driving gender equality in society, experiences of women parliamentarians, and how women citizens engage with the work of parliaments.

Senator Fiona O'Loughlin, Chair of the Irish Women's Caucus in the Oireachtas, gave an inspirational keynote speech and shared experiences from the Irish Women's Parliamentary Caucus.

Caucus Chair, Joyce Watson MS, and the Llywydd, Rt Hon Elin Jones MS, also spoke about their experiences as women in public life and elected Members of the Senedd.



Members of the Senedd's Women's Caucus are joined by the Senedd Commission's Chief Executive and Senator Fiona O'Loughlin, Chair of the Irish Women's Caucus in the Oireachtas, for a group photograph in the Senedd

To mark International Women's Day 2024, members of the Caucus took part in roundtable discussions with students from local schools to draw connections between the importance of gender equality, the work of the Senedd, and wider democratic representation.

A Global Senedd - International Engagement

This year, the focus for the implementation of our International Framework has been on inward visits and enhancing Member engagement in international networks. Inward visits included the Ceann Comhairle of Dáil Éireann, the Speaker of the lower House of the Irish Parliament (Oireachtas). This programme included a roundtable event with the Senedd representatives on the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly as well as two Senedd Committees.

From further afield, the Llywydd was delighted to welcome the Speaker of the National Assembly for Namibia, as well as the Speaker and Clerk of the Tasmanian House of Assembly.

Westminster Seminar

We were delighted to welcome a delegation of some 30 elected Members and Clerks from legislatures across the Commonwealth. It was an opportunity to showcase the Senedd and Wales. Matters discussed on the day included the development of devolution, the work of our Welsh Youth Parliament and the Senedd's legislative process and how Members are supported.

Diplomatic visits

The Senedd has hosted a number of high-profile Diplomatic visits, including those of the US Ambassador and a delegation of European Ambassadors led by the EU Ambassador.

Inaugural meeting of the Speakers of the Isles Conference

This meeting of the Speakers of the Isles conference brought together speakers and clerks of the parliaments and assemblies of neighbouring islands to discuss matters of shared interest and relevance.

The Llywydd and Chief Executive and Clerk represented the Senedd at this inaugural conference, hosted by the Ceann Comhairle in Kildare, Ireland in July 2023. The aim of the conference was to encourage open dialogue and discussions on matters of importance and mutual interest with colleagues across parliamentary networks and enhance working relationships.

British Irish Parliamentary Assembly (BIPA)

Senedd Members have continued their active engagement with BIPA, not only participating in the plenary meetings in Jersey and Kildare but also on numerous committees, for instance working on inquiries into indigenous languages and Effects of Brexit on UK-Irish trade. Senedd Committees also examined how the Senedd's engagement with BIPA can contribute to creating closer links with Ireland and the Senedd hosted a meeting of the BIPA Steering Committee.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

There was significant Member activity relating to the Senedd's membership of the CPA. Two Members were elected to represent the Senedd at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Ghana.

In addition to this, the Senedd's CPA branch hosted a delegation from the Canadian Federal Parliament to discuss issues including gender within the respective parliaments.

British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference

The 2023 Regional Conference was held in the UK Parliament and was attended by a full delegation of Senedd Members. The conference covered several topical themes including the importance of diverse and inclusive parliaments, standards of behaviours as well as the Climate Emergency.

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, Malta

The Senedd was represented by two Members at the Regional Annual CWP Conference, hosted this year by the Maltese parliament. Themes discussed at the conference included challenges facing women parliamentarians and period poverty.

Wales and the EU

The Senedd's engagement with new and emerging UK-EU structures has continued to evolve. Welcome this year has been the strengthening of the role of Senedd Members in the UK-EU Parliamentary Partnership Assembly (PPA) which has enabled Members to participate more fully in the work of the body.

Senedd Members continue to engage in the UK-EU Committee of the Regions Contact Group. Members have proposed work to strengthen the role of the group in monitoring UK-EU relations.

Our Brussels office continues to support and facilitate Senedd Committee and Senedd Member engagement with the EU institutions. Two Senedd Committee visits to Brussels to engage on work related to UK-EU relations took place during 2023-24.

The Senedd was also invited for the first time to participate in the prestigious European Union Visitors Programme; a training programme for young professionals working in relevant fields.

Senedd business taking on an international focus

Scrutiny and engagement of international affairs remains a priority area for Senedd Committees. The Senedd's Legislation Justice and Constitution Committee published a report on UK-EU Governance which included recommendations on Senedd engagement with the EU.

The Culture, Communication, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee concluded its work on Wales-Ireland relations which made commitments to build relationships with the Oireachtas and took evidence from the co-Chairs of the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly (BIPA). An inaugural debate on the Committee's international relations annual report took place in February 2024 and set out the Committee's international relations scrutiny during the last year including successes the Committee has had in improving the transparency of information made available by the Welsh Government.

The Senedd's Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee has closely monitored post-Brexit trade arrangements between Wales and the island of Ireland, including preparations for the UK's new border controls visiting Holyhead Port as part of its work. The Committee continues to consider the implications for Wales of international trade agreements.

The Senedd's Equality and Social Justice Committee monitoring of the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) and European citizens' rights in Wales has continued. This important work is shared with the UK's independent watchdog, the Independent Monitoring Authority.

In Plenary, the Senedd has frequently reflected and responded to key events that have shaped the world this year, such as the CoP (Conference of the Parties) climate change and biodiversity summits, the war in Ukraine and the Israel-Gaza conflict. In November 2023, the Senedd became one of the first parliaments in the world to vote for an immediate ceasefire. The Senedd has also granted or

withheld consent to a number of Westminster Bills with an international dimension.



What next?

The following are actions that we wish to make before the end of the current D&I Strategy .

- Being an inclusive parliament
 - Undertake an EQIA events programming and planning;
 - Refresh Members' Factsheets on their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010;
 - Build upon work undertaken to ensure that our hearing assistance technology is fit for purpose;
 - Review resources used by our education team to better reflect diversity and inclusion.
- Being an inclusive employer
 - Design mandatory D&I training module to complement the dignity and respect training module for 2025 rollout;
 - Attain Disability Confident Leader status;
 - Refresh frontline staff training for an inclusive customer welcome;
 - Staff surveys are undertaken, analysed and acted upon;
 - Follow up our peri/menopause toolkit with further action and training.
- Workplace Equality Networks
 - Review our Workplace Equality Networks and ratify operational guidance;
 - Develop a Social Mobility Workplace Equality Network;
 - Develop role descriptors for Senior Diversity Champions.
- Recruitment

- Refresh candidate guidance and employee stories on our careers webpages;
 - Refresh and roll-out recruitment manager training and guidance;
 - Link our employer recruitment brand with communications and engagement activities;
 - Review onboarding processes and procedures;
 - Collect and analyse data on recruitment diversity insights for public/Crown appointments run by the Senedd Commission.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing:
 - Integrate wellbeing into performance reviews for all staff;
 - Consider submitting to the Wellbeing index;
 - Update, republish and promote the Mental Health policy;
 - Assess use of tools to manage stress / workload in future wellbeing survey.

