



# Annual Report & Accounts 2024/2025



Eich llais chi mewn | Your voice in health  
iechyd a gofal | and social care

The Annual Report and Accounts of the Citizen Voice Body for Health and Social Care (also known as Llais) for the year ended 31 March 2025, is prepared in accordance with Schedule 1, Part 6, Paragraph 20 (1), together with the report of the Auditor General for Wales thereon and laid before the Welsh Parliament in accordance with the Act.

## Accessible formats

This document is also available in Welsh.

If you would like this publication in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us at [governance@llaiscymru.org](mailto:governance@llaiscymru.org)

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## Message from the Chair



**Prof. Medwin Hughes**  
**Llais Chair**

In this, our second year, Llais has stepped up its role as the independent voice of the people in health and social care by hearing from more than 40,000 people across Wales. From maternity services and emergency care to support for carers and access to dentistry, people have shared their experiences with honesty, urgency, and hope. Behind every voice is a story, and behind every story is a lesson to learn or a call to act.

And we have acted.

Our position statement on emergency departments, informed by over 700 people in just 5 weeks, sparked national attention and conversations about the urgent need for change. Our report on maternity and neonatal services in Swansea Bay gave powerful voice to over 500 families, influencing both local improvement and national review. And when people told us they couldn't get a dentist, we listened and called for urgent, fairer access for all.

This report provides a clear picture of our work and our impact. You'll find a detailed analysis of how we performed against our strategic priorities, what's working well for people, the issues people told us about, and how we acted on what we heard, whether through complaints, advocacy, representation, policy influence, or partnership. It also shares the kind of organisation we are becoming, our learning, our challenges, and the areas we know we must improve.

We know people and communities want to see a future where care is more joined-up, more people-centred, and more transparent. A future where people and communities are involved from the start, not just consulted at the end. A future where public voice is not an add-on, but a central part of how decisions are made.

We want that too and through our Strategic Plan, ***A National Conversation***, we'll continue to listen, influence, and act over the next 2 years. We do so in the knowledge that Wales is not short of people who care but it is in urgent need of better ways to connect people's views and experiences to decision makers.

Llais is proud to be part of that connection. And we know we don't do this alone. Our strength comes from the thousands of people who trust us with their stories, and from our partnerships with staff, volunteers, professionals, and organisations across the health and social care system.

To everyone who has shared, supported, and shaped our work this year thank you. Let's keep working together to build a health and social care system that not only serves the people of Wales but belongs to them.

**Professor Medwin Hughes CBE DL**



# Performance overview

The progress we made in 2024/2025 reflects the continued growth, ambition, and impact of Llais across Wales. We engaged with more people than ever before, amplified their voices through meaningful representation and advocacy, and strengthened our presence across key health and social care forums.

Our efforts to respond to consultations, support service users, and drive service improvements have laid strong foundations for future work. Delivery against our strategic objectives was high across all 5 priority areas, with clear momentum being carried into 2025/2026. The objectives were:

**1. Drive a national conversation about the future of health and social care services**

**2. Push for services that meet everyone's needs**

**3. Working together better**

**4. Help people and services to use technology in ways that work for them**

**5. Grow and improve as an organisation**

The objectives and initiatives rolling forward reflect both the scale of our ambition and our commitment to continuous improvement, ensuring that Llais remains a vital, people-focused part of Wales's health and social care landscape.

In our second year, we have engaged with over 43,000 people, over a third more people (38%) than last year. We have listened to a wider range of voices, stories, and experiences.

We have significantly increased our engagement activities (725). Our visits to health and social care premises across Wales have helped us build strong relationships and gain valuable insights into people's experiences of care.

This year, we are reporting involvement on average in 40 service changes per month, and we took part in 21 national consultations, ensuring that the voices of communities across Wales are reflected in the shaping of their services.

As part of our commitment to equity and inclusion, we've worked with over 1,000 organisations, including local authorities, community groups, statutory bodies, and equality organisations, to help us reach people whose voices are often underrepresented in health and social care conversations.

This included focused engagement with minority ethnic communities, deaf communities, unpaid carers, rural and coastal populations, and Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities. Through this work, we've gathered valuable insights into the barriers these groups face and the improvements they want to see.



We supported more people to raise 1,845 formal complaints – 335 more than last year – helping to resolve their concerns and often influencing future improvements to services.

We have a legal duty to make representations on behalf of people when health and social care services are not meeting their needs. This is an important power set out in the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act, 2020, supported by statutory Welsh Government guidance.

Our representations can take many forms, from formal submissions and public position statements to ongoing conversations with providers and decision-makers. They all share a commitment to making sure people's voices are heard by those with the power to make change.



We have made 560 representations to decision-makers – 401 more than last year – including to NHS organisations and local authorities.

Representations are approaches made by Llais on what we have heard from people regarding the provision of health and social care services. We know that what matters most to people is what happens as a result of our representations, and we will do more to communicate the effect of these to the people that shared their views and the wider communities as much as possible.

We'll continue to monitor how services respond and what changes this brings for people.

By taking part in 416 formal meetings and networks – 182 more than last year – Llais has helped ensure that people's voices are heard and considered by a wide range of organisations across Wales.

We're working on better ways to share information about the work we're doing in partnership with other organisations.



## About Llais

We are Llais (it means “voice” in Welsh). We are a Welsh Government sponsored public body. This means we get our funding from the Welsh Government, but we are operationally independent, so we get to choose what we work on, how we work, and who we work with.

We were set up in April 2023 and we have 107 staff and 164 volunteers, operating in every corner of Wales.

## The way we work

We’re focused on listening carefully and working with others to make sure we get the job done well. Our values, and what matters to you, will guide us. Our values are:

### People-driven

We put the needs and experiences of people at the centre of decision-making.

### Working together

We are inclusive and accessible. We work as 1 team with shared goals, both within our organisation and externally.

### Integrity

We are independent, honest, accountable and transparent about our work.

We organise ourselves into 7 regions across Wales (a diagram of our organisational structure can be found overleaf).



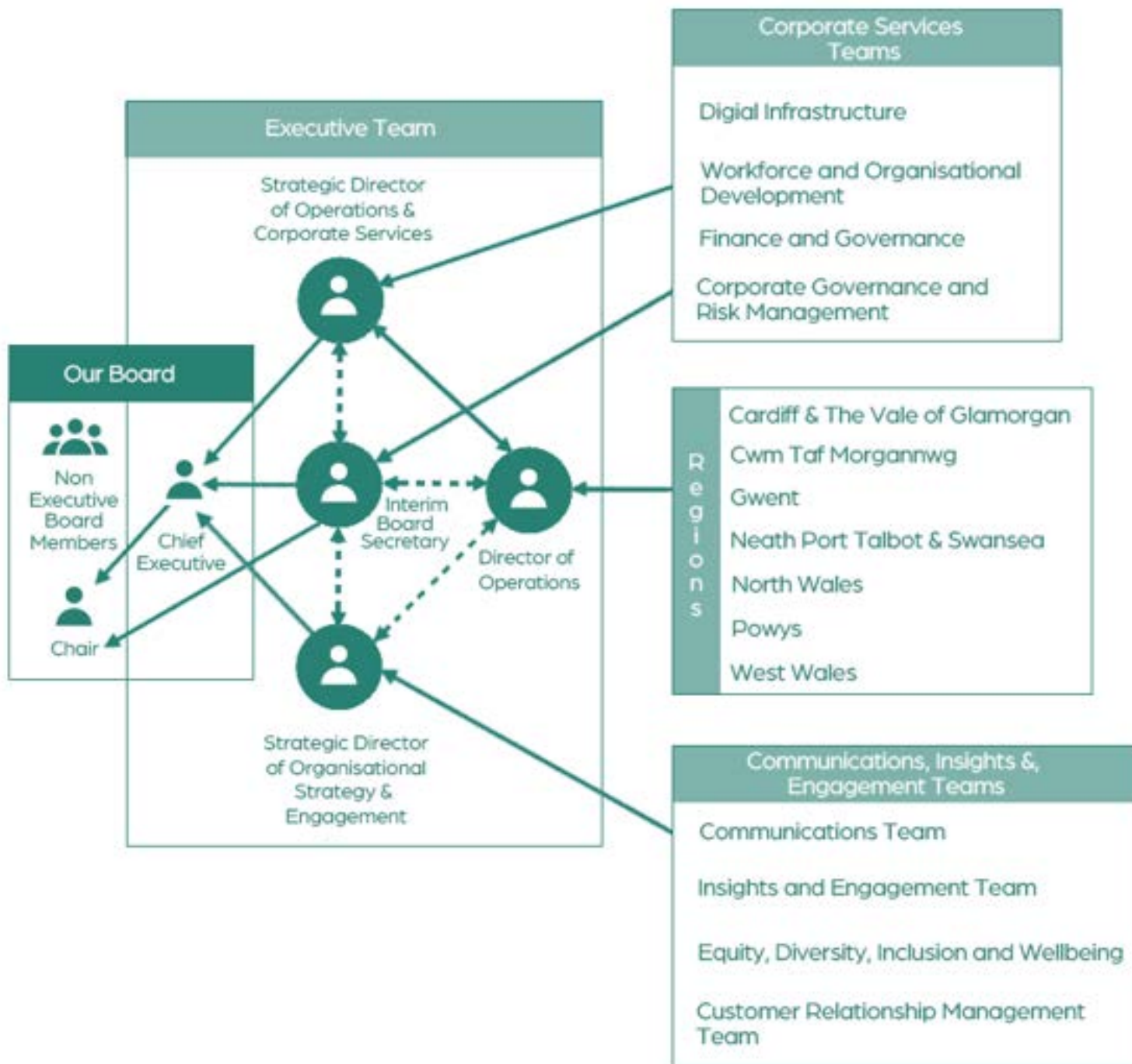
**People-driven**



**Integrity**



**Working together**



Our corporate services teams and strategy, communication and insights teams support our regional teams to deliver our work.

Our Board sets our strategic direction. It makes sure we are on track to do what we said we would do – living our values and delivering our work in the way that best meets people’s needs.

Our Executive Team increasingly leads on strategy, key decisions, and overseeing how we operate and perform. The Executive Team, which has been established during the last year also works closely with and on behalf of the Board and its committees to work effectively within our organisation’s governance and assurance arrangements.

Tîm Arwain is our senior leadership team. A range of senior staff are part of this leadership team, including our 7 Regional Directors, and work closely with the Executive Team. Together they support our Accounting Officer, who is our Chief Executive, to run Llais in a way that meets our obligations in the legislation and guidance set out for public bodies. It is an important decision-making forum for Llais, especially regarding our range of organisational policies.

Our second full year has continued to be about listening, learning, and working with others to understand what the people of Wales want and need from health and social care services. We set out our plans and priorities for 2024/2025 in an Annual Plan.

We have continued to make sure we get the basics right to help us support people and communities, form new partnerships, and to be an independently run organisation. Our organisation has undertaken a range of governance reviews and development work to ensure Llais has the building blocks in place to deliver as an effective organisation and increase our operational maturity to work on your behalf.



# Our vision and mission

## Vision

We believe in a healthier Wales. A health and social care system where people get the services they need in a way that works best for them and is ready for whatever the future holds.

## Mission

We make it our mission to listen carefully, locally, regionally and nationally, and to increase the impact of people's voices in shaping services.

We work together with the people of Wales to give you a stronger voice, and represent your interests, when it comes to health and social care.

## Engagement

We engage and listen to people about their experiences of health and social care. We try and meet communities in the places that work best for them.

## Complaints Advocacy

We help and support people when things go wrong, and they want to make a complaint through the formal complaints process of the NHS or their local authority. We also provide advice where we can to those who haven't started this process.

## Representations

We represent the views we hear to decision makers in health and social care. By law, they must let us know what they plan to do with the views and experiences that we share.

## Communication and promotion

We will make sure people know about our services so more people can have their say. The health bodies and the local authorities have a legal duty to promote our services too.

These are our core activities, and we base our key performance indicators on these 4 areas as well as how we are doing in meeting our strategic priorities and objectives.



**Alyson Thomas**  
**Chief Executive**

## Statement from the Chief Executive on our performance

This has been a year of momentum, maturity, and meaningful impact for Llais.

In our second year, we've built on the strong foundations laid in 2023/2024 and moved with purpose, not just growing our reach, but increasing our influence. We've continued to listen, to learn, and most importantly, to act.

What's stood out this year is not just the scale of our work, but its growing significance. We're hearing from more people, in more places, on more issues than ever before. But more importantly, what we hear is beginning to change what happens. Our representations have led to improved access, clearer communication, and tangible adjustments to care. Our insight is now more routinely informing policy, service design and review processes at both local and national levels.

These actions aren't just about fixing what's not working for people. They're part of a bigger shift, towards a health and social care system in Wales that listens earlier, involves more people, and sees people's voices as central to getting things right first time.

We delivered over 90% of the objectives in our Annual Plan, spanning all 5 strategic priorities. That included progress in national influence, complaints advocacy, digital maturity, and partnership working.

Where our objectives have taken longer than expected to deliver, we're applying learning to sharpen our delivery in 2025/2026. This year, our work has uncovered and elevated voices across a wide range of critical issues. We highlighted the experiences of people affected by poor communication in vascular services. We brought attention to the gaps in mental health support from young people to adults in crisis.

We supported families navigating maternity care, raised concerns about the withdrawal of specialist school nursing, and spoke up for people whose access to basic services like dentistry or discharge planning had become unsafe or unfair.

Through our ***Llais Local*** model and national engagement work, we've connected directly with thousands of people in hospital corridors, on the high street, at community events, and through underrepresented groups.

We've made space for those whose stories too often go unheard including carers, disabled people, rural residents, ethnic minority communities, and people with complex communication needs.

Alongside this, our complaints advocacy service supported people to raise nearly 1,900 formal concerns. We supported people with early resolution, signposting, and compassionate complaints advocacy, helping people navigate a complex system at moments of stress and vulnerability.



We also invested in building our complaints advocacy service for the future, improving learning, consistency, and integration with our wider work.

Internally, we've strengthened our governance, increased transparency, and professionalised our systems, from improving our new case records management system to developing national frameworks for engagement, equity, and insight.

We recognise that challenges remain. We still hear more about health than social care. Our impact must be better communicated. And we need to work harder to ensure underrepresented voices, including children, disabled people, and ethnic minority communities, are meaningfully involved in shaping services. These gaps pose real risks to our reach, to trust, and to accountability and we are actively addressing them.

That's why ***A National Conversation***, our 3-year Strategic Plan matters. It sets a bold direction for deepening our insight, strengthening our influence, and making the people's voices central to services. Our Annual Plan for 2025/2026 continues this work, turning ambition into action.

I want to thank our dedicated staff, committed volunteers, and partners across the system. Most of all, I want to thank the people of Wales who trusted us with their stories. Your voices guide everything we do.

We are still a young organisation, but we are maturing with purpose. This year has shown what Llais can become: a trusted ally for people and communities, a critical friend to the health and social care system, and a catalyst for change.



# Overview of our performance against our strategic priorities and objectives 2024/25

## Progress against our strategic objectives within the Annual Plan 2024/25

Our annual plan set out what we would do for the year (April 2024–March 2025) to help us achieve the priorities we set out in our 3-year Strategic Plan 2024/2027 – ‘A National Conversation’.

Our plans are based on what people have told us matters most — including feedback from individuals, communities, our staff, and other organisations involved in making services work for everyone.

We set 50 planned objectives for 2024/2025 within our 5 strategic priority areas. The summary below sets out what we successfully delivered.

|                                                                                      |                                                 |                                   |                                                                          |                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1. Drive a national conversation about the future of health and social care services | 2. Push for services that meet everyone’s needs | 3. Working together better        | 4. Help people and services to use technology in ways that work for them | 5. Grow and improve as an organisation |
| 93%                                                                                  | 91%                                             | 99%                               | 90%                                                                      | 87%                                    |
| of priority 1 objectives achieved                                                    | of priority 2 objectives achieved               | of priority 3 objectives achieved | of priority 4 objectives achieved                                        | of priority 5 objectives achieved      |

# Objectives continuing into 2025/2026

Of the 10 objectives under priority 2, we completed 8. We are continuing work on 2 objectives:

- 2.3 Advance research and policy development to find out more about all-Wales priorities and call on decision makers to take action
- 2.9 Develop our complaints advocacy and enquiries service

Of the 11 objectives under priority 3, we completed 10 and are carrying forward 1 objective:

- 3.4 Host a complaints summit

Of the 4 objectives under priority 4, we completed 3 and are carrying forward 1 objective:

- 4.5 Get support from Centre for Digital Public Services and Digital Health and Care Wales in developing our Digital Strategy

Of the 19 objectives under priority 5, we completed 15 and are continuing to work on 4 objectives:

- 5.1 Create a locations strategy
- 5.4 Introduce the new Customer Relationship Management system Phase 1
- 5.6 Create our Net Zero Aim
- 5.13 Review and improve the recruitment process.





## Engagement activities

In our second year, we explored and refined different ways of working to help us speak to more people and have the most impact. We've continued to listen openly and consistently to your views at local, regional, and national levels through a rolling programme of engagement. This included our new Llais Local approach – listening to you in your local community to help us understand what matters most to you about health and social care.

Based on what we heard in our first year, we did targeted work in each region on the top 3 things raised by people in each area, we have highlighted 1 of each of the 3 projects in each region as an example on the following pages.

## Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan

- Getting care and treatment quickly when you need it
- Having a baby
- Living with Cancer

Our '[Living with Cancer](#)' report shared lots of positive feedback from people about their care experiences, as well as some things that could be better.

In response, Velindre Cancer Centre issued a letter of thanks and developed an Improvement Plan based on our findings.

This included improving communication, re-opening the on-site café, supporting more local access to blood tests, and helping people avoid falling through the gaps between hospital and GP care.



# Cwm Taf Morgannwg

- Being supported to stay healthy if you have a learning disability
- Healthcare provision in Cwm Taf Morgannwg Special Schools
- Food and drink in hospitals

Following concerns raised with us by members of the public regarding the Nursing in Special Schools Framework (2018), our Cwm Taf Morgannwg team looked into the issues, supported by research organisation ACCESS. Between April and July 2024, we spoke with 84 people in focus groups, a survey, and in-depth interviews to hear the voices of parents, carers, and school leaders.

We heard that Special Schools in the region have seen a reduction in onsite nursing since the School Nursing Framework came into effect. The provision was not meeting the needs of pupils with high levels of complex needs, and some pupils were spending less time in school.

We have made representations based on what we learned and are continuing to follow up on it.



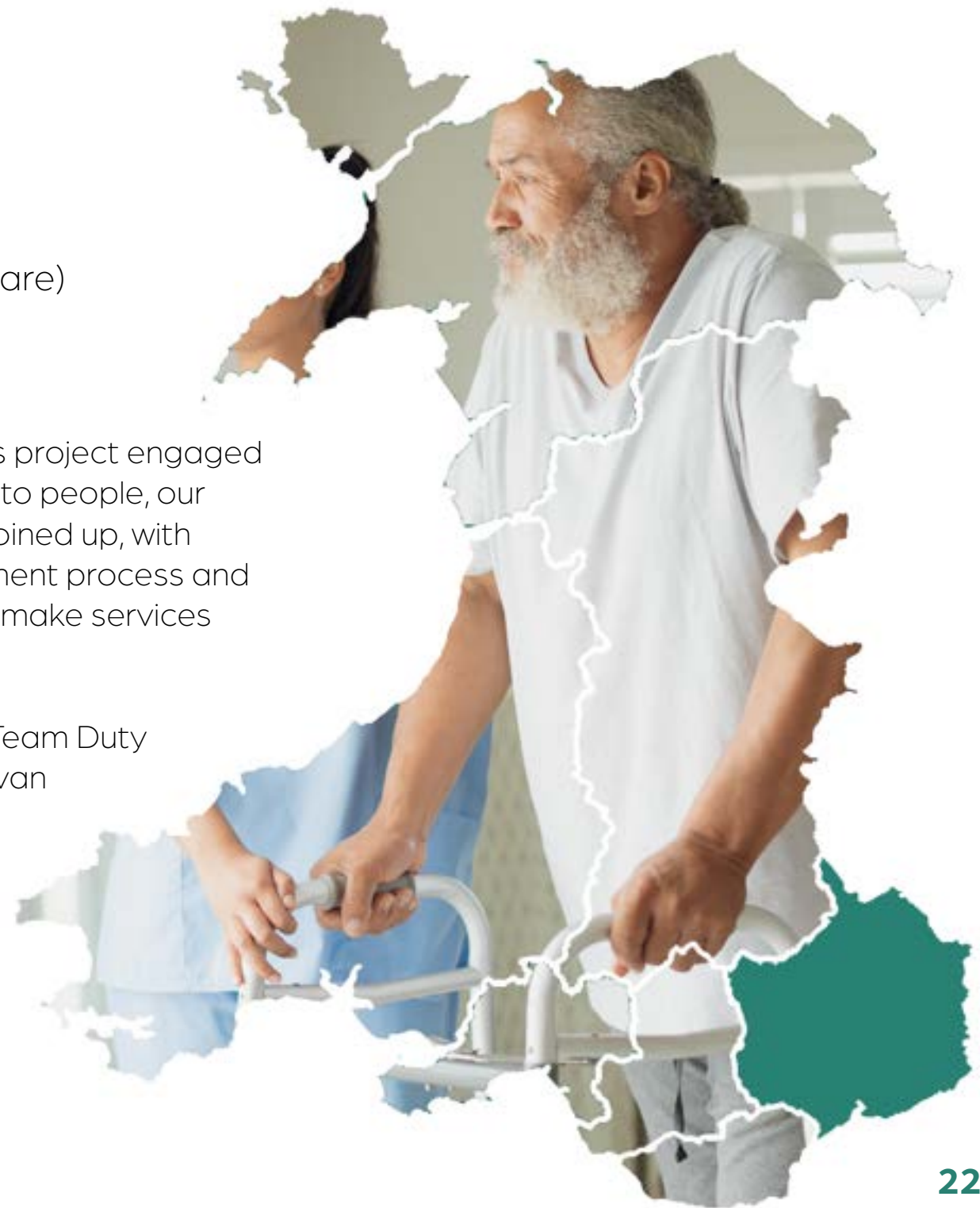
# Gwent

- Community services (health and social care)
- Getting care quickly when you need it
- Mental health services

In Gwent, our Navigating Mental Health Services project engaged with people in lots of different ways. By listening to people, our team identified a need for services to be more joined up, with clearer pathways, a standardised initial assessment process and the use of an electronic booking system to help make services work better for everyone.

We worked with the Community Mental Health Team Duty Desk (CMHT) in Blaenau Gwent and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board Mental Health and Learning Disabilities (MHLD) Q-Innovation Hive to do this. Voices of Gwent –

[Navigating Mental Health Services 2024/2025](#)



# Neath Port Talbot and Swansea

- Ethnic minority communities living with dementia
- Having a baby
- Young people's mental health

Our all-Wales Insights and Engagement Team supported our Neath Port Talbot & Swansea regional team to hear from over 500 people about their experiences of maternity and neonatal services. The stories we heard revealed both compassionate care and areas of deep concern.

We shared what we heard in a [major report](#), contributing to an Independent Review of maternity and neonatal services provided by Swansea Bay University Health Board and influencing local and national action.

Our report, discussed by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care in the Senedd, shows how people's lived experience can and must shape safer, more compassionate care.



## North Wales

- Helping to make mental health better
- Helping to make vascular services better
- The effect of 'Special Measures' on people and services

Our team worked alongside Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to support families affected by vascular service failures. At the launch of a report about the impact of these service failures, we helped ensure people's voices were heard, providing advice, signposting, and access to our complaints advocacy service. The Health Board recognised our role as a key driver for supporting the improvements being made in vascular care.



# Powys

- Care and support closer to home
- Getting good care wherever you live in Powys
- Supporting carers

Through engagement events in partnership with Age Cymru, surveys, and conversations with carers, we gathered valuable insights into the daily experiences and challenges faced by those providing unpaid care.

We heard about challenges accessing health and social care services for carers and their cared for person, lack of access to transport and respite, and the impact of caring on finances and physical and mental health.

We are continuing to work with Credu and other organisations to learn more about carer experiences and have shared our findings to date with the Health Board and Local Authority.

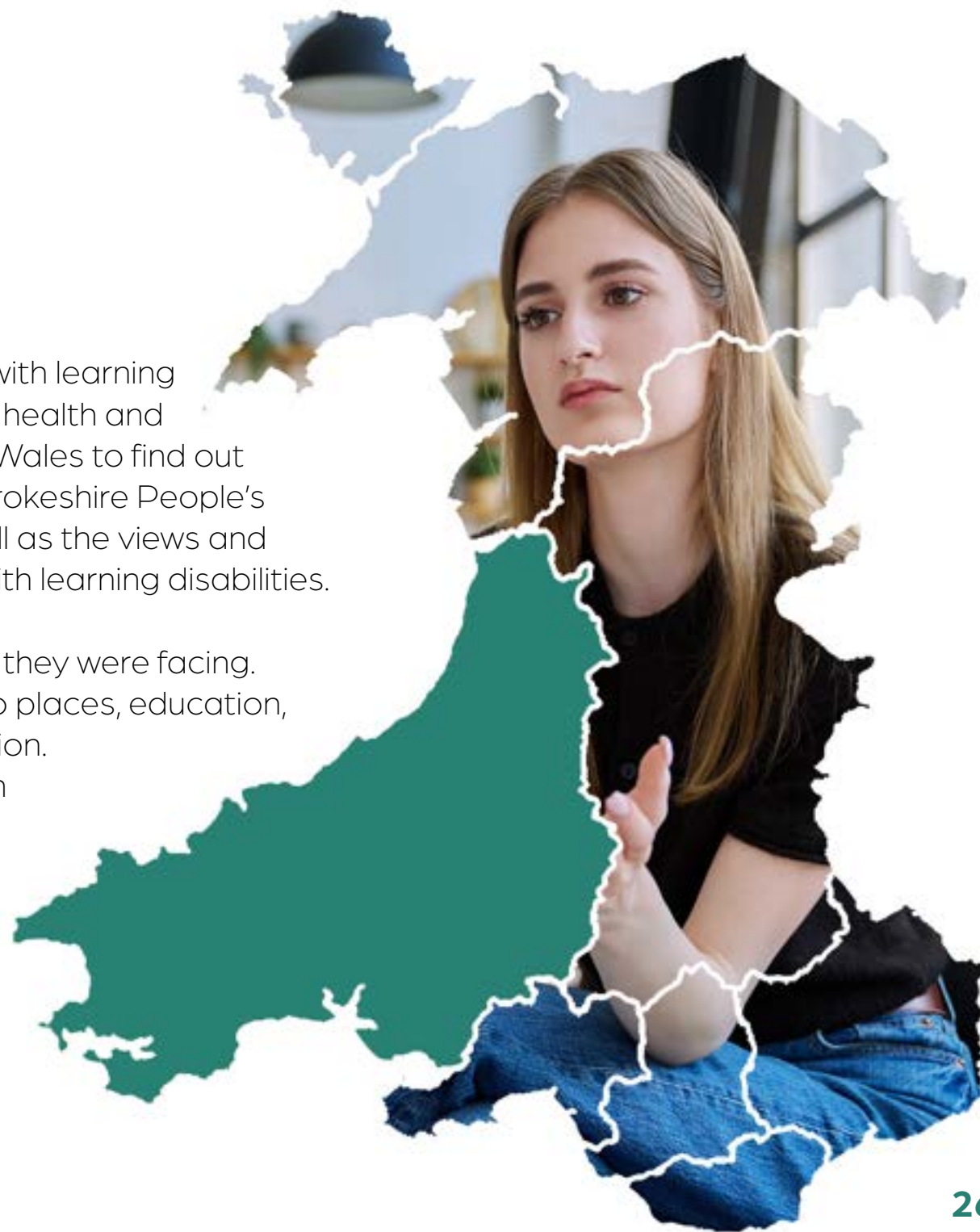


## West Wales

- Being supported waiting for treatment
- Learning difficulties
- Young people's mental health

We know that we don't often hear from people with learning disabilities about their views and experiences of health and social care. So, we developed a project in West Wales to find out their views and experiences, working with Pembrokeshire People's First, Mencap, Learning Disabilities Wales, as well as the views and experiences of some parents/carers of adults with learning disabilities.

We heard from over 60 people about the issues they were facing. This included challenges in getting support to go places, education, residential care, using services and communication. We recently presented our findings to the Health Board and Pembrokeshire Learning Disabilities Partnership Board. They meet 6 times a year and have agreed to dedicate one meeting annually to Llais so that they can share experiences to drive action.



## Llais Local activity across Wales

With our new Llais Local approach our teams across Wales visited a range of local towns and neighbourhoods to hear what's important to people living there. We visited each region in Wales at least 3 times this year; working with local groups, clubs, charities, and health and social care services to make it easy for people to tell us what they thought.

**725**

We have carried out 725 (39.96% more than last year), community engagement activities across all regions in the past year.

This included hosting events and workshops, attending partner events, networks and forums, profile raising activities, information sharing and general promotion of Llais.

**477**

477 of our community engagement activities related to both health and social care (208 more than last year). 208 related to health (22 more than last year) and 38 related to social care (2 more than last year).

We have been part of lots of regional and national events. This included events like the Royal Welsh Show, Pride Cymru, National Eisteddfod, The Minority Ethnic Communities (MEC) Health Fair 2024, Royal College of Midwifery St David's Day Conference, Autistic Minds Live Show, Rural Health and Care Conference and One Voice Wales Conference. These activities gave us the opportunity to engage with up to 400,000 visitors.



## Engagement impact #1



Over the past year Llais had been hearing a lot about the challenges facing people needing emergency healthcare in Wales.

Starting in late September 2024, over the course of 5 weeks, Llais' teams across Wales visited the Emergency Departments, Minor Injury Units and Medical Assessment Units in their local areas.

We undertook 42 visits, ran an online survey, and held focus groups, offering different ways for people to share their experiences in ways that suited them. During this 5-week period we heard directly from over 700 people about their experience of emergency healthcare.

We reported what we heard to make sure people's experiences played a key part in a national conversation that challenged policymakers and service providers to drive urgent improvements.

Read our [Position Statement](#) and [Full Report](#)

## Engagement impact #2

In November 2024, Llais called for urgent action to ensure fair access to dentistry for all following what we were hearing in our engagement activities at public events and through a survey and individual interviews.

One-third of people we heard from across all our activities were unable to find a dentist or were stuck on lengthy waiting lists. Children, older adults, disabled people, and low-income families faced the most challenges getting essential dental services.

We called for greater promotion by Welsh Government and Health Boards of the Welsh Dental Access Portal, which went live during the last year to make sure that people knew about the portal, as it can provide helpful information about how to get dental care in their area.

We called for more to be done to help people understand how dental services are developing, what this will mean for their care, and provide clear advice and information for patients on how to take care of their teeth.

And we called for more targeted research to better understand and take action to remove barriers where some people, like those with disabilities, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, older people, and people with less money, find it harder to get dental care.

Our continued involvement in discussions around dental reform is helping us to make sure plans to change the way dental services are provided in Wales respond to the issues people have raised with us. [Our position on access to dentistry in Wales.](#)





## On-site health and social care engagement

Our staff and volunteers have been out and about visiting you wherever you're receiving your health or social care service to listen to your experiences. These visits give you an opportunity to talk about services you are receiving or accessing, to enable us to respond quickly to emerging issues and concerns and we can seek to drive action quickly. They also give you the opportunity to talk and share your views, which otherwise we might not be able to hear.

This year we have made 190 on-site visits:

157 to healthcare premises (101 more than last year), 21 to social care premises (16 more than last year) and 12 to premises that cover both health and social care (2 more than last year).

# Representing Llais and representations

## Representing Llais

We have represented Llais at 412 meetings in the last year.

## Representations

Over the past year, we have listened to your views and shared them with decision-makers to help drive meaningful change. Our goal in doing this is to support the co-design of health and social care services by getting your voice heard where it matters most.

We have tracked 645 representations made to NHS bodies, local authorities, and their partners – including regional partnership boards – about how health and social care services are delivered.



**490**

Health related  
representations

**57**

Social care related  
representations

**98**

Both health and  
social care related  
representations

**588**

Made to Health  
Boards

**172**

Made to Local  
Authorities



Most of the representations were made by email, with formal meetings being the second most frequent method of communication. The next most frequent method was by letters.

Most of our representations were made to health boards (588) with just over a quarter made to local authorities (172) and the remainder made to a mix of private practices and health-related organisations.

The total number of representations made does not tally with the number of organisations they were made to, as some representations were made to several bodies at the same time.

We have continued to work on improving how we record and track our representations so that we can check on what has happened as a result and let people know the difference it's made.

## Representation impact #1

Our Cwm Taf Morgannwg team met with the Wales Council for Deaf People when they learnt about the planned withdrawal of a domiciliary care service currently providing care to 45 people across 11 Local Authorities through British Sign Language. Most of those people affected also have other communication challenges, including learning disabilities and dementia.

Llais wrote to Directors of Social Services in Powys, Gwent, Cardiff, and Neath Port Talbot and Swansea regions to find out what support they will give to those affected by the change.

They agreed the following:

- The provider will maintain support until a long-term solution is found.
- Local Authorities are now increasing engagement with staff and those accessing the service.
- Llais are now hearing from people via our complaint's advocacy service on communication barriers in accessing care and support.

Thanks to the [Wales Council for Deaf People](#) for their important contribution.



## Representation impact #2

In West Wales, we made a representation to Hywel Dda University Health Board after speaking to people experiencing homelessness about their experiences of health and social care.

We heard about the challenges people faced trying to communicate with NHS services.

Someone experiencing homelessness with speech impediments found it difficult to phone to get or cancel appointments and said they would be accused of not attending. Often, there was an assumption that they were drunk, or they would be told to ring back when less agitated.

A letter of representation was sent to the Health Board to identify what kind of training was provided for staff to help people with communication difficulties feel heard and listened to.

As a result, Hywel Dda set up a working group across a range of staffing groups, to improve the experiences of people with specific communication needs. We continue to be involved in this work. Llais also arranged training for our own organisation, with over 80 staff attending a session run by [STAMMA](#), a charity for people with speech differences.



## Representation impact #3

Llais Cardiff and the Vale published a well-received 'Living with Cancer' report in April 2024. The report highlighted what people had told us was and wasn't working well during their cancer care, and was accompanied by representations that would improve people's experiences. Velindre Cancer Centre issued a letter of thanks, along with an Improvement Plan to address some of the issues highlighted in the report.

The actions set out in the Improvement Plan covered areas of real importance to people receiving cancer care:

- Re-opening the cafe
- Improving communications
- Helping people have blood tests closer to home
- Ensuring people didn't get lost in the gap between the hospital and the GP surgery

Many of these issues have now been addressed, meaning a better experience for people during their cancer care.



# Service change

Llais often gets involved when the NHS or local councils want to change how health or social care services are run. This could be called a reorganisation, redesign, improvement, or something similar.

When changes are planned, the NHS and councils must involve people from the start to understand what they need now and in the future.

Our role is to help make sure they listen to the views of people who may be affected and that they take those views seriously.

We also share what we hear with decision-makers when they're asking for public views, whether that's through consultations or inquiries about health and social care in Wales.

Across Wales we were involved in 484 consultations this year (341 more than last year).



## Service change impact #1

We have continued to be involved in proposals to change the way the Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transfer Service (EMRTS) operates.

Many people remain worried that changes to the service they value so highly might make things worse in their area, particularly rural areas.

That is why we have been talking to the people responsible for the service, sharing what the public has said, and urging them to listen and respond.



## Service change impact #2



The local community were very worried when the GP practice in St David's was set to close and the solution offered was Solva Surgery.

They raised a number of concerns, including:

- Accessibility issues such as transport and parking
- Capacity of Solva Surgery to handle increased patient numbers
- Impact on an ageing and growing population in St David's
- Continuity of care and prescription convenience
- Specific individual impacts, such as difficulties for those with chronic conditions or those needing to carry medical equipment

Llais highlighted the need for the Health Board to consider the growing fragility and unmet health needs within the community as part of a broader strategic approach.

We made representations to the Health Board to:

- Communicate how Solva Surgery would handle the increased patient load
- Ensure receiving practices provide a warm welcome and clear information to new patients
- Offer open day events for patients with learning disabilities to familiarise themselves with new practices
- Keep patient experience under review as new experiences were established

The Health Board has acted on this, and we are continuing to keep in touch with both them and the community to hear how things are going.

# Consultations and calls for evidence

As part of our statutory role, we contribute to national consultations and calls for evidence to ensure that people's voices influence how health and social care services are developed, delivered, and improved.

Our contributions take different forms depending on the context, including formal written submissions, oral evidence, and informal feedback directly to policymakers or regulatory bodies. We prioritise consultations where the outcome is likely to impact the quality, accessibility, or equity of services across Wales and where we have insights from what people and communities have told us.

In 2024/2025, we contributed to over 20 national consultations and calls for evidence. These covered a broad range of topics including mental health strategy, inspection regulations, digital inclusion, social care workforce standards, hospital discharge, and Putting Things Right reform.

We are now starting to see the impact of this work, with many of the issues we raise reflected in emerging strategies, policies, and plans.

All our consultation responses can be found on our [website](#).





## Things we still need to work on...

We have made good progress building links with social care providers and organisations, hearing from more people (including carers), and visiting more services to speak with staff and people who use those services.

We still have more to do to better understand how we can make the biggest difference for people in social care in Wales.

In the year ahead, we also want to do more to hear from children and young people, and to make sure we're better representing the voices of Wales's diverse communities.

We'll also continue with our organisational development work so that the way we carry out our work helps us make the biggest impact for people and communities in all parts of Wales.

## Our complaints advocacy service

Our trained, dedicated complaints advocacy staff provide free, independent, and confidential support tailored to support the needs of individual clients. Our service is designed to empower people, to help achieve outcomes for individuals as well as support wider systemic learning.

Between the 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, 3,584 people contacted Llais' complaints advocacy service.

**1,724** Our teams resolved 1,724 of those enquiries without them escalating to formal complaints.

**1,860** We have raised 1,860 concerns on behalf of people from across Wales, with another 38 in the pipeline at the end of the year.

Most of those concerns related to healthcare (1,266), with 594 relating to social care.

We have resolved 1,160 of those concerns, 696 are ongoing and 4 were cancelled by the client.



## Regional breakdown

North Wales was the region with the highest number of concerns raised, followed by Gwent and Cwm Taf Morgannwg.

The concerns raised reflect significant challenges in the provision of healthcare and social care services across Wales.

The cases our complaints advocacy teams support are often complex, sometimes involving multiple service providers.

Below is an overview of the most common concerns raised by people about their healthcare and social care services.



**167**

Cardiff & The  
Vale of  
Glamorgan

**164**

Cwm Taf  
Morgannwg

**350**

Gwent

**297**

Neath Port  
Talbot &  
Swansea

**376**

North Wales

**184**

Powys

**322**

West Wales

# Healthcare concerns

## Inability to access services

People have expressed frustration over difficulties in accessing healthcare services, particularly GP appointments and specialist referrals.

Common issues include long waiting times, particularly for orthopaedics and ophthalmology, lack of available appointments, service refusals and difficulties accessing healthcare across regions or borders.

## Medical treatment and diagnosis concerns

Complaints regarding the quality and appropriateness of treatment received are frequently reported. Concerns often relate to misdiagnoses of conditions such as cancer or stroke, errors in medical care, surgical complications, inadequate follow-up care, and ineffective communication between healthcare providers. All have led to worsened outcomes for the people involved.

Others have highlighted unsafe practices: faulty equipment, unsafe procedures, and a lack of infection control.



## Lack of communication between service providers, individuals, and healthcare teams

People have raised concerns about poor communication between healthcare providers and individuals in a variety of settings, including lack of clear explanations regarding treatment options, failure to provide timely updates, and difficulties in reaching medical professionals.

Concerns have also been raised about communication between healthcare teams leading to errors or delays in care.

## Unacceptable standards of care

Concerns have been raised about inconsistent levels of care in different healthcare settings. Reports indicate issues such as poor hygiene standards, inadequate staffing levels, and insufficient resources affecting patient care.

People have complained of a lack of compassion in the care they received due to unprofessional or uncaring behaviour from healthcare providers.

## Unsafe hospital discharges

Concerns raised about unsafe discharges, with premature discharge of patients without proper assessment or care, or lack of proper follow-up care, leading to deterioration in health.



## Emergency care

Emergency care complaints primarily highlight treatment delays, misdiagnoses, poor communication, and patient safety concerns. Many patients experience long waits for assessments and treatment, leading to worsened conditions.

Misdiagnoses and medication errors have resulted in avoidable harm. Issues with ambulance delays, unsafe discharges, and poor coordination of care.

## Maternity services that aren't delivering

Concerns related to delays and stress caused due to changes or disruptions in maternity care. Some complaints related to inadequate postpartum care after pregnancy, including mismanaged pain or complications.

## Patient safety being compromised

Complaints were in relation to unsafe ward conditions leading to neglect or lack of attention, including patient falls and lack of proper post-incident assessments. Medical administration errors have also been raised as concerns, including patients receiving incorrect drugs or incorrect procedures performed.





## **Barriers to raising concerns**

Many concerns highlighted dissatisfaction with the handling of complaints and administrative processes, with some citing lack of support for people seeking help with complaints, or inadequate responses when attempting to resolve complaints.

Recurring themes include delays in responses to inquiries, difficulty obtaining medical records or clear care information, lack of transparency in decision-making, and difficulty in navigating healthcare complaints systems.

## **Negative psychological impact of poor care**

Concerns were raised about distress caused by poor care, delays, misdiagnoses, or mistreatment, for both patients and their families.

# Social care concerns

## Care homes and end-of-life care

A number of complaints relate to care provided in nursing homes, both regarding the quality of care and end-of-life support. Concerns include mistreatment of patients, lack of proper assessments, and negligence in handling medication or care plans.

Mismanagement of death certificates and post-death care have also been raised by some.

## Discriminatory treatment by social service providers

Some complaints mention clients feeling bullied or discriminated against by social services, including claims of being forced into decisions regarding child protection or having their needs misrepresented in reports.

## Communication failures and lack of joined up services

Many complaints relate to poor communication between healthcare providers, social services, and families. There is frequent mention of a lack of follow-up, miscommunication about care plans, or failure to respond to inquiries.



## **Social Services workforce**

Several complaints related to how social workers are handling cases involving children, particularly around child protection, foster care, and the needs of children with special needs. Complaints ranged from delayed or inadequate responses to complaints about the behaviour and decisions of social workers.

Other complaints included inconsistent access to social workers and issues related to the continuity of care and the availability of social work professionals, including insufficient support for vulnerable individuals, such as those with disabilities or complex needs.

## **Lack of adequate support for people with mental health issues**

Complaints were also about social services not providing sufficient support for individuals with mental health issues.

Long waiting times for mental health assessments and support, long waiting lists for treatment and poor communication from health and social care providers.

Many complaints have been about mental health services not responding quickly or adequately to severe mental health conditions, including suicide attempts, self-harm, and crisis situations.

A number of these complaints related to children and young people's mental health services.

## **Psychological impact of inadequate care provision**

Several complaints highlighted the emotional strain on families trying to secure adequate care for their loved ones.

# Communication and promotion of our services

We launched our [Communications Strategy 2024/2027](#) at the beginning of the year.

It set out how we want our communication to be purposeful, relevant, timely, informative, engaging, and impactful. We want to amplify the voices of the people of Wales in how we communicate what we do.

We want to make sure the way we communicate is trauma informed. This means being thoughtful, kind, and respectful in how we speak and listen. We know that people's past experiences can affect how they feel, what they say, and how they respond, especially when talking about difficult things.

So, we aim to create a space where people feel safe, supported, and never judged. We remain focused on helping the public understand our role, our aims, and how to engage with us. This year we delivered several campaigns, for example:

- We worked with partners to develop Volunteer your Voice, a campaign aiming to encourage more people to volunteer with Llais. Special focus was placed on reaching underrepresented groups to promote Llais' volunteer opportunities, in line with the communication needs identified in Our Plans and Priorities October 2023 – March 2024.
- The Discover Llais campaign ran in autumn 2024. This was a multi-media campaign aimed at increasing awareness of Llais across the country.



This year we launched both our internal and external newsletters.

## **Y Gair**

Our internal monthly newsletter is shared with teams across the organisation to help with keeping everyone up to date with the latest developments in Llais. It provides an opportunity for peer learning and is helping to foster a stronger sense of community in our young organisation.

## **Impact**

We know how important it is that we tell you what is happening with what you have told us, and our newsletter aims to do just that; sharing the impact of the work we are doing to hear your voices, represent them to decision makers and advocate for you and your families.

Launched in August 2024, the monthly newsletter highlights the impact of our work across Llais, the work we are doing to really understand what's happening on an all-Wales basis, and the initiatives our teams are launching to look in more depth at emerging issues happening locally.

To date, our newsletter has had 15,617 opens across 8 editions. The communications team has also produced accessible materials in a variety of formats including bilingual, Easy Read, and British Sign Language to support our activities.

We have published leaflets, videos, posters, infographics, radio adverts, and online and in print newspaper articles.





## Our website

Our website ([www.llaiswales.org](http://www.llaiswales.org)) continues to play a central role in how we communicate, offering key information and serving as a main way for people to connect with us. Because of its importance, we have focused on improving its design, content, and accessibility to better serve our diverse audience.

We are now able to track our website traffic to better understand how visitors use the site and where we can make further improvements. For example:

- Our website has been visited more than 19,000 times in the past year
- 4,844 report downloads from our website (including policies and procedures)

On average, people stay on our site for around 5 minutes. We want to keep making our website better, more interesting, and easier to use. It's also an important way for people to reach us. We will keep improving the site and tracking how it's used, so it stays useful for everyone and helps us stay connected.

## Our social media

We have continued to build our social media presence as it plays an important role in raising awareness of Llais and helping people understand what we do. Social media is important for broadening our reach, helping us to engage directly with individuals and communities, and sharing information quickly.

We now have 2,469 followers on our social media platforms.

LinkedIn gives us the most engagement and is a great way to connect with professionals and organisations. When we engage with people there, they often share our messages, helping us reach more people. That makes LinkedIn an important tool for promoting what we do.

Facebook gives us the greatest reach, partly because each of our 7 regional teams run their own page. This local approach helps us share region-specific updates and stay closely connected to communities across Wales.

Our average engagement rate across all platforms is 6.76%. Instagram has been particularly effective in helping us reach younger audiences with visual content. We plan to build on this by creating more dynamic content on Instagram over the coming year, supporting our children and young people's programme. We have also started exploring TikTok and YouTube to expand our reach and connect with different audiences in new and creative ways.

As we grow our social media presence in line with our communications strategy, we'll continue to focus on using these platforms to connect with communities, share useful information, and invite people to get involved in our work. This will help us stay visible, relevant, and in touch with what our communities need.



## Media activity

This year we have worked to develop relationships with the media in Wales. This approach has helped more people learn about Llais and what we do. By sharing clear, relevant information at the right time and working together on our messages, we're steadily becoming more visible and heard in public conversations.

We have been involved in high-profile media discussions about important health and social care issues, like the proposals to change the way the Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transfer Service is run, the dental crisis in Wales and calls for urgent action on emergency care.

We have shared our views in the media on issues like emergency care, Swansea Bay maternity services, the changes to NHS complaints handling, and problems at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. By speaking out on these important matters, Llais is becoming recognised as a knowledgeable and trusted voice.

From April 2024 to March 2025, Llais was mentioned in at least 186 news stories. This coverage included 127 online articles, 56 in print, and a range of broadcast features.

# Our commitment to the Welsh language

We are dedicated to promoting and supporting the Welsh language in everything we do. Our Compliance Notice came into effect on 1 April 2024.

We will publish a separate Welsh Language Standards Annual Report by September 2025. This will cover what we've done to promote the Welsh language and meet the requirements set out in our Compliance Notice.

Here are some of the things that we have done over the last year to work towards achieving consistent compliance across our organisation:

- Developed a Welsh Language Standards Action Plan
- Upgraded our telephony services so that we can check how many calls we received in Welsh
- Issued further guidance to our staff on translation services, with clear processes and timelines
- Ensured the Welsh language is embedded into our Integrated Impact Assessment approach
- Worked with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office to understand how we can meet the standards, so we can fairly represent people's voices in both Welsh and English, especially considering people's different backgrounds, cultures, and contexts
- Identified the impacts of our work on the Welsh language through our Integrated Impact Assessments in a comprehensive and intersectional way that considers our duties to the Welsh Language alongside our wider duties and responsibilities e.g., Equality Act 2010, Public Sector Equality Duty etc
- Built on our Welsh language intranet to make it more interactive and accessible
- Created a short video to raise awareness of the importance of 'Welsh language first-thinking' in our organisation
- Celebrated key events in the Welsh Awareness calendar including Shwmae Day, Eisteddfod, Defnyddia dy Gymraeg (Use your Welsh).



## Digital initiatives and improvements

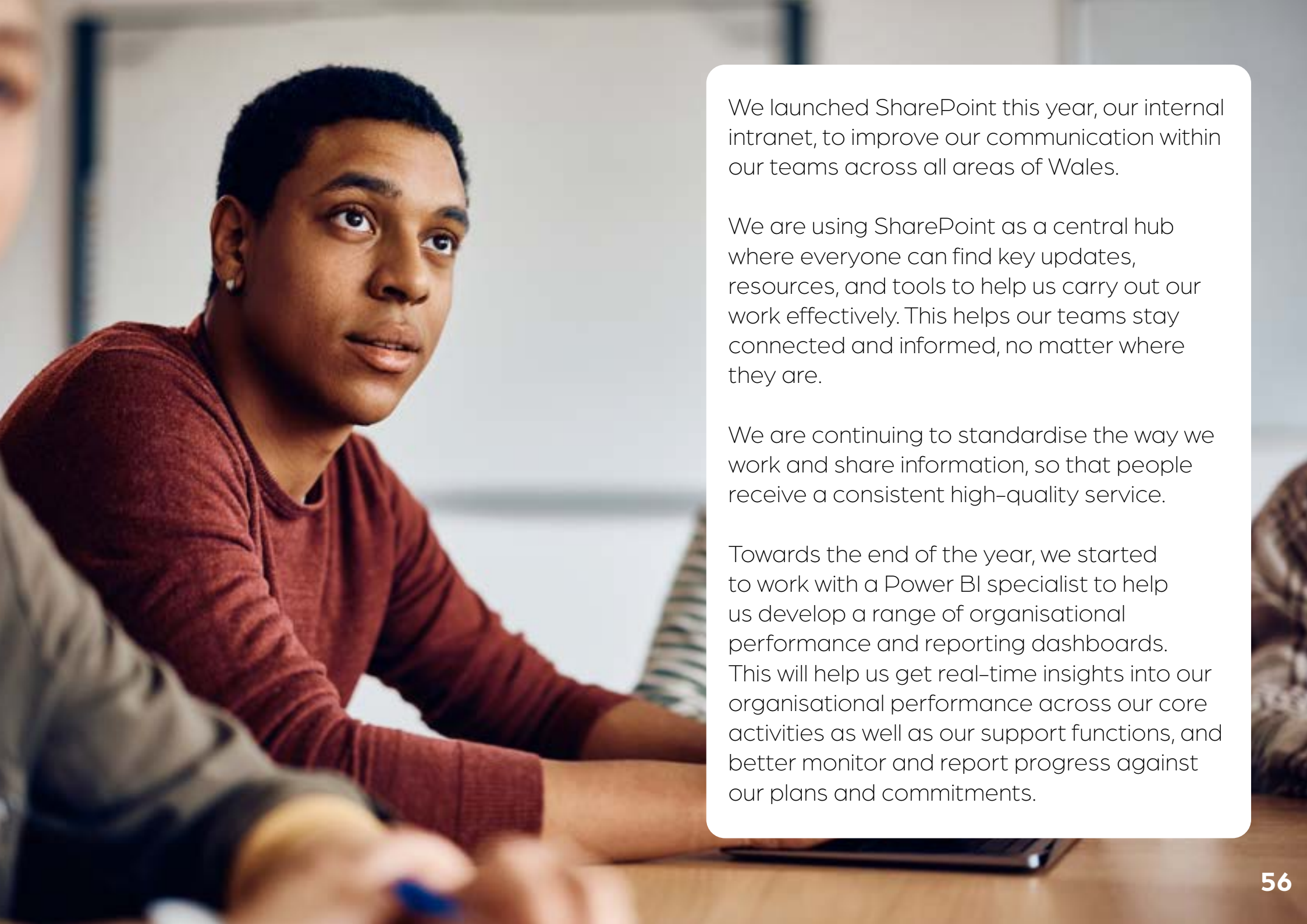
This year we continued to develop our new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and hired a full time CRM Manager to oversee continuing developments.

Our CRM Manager has worked with teams across the organisation gathering requirements, providing training, and creating super user groups to test and resolve the ways in which we use the system and improve data quality. This system is beginning to bring all our functions together, making it easier for us to manage data, track our impact, and identify trends in health and social care.

We are already seeing some improvements, especially in areas like our complaints advocacy service. This is making our work increasingly joined up and better run, and it helps the people we support by making our services quicker and more efficient.

We're continuing to develop our system and how it's used so it's easier for our people and better at capturing data. This will help us understand issues more quickly, respond faster, and improve the experience for the people we support.

As it continues to develop, the system will reduce reliance on manual work and make our processes more efficient.



We launched SharePoint this year, our internal intranet, to improve our communication within our teams across all areas of Wales.

We are using SharePoint as a central hub where everyone can find key updates, resources, and tools to help us carry out our work effectively. This helps our teams stay connected and informed, no matter where they are.

We are continuing to standardise the way we work and share information, so that people receive a consistent high-quality service.

Towards the end of the year, we started to work with a Power BI specialist to help us develop a range of organisational performance and reporting dashboards. This will help us get real-time insights into our organisational performance across our core activities as well as our support functions, and better monitor and report progress against our plans and commitments.

# Sustainability

Our organisation aims to be easily accessible to people.

Some of our teams moved offices this year to sites that are more accessible for both our people and the public, as well as to save money. This is helping us make our services easier to access and better for the environment.

We're committed to cutting the environmental, financial, and social impact of our work. To help with this, we're following wider public sector efforts, like the NHS Shared Services Partnership Sustainable Procurement policies.

Whilst we're not required to join the Welsh Government's Net Zero Scheme, we've chosen to take part from 2025/2026. We had hoped to start this year, but this has been delayed because of capacity challenges in our corporate team. We plan to begin reporting our progress by September 2026.

This year, we've reinforced our key policies, like travel and agile working, to support greener and more cost-effective ways of working. We encourage our people to choose travel options that are both economical and better for the environment.

Our communications and engagement teams in the last year have also reviewed our promotional items use, including printed materials. We have developed new materials that mean less printing and reducing our environmental impact.

By making sustainability part of our everyday work and taking part in wider efforts, we're helping to protect the environment while keeping our services accessible and effective for people across Wales.

# Our future plans and strategic priorities

## Strategic goals for 2025/2026

Moving into the second year of our strategic plan, we will continue to focus on our overarching priorities and objectives:

### **1. Drive a national conversation about the future of health and social care services**

We will involve people from all over Wales in discussions about the future of health and social care. By making sure policymakers and service providers listen to public feedback, we can help shape a system that better serves everyone.

### **2. Push for services that meet everyone's needs**

We are committed to ensuring that health and social care services are not only effective but also inclusive and accessible. We will focus on making sure these services are designed with the needs of all groups in mind.

### **3. Working together better**

We will work to build stronger partnerships across different sectors, making sure health and social care services try to work together more smoothly and effectively to improve how services are delivered.

### **4. Help people and services to use technology in ways that work for them**

We want to help people and services talk to each other so everyone feels okay about new tools and technologies, everyone can use them if they want to, and no one feels left behind.

### **5. Grow and improve as an organisation**

This includes adopting new IT systems, improving our communication strategies, and fostering a workplace that values continuous learning and development.

# Upcoming projects and initiatives

As well as our everyday work, we will focus on a range of activities that help support our 5 strategic aims. They respond to the things we hear about what matters most to people and communities across Wales about their health and social care services. In 2025/2026, these are:

## 1. Drive a national conversation about the future of health and social care services

### Activities in progress that will continue into 2025/2026

**Position statements and action groups:** we publish our position on issues we know about, such as emergency care, dentistry, issues facing unpaid carers, or waiting times for neurodevelopmental assessments. We will make representations and prompt services to act by bringing together decision-makers to explore the issues, spread what's working well and drive improvement where things need to get better.

**'Walking in your Shoes' collaboration with the Bevan Commission:** building on our joint work around the Silly Rules campaign, we will find other ways to combine people's real-world experiences with practical problem-solving to create meaningful service improvements.



## Activities that are new for 2025/2026

### Our all-Wales engagement projects

#### Exploring rights, expectations, and responsibilities in health and social care

We will work across Wales to raise awareness and build understanding of people's rights in health and social care, explore what people want and expect from their services moving forward and understand what people need to use services responsibly. We will use what we find out to highlight any gaps and push for changes wherever this is needed.

#### Getting care and support through Integrated community care hubs

This project will explore how people experience care within the Integrated Community Care System (ICCS), focusing on how well local hubs and joined-up services work for people and communities across Wales. It will examine how people move through the system, looking at what helps or hinders access to care – whether that's travel, digital options, or the availability of local services.

#### Voices for change event

We will bring together health and social care decision-makers, front line staff, representative and improvement organisations, and community groups to listen to and discuss real-life experiences of health and social care.



## 2. Push for services that meet everyone's needs

### Activities in progress that will continue into 2025/2026

#### Navigating the new NHS complaints process

We will continue working with the Welsh Government and NHS bodies to help shape the new arrangements, and when the changes are made, we will adapt how we support people to make things easier.

#### Embedding anti-racism in our work

We will work with ethnic minority-led organisations, NHS, and social care services to help make sure diverse voices shape policy and service improvements, tackling race-related inequalities in health and care. We will continue to make changes within our organisation to embed anti-racism principles in everything we do.

#### Social care voices

Social care services are often less visible than health services, but they matter just as much. We'll create more ways to hear from people who need social care services so we can share their experiences with decision-makers and push for changes, where needed.





## Projects or initiatives that are new for 2025/2026

### Learning from complaints to improve services

Working with regulators, inspectorates, advocacy services and complaint-handling bodies, we will bring a strong focus on learning from complaints to drive change in all parts of the health and social care system – so people's experience make a real difference by making things better for everyone.

### Regional health and social care summits

We will bring together NHS bodies, local authorities, social care providers, third-sector organisations, and government representatives to tackle shared challenges and develop coordinated solutions that improve people's services.

### Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership Cymru

We will be the 'host agency' for the Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership Cymru. We will bring together the chairs from each of the local maternity and neonatal groups to share what's happening across Wales and take actions together to inform and influence our maternity services.

### 3. Working together better

#### Activities in progress that will continue into 2025/2026

##### Continuing to develop our Children and Young People's Programme

We will build and strengthen relationships with organisations working with children and young people to ensure their voices shape the services they rely on, making sure younger voices are heard on the things that matter most to them.

#### Activities that are new for 2025/2026

##### Playing our part in strengthening community engagement

We will deepen our engagement with community-based health and social care services and representative groups. This includes groups like carers' forums, GP patient participation groups and service user groups, to understand what's in place for you to have your say, what works and where change is needed.



## 4. Help people and services to use technology in ways that work for them

### Activities in progress that will continue into 2025/2026

#### Promoting digital inclusion

Continuing to be a part of the Digital Inclusion Alliance Wales and collaborating with partners like Digital Health and Care Wales and Social Care Wales, we will represent your views on how digital health and social care tools are developed with user needs in mind.

### Activities that are new for 2025/2026

#### Health and social care data transparency

We will act to help make sure that organisations make health and social care data more transparent so that people and communities can better understand how our services are performing and push for improvements wherever needed.

#### AI (artificial intelligence) and data use for improvements and engagement

We will find out more about data privacy and ethics. We will share what we hear from service users about using their data, and we'll play our part in involving communities in discussions about AI and new technologies in health and social care.



## 5. Grow and improve as an organisation

### Activities that are already in progress and will continue into 2025/2026

#### Strengthening our volunteer programme

Volunteers are at the heart of what we do. We'll grow and diversify our volunteer network, encouraging more young people, Welsh speakers, and those with lived experience to get involved. By improving learning, mentoring, and recognition, we'll work to make sure our volunteers feel supported and empowered to help shape real change.

#### Improving how we work

We'll continue to develop our ways of working, from reviewing our policies and processes to how we organise ourselves. This will help us be more efficient, work smarter, and focus on making the biggest impact possible.

#### Delivering our commitments to equity, diversity, and inclusion

We'll continue working with partners to deliver our Strategic Equality Plan, including our commitments in the Anti-Racist Action Plan for Wales, LGBTQ+, and disabled people plans.





## Activities that are new for 2025/2026

### Making sure we're in the right places

We'll introduce a new locations strategy to make sure we're organised in a way that works best for the people and communities we serve. This will support more accessible and effective community engagement and provide our complaints advocacy services in the best way possible.

### Building a supportive and inclusive culture

We want Llais to be a place where people feel valued, listened to, and able to make the biggest difference for all of us living in Wales.

Our cultural change plan will help us strengthen accountability, decision-making, and leadership. We'll champion collaboration, recognise positive contributions, and ensure Llais is an organisation where everyone feels empowered to drive change.

### We will enhance transparency and accessibility

By making it easier for people to engage in our decision making and strengthening how we communicate our decisions. We will hold more accessible Board meetings and share information in clearer, more engaging ways.

# Finance review

We fully utilised our baseline funding allocation of £7,727,000 from the Welsh Government. In addition to this amount, further funding was received for the following:

|                                    |                                               |                                               |                                         |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>£353,000</b>                    | <b>£72,000</b>                                | <b>£97,000</b>                                | <b>£220,000</b>                         |
| Notional 9.4% pension contribution | 4 offices moving to 3 public sector buildings | The Agenda for Change cost of living increase | A voluntary early release scheme (VERS) |

An estates review was carried out during 2024/2025. Following consultations with staff, 4 offices moved to 2 public sector buildings and one not-for profit education setting.

The Cardiff and Vale regional team and the National team co-located to the Crown Buildings at Cathays Park. Some of our West Wales team work from the Crown Buildings at Carmarthen, and some of our Powys teamwork from Brecon College.

All office moves were assessed using an integrated impact assessment so that we understood and responded to the opportunities and challenges relating to our proposed moves. All our moves helped us to be accessible in our local communities and met our wider business needs. All new offices are lower or equal in cost to the old offices.

In February 2025, our Board approved the launch of a Voluntary Early Release Scheme (VERs) for a limited period. Running the scheme enabled us to redesign a range of key staff roles to better align with the evolving needs of Llais as an independent, all Wales organisation.

The Welsh Government provided additional funding to support a cost-of-living pay increase for our staff. This is because we continue to operate the Agenda for Change terms and conditions for staff, following the transfer from Community Health Councils. The Agenda for Change pay award was 5.5%, which was 2.8% higher than the pay bill assumption recommended by the Welsh Government.



## Accountability

### Corporate governance report

#### Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities

As required by the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020, I, as Accounting Officer have prepared for each financial year, an annual report and statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Directions issued by HM Treasury and Welsh Ministers. I consider these documents fair, balanced, and understandable.

The accounts are prepared to give a true and fair view of the reported situation as at the year-end, and of the net expenditure, financial position, cash flows and changes in taxpayers' equity for the financial year then ended.

In preparing the accounts, I am required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular:

- observe the Accounts Directions, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts;
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis; and
- confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole, are fair, balanced, and understandable and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required to determine that it is fair, balanced, and understandable.

I have been appointed by the Director General, Health and Social Services Group, Welsh Government, as Accounting Officer of Llais with effect from 1 April 2023.

The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer include responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records, and for Llais' assets as set out in the memorandum – 'Managing Public Money' – published by HM Treasury, and 'Managing Welsh Public Money', published by the Welsh Government.

As the Accounting Officer, I have taken all steps that I should to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that Audit Wales' auditors are aware of this information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

**Alyson Thomas, Chief Executive, Accounting Officer, Llais**

**Date: 5th November 2025**



## Directors' report

### History and statutory background:

The Citizen Voice Body for Health and Social Care, Wales, known by its operating name Llais is a national, independent body set up by the Welsh Government to give the people of Wales a stronger voice in their health and social care services. Llais became fully operational on the 1 April 2023 and replaced former Community Health Councils across Wales, which ended when Llais was established under the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020.

### Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

The Chief Executive and Accounting Officer for the financial year 2024/2025 was Alyson Thomas.

### Chair of Llais

The Chair of Llais for the financial year 2024/2025 was Professor Medwin Hughes CBE DL.

Board members serving during 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 are outlined in the Board membership and attendance table on page 79.

## Our Board and committees

Our Chair and Board members are responsible for providing us with leadership and direction. Our Board comprises a Chair, Deputy Chair, 6 other non-executive members and the Chief Executive. All these positions can vote on Board decisions. Our Board also has 1 associate non-executive member appointed to represent the staff of Llais, who cannot vote.

Our Board works closely with the Chief Executive and our Executive Team and Senior Leadership Team, known as Tîm Arwain, to set our strategic direction through the approval of a 3-year strategic plan and annual plan. It also allocates our resources and monitors our performance.

Our work is scrutinised, guided, and approved by the Board and its committees in line with our standing orders, standing financial instructions and scheme of delegation.

During the last year, our Board has undertaken a comprehensive governance review. As a result, it has adopted updated standing orders, standing financial instructions and a new scheme of delegation, which also includes a schedule of matters reserved for Board decision only.





## Declarations of interest of Board members:

### Members' interests:

Details of company directorships and other significant interests held by members of the Board or close relatives which may conflict with their responsibilities are maintained and updated on a regular basis.

The document, which can be accessed in the link below, shows details of directorships of other organisations or other interests that have been declared by the members of the Board of Llais in line with our Standards of Business Conduct and Declarations of Interest Policy.

[Declarations of Interest 2024/2025](#)

Llais has also during the last year undertaken a range of additional work on declarations of interest to ensure all staff members, where possible, also make clear declarations of any potential conflicts of interest in relation to the work they do and/or the decisions they make on behalf of the organisation.

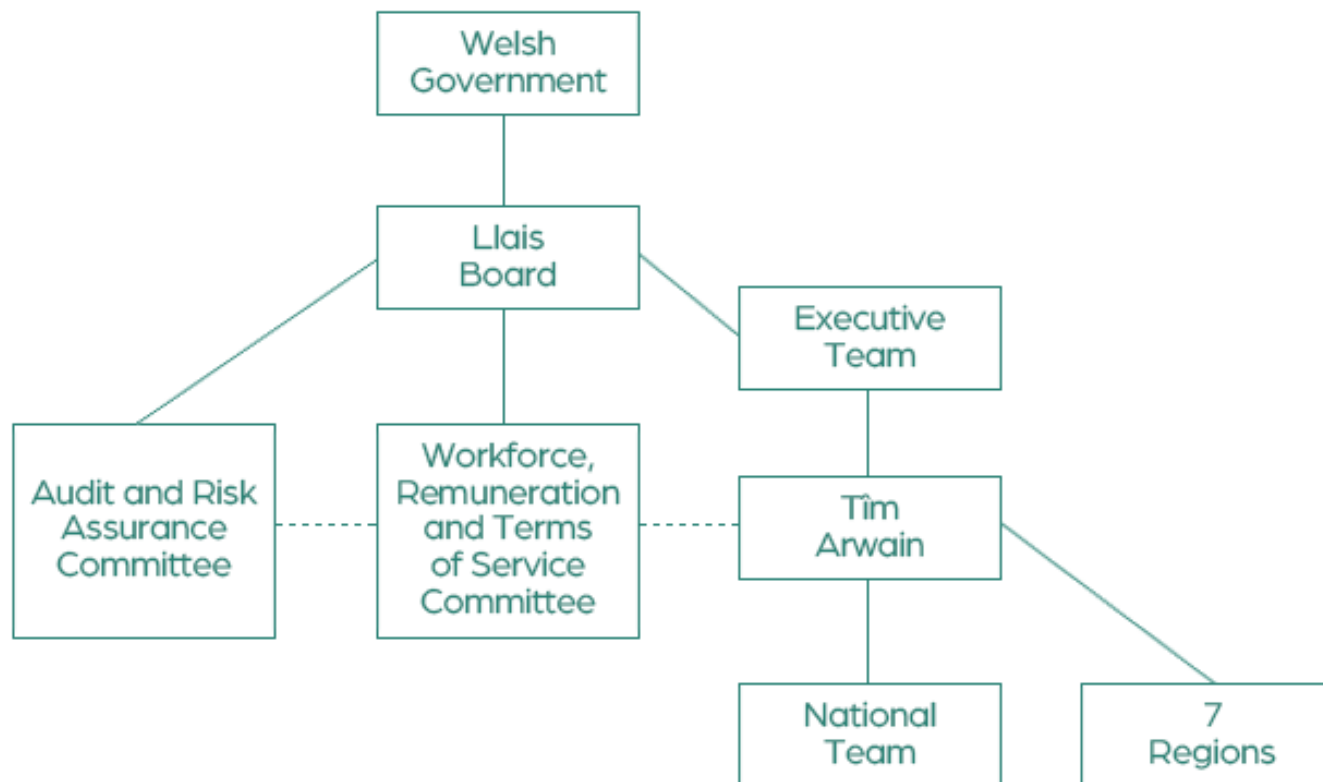


# Governance statement

This statement sets out our control structure and provides an account of corporate governance and risk management, alongside a description of our strategic risks. This governance statement sets out the ways in which we are governed and managed and how the Accounting Officer is accountable for how the organisation discharges its responsibilities.

## Our accountability, governance and assurance framework and structure:

We have a governance framework which guides and supports how we work. This is illustrated in the diagram below:



## Governance framework and processes:

In 2024/2025 we have built on our first full operational year. It is recognised that we are still a developing organisation. However, we have undertaken in the last year a comprehensive governance review to ensure that we are best placed as an organisation to fulfil our roles and responsibilities.

This includes having updated governance structures, documentation, and processes that are becoming embedded in the organisation. As an organisation we want to continuously improve and strengthen our governance arrangements.

Our Board has led a comprehensive governance review during 2024/2025. This responded to key development areas identified in a Board effectiveness review undertaken in February 2024, and a similar effectiveness review undertaken by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in March 2024.

The review confirmed that all the good governance fundamentals are in place, however further work has been undertaken to refresh and refine the organisation's framework of governance documentation and begin the processes of embedding them in the day-to-day working and decision making of Llais.



This review and development work has included a full review of Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions, Scheme of Delegation and Schedule of Matters Reserved for Board decision. This work has also included development of a Board Assurance Framework and a review of our risk management approach and the adoption of a new risk management strategy.

A review has also been completed of the committee framework. The terms of reference for each committee have been revised, which has resulted in the widening of the scope of 1 of our committees with a new Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee having been established to work alongside the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. Further work is required on cross committee assurance reporting as well as the routine reporting to the Board.

In addition to our public board meetings that took place in 2024/2025, the Board has also undertaken a programme of development and briefing sessions.

These have covered engagement with partner bodies, discussions with staff of the organisation on key strategic and business developments, preparedness for required organisational developments and requirements from Welsh Government, new legislation, and national consultations.



# Members' attendance at Board and Committees

## Committees of the Board:

The Board originally established 2 committees, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee. During the last year as part of the comprehensive governance review a reassessment was made of the committee framework.

This resulted in new terms of reference being agreed for the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the establishment of a new Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee with an expanded remit outlined in newly framed terms of reference.

These committees provide detailed scrutiny, insights, information, and advice to the Board. The committees comprise non-executive members of the Board and are supported and advised by officers and other internal and external advisers.

The Board has also appointed to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee 2 additional independent members to provide further input from the perspectives of particularly finance, cyber and information technology (IT).



## **Llais Board – roles and responsibilities include:**

- Makes decisions on those matters reserved for the Board and agrees the overall governance arrangements for the organisation.
- Demonstrates high standards of organisational governance – agreeing Standing Orders and other required governance documentation and committee terms of reference.
- Provides leadership and direction by setting our strategic direction, agreeing a 3-year strategic plan and associated annual plans.
- Scrutinises resources and performance – through finance and performance reports.
- Considers human resources, governance, policy, and employee engagement information.
- Considers information regarding the role of Llais in representing the interests of the people of Wales in health and social care and receives reports on our activities locally, regionally, and nationally in discharging these responsibilities.

## **Audit and Risk Assurance Committee roles and responsibilities**

Advises the Board on:

- the effectiveness and adequacy of the financial position and performance, risk management, internal control, and governance.
- the appropriateness, adequacy and integrity of the Annual Report and Accounts.
- the adequacy of management and organisational responses to issues that have been identified by internal audit, Audit Wales and the Counter Fraud Service relating to the corporate governance requirements for the Board and the organisation.

# Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee roles and responsibilities include:

Advises the Board on:

- Appropriate arrangements for our workforce and volunteers.
- Arrangements for promoting a healthy workplace and supporting the general health and wellbeing of the workforce of Llais.
- Workforce information and metrics and scrutinises reports on behalf of the Board on a range of key performance indicators.
- Llais's compliance with employment legislation and the framework of policies and procedures within the organisation.
- Organisational development and training opportunities.
- Matters relating to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Matters relating to the setting and review of the pay of the Chief Executive and, consideration and endorsement of any required recommendation for staff annual payments/uplifts in line with Agenda for Change, Llais policies and any additional national agreements.



## Board and Committee membership and attendance 2024/2025

| Name                                                                                    | Committee Membership                                                                         | Attendance at Board Meetings | Attendance at Committee(s) | Terms of Appointment          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Medwin Hughes,<br>Chair                                                                 | Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee However, can also attend all meetings | 5 of 6                       | 1 of 1                     | 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2026 |
| Alyson Thomas,<br>Chief Executive                                                       | None. However, is invited to attend committees                                               | 6 of 6                       | Attendance, as required    | Not applicable                |
| Grace Quantock<br>(Deputy Chair)                                                        | Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee (Committee Chair)                     | 5 of 6                       | 1 of 1                     | 6 June 2022 to 5 June 2026    |
| Bamidele Adenipekun<br>(Non Executive Member)                                           | Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee                                       | 6 of 6                       | 1 of 1                     | 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2026   |
| Jack Evershed<br>(Non Executive Member)                                                 | Audit and Risk Assurance Committee                                                           | 6 of 6                       | 4 of 4                     | 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2028   |
| Barbara Harrington<br>(Non-Executive Member)<br>Left the organisation on 1 January 2025 | Audit and Risk Assurance Committee                                                           | 3 of 4                       | 3 of 3                     | 1 July 2022 to 1 January 2025 |
| Karen Lewis<br>(Non Executive Member)                                                   | Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (Committee Chair)                                         | 6 of 6                       | 4 of 4                     | 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2026   |
| Dr Rajan Madhok<br>(Non Executive Member)                                               | Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee                                       | 6 of 6                       | 1 of 1                     | 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2026   |
| Jason Smith<br>(Non Executive Member)                                                   | Audit and Risk Assurance Committee                                                           | 6 of 6                       | 4 of 4                     | 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2028   |
| Mwoyo Makuto<br>(Associate Member)                                                      | None                                                                                         | 2 of 6                       | Not applicable             | 1 Nov 2023 to 1 Nov 2026      |

## Independent members for Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

| Name              | Committee Membership               | Attendance at Board Meetings | Attendance at Committee(s) | Terms of Appointment               |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| John Baker        | Audit and Risk Assurance Committee | Not applicable               | 4 of 4                     | 1 February 2024 to 31 January 2026 |
| Anthony Pritchard | Audit and Risk Assurance Committee | Not applicable               | 4 of 4                     | 1 February 2024 to 31 January 2026 |

## System of internal control, risk management framework and processes

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risks. It can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurances of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of our policies, aims and objectives. It is also designed to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised, their impact and how they will be managed efficiently, effectively, and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place for the year ended 31 March 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts.

## Capacity to handle risk, risk management framework and Risk profile

As Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, I have overall responsibility for risk management and report to the Board on the effectiveness of risk management across Llais.

My advice to the Board has been informed by officers and feedback received from the Board's committees, in particular the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. Tîm Arwain and Executive Team meetings present opportunities for the senior leadership teams to consider, evaluate, and address risks, to actively engage with and report to the Board and its committees on our risk profile.

Our Interim Board Secretary is the lead for risk and is responsible for establishing the policy framework, systems and processes that are needed for the management of risks within the organisation.

Depending on the nature of risk, other senior officers take ownership for management and mitigation, especially at a regional level. The Board has agreed a risk management policy and has also agreed a risk appetite statement, which is provided overleaf.



# Llais risk appetite

|                                        |              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Finance /VfM</b>                    | <b>RA 1</b>  | We have an <b>averse</b> risk appetite to any financial loss or impact. Value for money is a key objective.                                                                                                                                |
|                                        | <b>RA 2</b>  | We have an <b>eager</b> risk appetite to invest where there is benefit to the establishment of Llais systems, functions and services.                                                                                                      |
| <b>Governance</b>                      | <b>RA3</b>   | We have an <b>averse</b> risk appetite for decisions that may compromise compliance with statutory, regulatory or policy requirements particularly during our establishment phase.                                                         |
|                                        | <b>RA 4</b>  | We have an <b>eager</b> risk appetite to our internal governance controls. We want our internal controls to reflect our culture. We want our people to feel empowered to make decisions and not feel like they are restricted by red tape. |
| <b>Operational and policy delivery</b> | <b>RA 5</b>  | We have an <b>eager</b> risk appetite to innovation. We are a new ambitious organisation wanting to make real change for the people of Wales.                                                                                              |
|                                        | <b>RA 6</b>  | We have a <b>cautious</b> risk appetite for decisions that could adversely affect how our partners and the public see us. Our priority is to build trust and establish positive relationships.                                             |
| <b>Reputational</b>                    | <b>RA 7</b>  | We have an <b>averse</b> risk appetite for decisions that could have a negative impact on the welfare of our people. Our priority is to build trust with our staff and volunteers.                                                         |
|                                        | <b>RA 8</b>  | We have an <b>eager</b> risk appetite to help our people develop and to do things differently and for the better. We want to provide our people with opportunities to share ideas and suggest new ways of working.                         |
| <b>Our people</b>                      | <b>RA 9</b>  | We have an <b>averse</b> risk appetite when it comes to the safety of the information and data we hold about our people and the public and the damage that could be caused by the disclosure of that information.                          |
|                                        | <b>RA 10</b> | We have an <b>eager</b> risk appetite when it comes to sharing information that will improve joint working with our strategic partners, but only where the aim is to improve services for the people of Wales.                             |
| <b>Information and data</b>            |              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                        |              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

# The risk management framework

Significant development work has been undertaken during 2024/2025 to redevelop and further embed our approach to risk management. This has resulted in the development of a new risk management strategy, which was approved by the Board at its March 2025 meeting.

The Board also approved at that meeting a new Board Assurance Framework, which will also report to the Board regarding progress with the achievement of its identified priorities, especially those expressed in our 3-year strategy and annual plan, but it will also outline the risk of non-delivery of these priorities.

The Audit and Risk Assurance committee remains responsible for monitoring effectiveness of the implementation of the risk approach to ensure we reach our full potential.

In monitoring the ongoing implementation, any risks to the non-delivery or gaps in the achievement of our goals and objectives will be identified and acted upon with remedial actions agreed and implemented to mitigate and ensure the plan continues to progress.



At each Llais Board meeting, the Board receives a strategic/corporate risk report, which provides a high-level account of all risks included on the corporate risk register. This report is published in the public domain, ensuring transparency and openness around the strategic risks that Llais has identified as potential impacts to achievement of the Board's strategic priorities.

Members of the public and any other stakeholders can comment on or raise queries about these risk reports, in-line with Llais's Board Standing Orders.

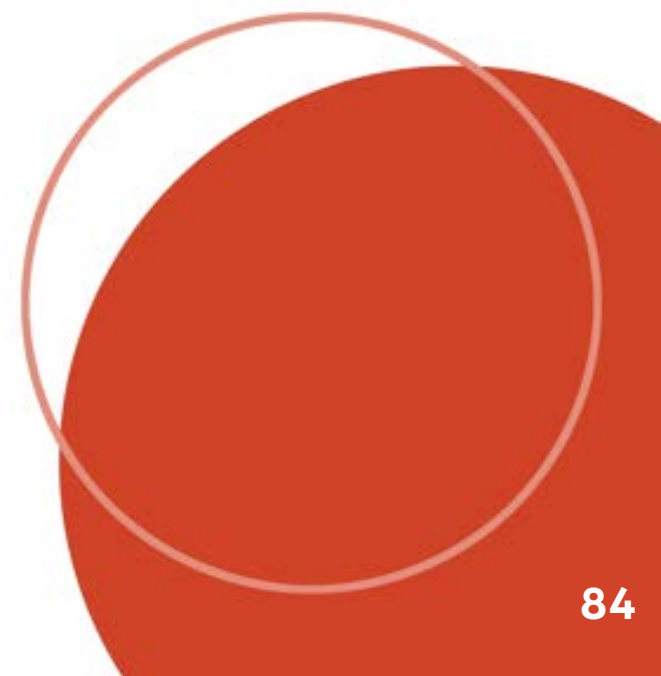
In addition to this, members of the Executive Team hold assurance meetings with their respective regions and teams to discuss management of ongoing risks that are held at regional and team levels. Reports are discussed at Tîm Arwain and Executive Team to ensure a balanced and consistent approach. Cross referral of risks and agreed joint working are undertaken, as required.

## Risk profile:

As at end of March 2025, there were 14 strategic risks described within the Corporate Risk Register which represents the most significant risks to the organisation, which could potentially impact on the delivery of the Board's strategic priorities.

The risks are classified as:

- Very High – 1
- High – 5
- Moderate – 8
- Low – 0



The key risk themes of the risks on the corporate risk register are:

- IT – Systems failure (Very High risk)
- Cyber resilience (High risk)
- Digital and IT implementation (High risk)
- Finance and resources (High risk)
- Our people – Sickness and wellbeing (High risk)
- Unexpected/Uncertainty of demand (High risk)
- Financial impact on delivery – people and skills (Moderate risk)
- Key partnership service provider arrangements (Moderate risk)
- Llais office and location strategy (Moderate risk)
- Organisational culture (Moderate risk)
- Public and stakeholder expectations (Moderate risk)
- Partnership relations (Moderate risk)
- Statutory obligations (Moderate risk)
- Volunteers – their recruitment and development (Moderate risk)

A heat map showing the spread of risks on the corporate risks register as of the 31 March 2025 is provided overleaf:



|            |                | Impact        |          |             |           |                |
|------------|----------------|---------------|----------|-------------|-----------|----------------|
|            |                | Very Low<br>1 | Low<br>2 | Medium<br>3 | High<br>4 | Very High<br>5 |
| Likelihood | Very High<br>5 |               |          |             |           |                |
|            | High<br>4      |               |          |             | 1         | 1              |
|            | Medium<br>3    |               |          | 3           | 5         | 4              |
|            | Low<br>2       |               |          |             |           |                |
|            | Very Low<br>1  |               |          |             |           |                |

A copy of the latest Strategic Risk Report (Corporate Risk Register) which was presented at the end of March 2025 is available via this link – [Corporate Risk Register end of March 2025](#)

The risks contained within the risk register have been subject to risk owner scrutiny, and challenge through management review and reporting to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Board during 2024/2025.

An overview of these key risks are as follows:

## **Workforce capacity and capability:**

Several risks on the corporate risk register relate to this theme – they range between current risk levels of 12 and 15 and all have actions in place to seek to mitigate these risks. These include the finalisation of a workforce strategy and the current programme of role re-design and realignment being led by the Executive Team, taking the opportunities presented by the voluntary early release scheme to ensure that the Llais workforce is best placed to deliver the roles and responsibilities of the organisation for the future.

## **Pressures in the wider health and social care system:**

Several risks on the corporate risk register relate to this theme – they range between current risk levels of 12 and 16, all with actions in place to seek to mitigate the identified risks. These include the regularised liaison with partners, especially health and social care organisations. Active monitoring of demand. Work on regional reassessments of service planning discussions with health and social care organisations. Active involvement in partnership meetings at regional and national levels. The framing of our Rights, Expectations and Responsibilities Programme will be important in responding to this area of risk for Llais.



## Public and partner awareness:

Several risks on the corporate risk register relate to this theme – they range between current risk levels of 9 and 12, all with actions in place to seek to mitigate the assessed risks. Ongoing actions in this area include our programmes of communication and engagement and the development of new protocols with partners to clarify our role and reinforce our independence.

## Data quality and insights:

A few risks on the corporate risk register have dimensions that relate to this theme – they range between current risk levels of 12 and 16, all with actions in place to seek to mitigate the identified risks. These include corporate development work on our planning and performance management system (OKR), customer relationship management system, performance dashboards and the information governance programme work that is being undertaken. A comprehensive digital and data strategy is being finalised for the coming year.

## System complexity and strategic partnerships:

Several risks on the corporate risk register relate to this theme – they range between current risk levels of 12 and 16, all with actions in place to seek to mitigate the risks. These include the regularised liaison with partners, especially health and social care organisations. Regional attendance at regional partnership boards and engagement with key national service networks.



## Safeguarding and the emotional impact of our work:

A risk on the corporate risk register relates to this theme – the current risk level for this area is 15, with actions in place to seek to mitigate the risk. These include additional training and awareness raising especially in safeguarding and on social care. Further work is being undertaken on wellbeing and responding to the organisational wellbeing survey undertaken last year. This area is monitored in more detail via the Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee.

## Language and inclusion:

A risk on the corporate risk register covers the dimensions that relate to this theme – the current risk score is 12 – with actions in place to seek to mitigate the risk, especially regarding further enhancing our work on our commitment and responsibilities to the Welsh Language, equity, diversity and inclusion, and our commitment to use everyday language.

## Policy and changing priorities:

A few risks on the corporate risk register cover this theme with scores between current risk levels of 12 and 16. Actions are in place to seek to mitigate the risks. These include active engagement with our Welsh Government Partnership Team and awareness of the legislative programme. Work is undertaken on policy horizon scanning and active engagement in assessing new policy proposals and undertaking assessments to provide feedback from Llais based on the feedback and experiences of the people of Wales generated through our work as an organisation.



## Volunteer engagement:

There is a dedicated risk on the corporate risk register to cover this theme with a current score of 12. Actions are in place to seek to mitigate this risk.

This includes the work that has been undertaken on the implementation of the volunteer strategy, the new volunteer induction programme, active engagement of volunteers in the work of Llais, especially through regional engagement and ensuring volunteers have access to comprehensive, targeted training for their work with Llais on health and social care.



## Digital and cyber risk:

A few risks on the corporate risk register cover this theme with scores between current risk levels of 15 and 20. This has consistently been some of the highest risk scoring area in Llais' risk profile over the last year. Several actions have taken place to seek to mitigate the risks. These include working towards obtaining Cyber Essentials Plus to build on the achievement of the awarding of Cyber Essentials during the last year.

External specialist advice has been commissioned to undertake a review, and this will be reported to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee via an additional special assurance session in the coming year. There will be a sustained focus on this area to ensure we take forward further assurance and development work on information and digital governance to ensure we have the right framework, system, policies, and processes, and that access controls are further tightened.

Also, a range of learning and awareness raising has taken place, and will continue to take place across Llais, as part of an ongoing programme of work to ensure all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and action to take should issues arise. This awareness raising builds on the online learning that all members of staff are required to complete.



## Internal, external audit and counter fraud

Our Internal Audit function is provided by the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership.

We have developed our internal audit plan using a risk-based approach. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Executive Team and Tîm Arwain advise on and agreed the plan.

Our internal auditors submit reports about the adequacy and effectiveness of our systems (financial, corporate and workforce regulation) of internal control, together with recommendations for improvement to management and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The overall assessment of our internal auditors and the Head of Internal Audit opinion is provided below.

We also liaise closely with Audit Wales and actively engage in their programme of work each year. Audit Wales representatives attend our Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and Board, as required.

We receive an Audit of Financial Statements Report and Management letter, which reports on issues that are picked up during the audit of our financial statements.

We have a Counter Fraud Policy and a counter fraud service, which is provided by NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership. Updates and an annual report are provided to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. Counter fraud training and communications have also been provided to our staff, which is outlined further in the Remuneration Report.



The Board of Llais is accountable for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the organisation's objectives and is also responsible for putting in place arrangements for gaining assurance about the effectiveness of that overall system. A key element in that flow of assurance is the overall assurance opinion from the Head of Internal Audit.

This section sets out the Head of Internal Audit Opinion together with the summarised results of the internal audit work performed during the year.

## **Head of Internal Audit Opinion 2024/2025**

The purpose of the annual Head of Internal Audit opinion is to contribute to the assurances available to the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer and the Board which underpin the Board's own assessment of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The approved internal audit plan is focused on risk and therefore the Board uses these results with other sources of assurance when making a rounded assessment of control for the purposes of the Annual Governance Statement.



## The overall Head of Internal Audit opinion for 2024/2025 is:

### Reasonable Assurance

The Board can take Reasonable Assurance that arrangements to secure governance, risk management and internal control, within those areas under review, are suitably designed and applied effectively. Some matters require management attention in control design or compliance with low to moderate impact on residual risk exposure until resolved.



# Summary of Audit Assignments

This opinion summarises the outcomes from the work undertaken in the year. In some cases, audit work from previous years may also be included and where this is the case, details are given. This opinion also references assurances received through the internal audit of control systems operated by other NHS Wales organisations.

The audit coverage in the plan agreed with management has been deliberately focused on key strategic and operational risk areas; the outcome of these audit reviews may therefore highlight control weaknesses that impact on the overall assurance opinion.

Overall, the following assurances have been provided to the Board that arrangements to secure governance, risk management and internal control are suitably designed and applied effectively in the substantial and reasonable areas in the table below.

Where high priority key matters have been identified, management are aware of the specific issues identified and have agreed action plans to improve control in these areas.

A summary of the audits undertaken in the year and the results are summarised in the table below.

|                       |                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Substantial Assurance | Finance review                                                                                           |
| Reasonable Assurance  | Regional governance and risk management arrangements<br>Information governance<br>Performance management |
| Limited Assurance     | None                                                                                                     |
| Unsatisfactory        | None                                                                                                     |
| Advisory/non-opinion  | None                                                                                                     |

Please note that the overall opinion has also considered other information obtained during the year that is deemed to be relevant to the work of internal audit. A summary of the findings and required management actions are shown below.

## Finance review

Internal controls with the finance system are essential for ensuring the integrity, accuracy, and reliability of financial reporting, as well as for safeguarding assets and promoting operational efficiency. Internal audit evaluated the adequacy of the systems and controls in place of key aspects of the financial systems. Llais has a service level agreement in place with the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) for the provision of several services which includes accounts payable. Internal audit work on accounts payable in this finance review audit focused on the activities operating within Llais. **Substantial assurance** was given in this area. No matters for management action were identified as part of this review.

## Regional governance and risk management arrangements

The purpose of this review was to consider the developing governance and risk management arrangements at a regional level to ensure that these were operating effectively and were complementing Llais's overarching governance framework. Our work included providing assurance that regional teams were accountable to the Chief Executive as the Accounting Officer.

8 medium priority findings were agreed with management and a **reasonable assurance** opinion was given for this area of review.

## Information governance

The work for this audit focused on the resources available and structure to undertake information governance duties and the reporting framework to demonstrate compliance with information governance requirements. 3 medium priority matters were identified and agreed with management, and **reasonable assurance** was given for this review.

## Performance management

This audit looked at performance monitoring, training arrangements, reporting mechanisms to ensure that performance measures supported organisational priorities. 2 medium priority actions were agreed with management and a **reasonable assurance** opinion was issued for this review.

## Completing and tracking management responses to internal and external audits

The management of Llais has put in place an audit recommendations tracker and maintained that during 2024/2025. This tracker logs all the recommendations provided by both internal and external auditors. It identifies the agreed actions, lead officers, timelines within which responses should be made and the outputs/outcomes of completing the actions.

This tracker has been reported to the Executive Team and Tîm Arwain (senior leadership) meetings during the last year to monitor progress against the actions and identify any required remedial action. The tracker is also reported to each meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee for assurance purposes, where 30 recommendations have been satisfactorily completed.

3 have been superseded by new recommendations through further audits. 5 remain to be fully completed as at the year-end, but progress has been made and new completion dates identified. During the last year, our organisation has also agreed an audit tracker process/procedure to better manage the tracking arrangements and to provide guidance to colleagues across Llais.



## Information governance

The protection of personal data is important to Llais. Our staff are required to undertake mandatory data protection training to ensure we remain compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR). During the year we have continued to work with our third-party supplier to resolve issues that have been experienced with accessing the learning and development platform.

There have been 4 personal data related incidents during the year. Our Corporate Services team has monitored and is reviewing our information governance arrangements across the organisation to ensure they are strengthened in response to any incidents, including near misses.

We received 14 requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. 1 request was delayed however, this was due to it being linked to the processing of a detailed Subject Access Request, but all other requests were responded to within the prescribed 20 working day timescales.

We received 5 Subject Access Requests during the year. 4 of these were responded to within the prescribed 1 calendar month timescale. 1 exceeded this timescale due to the breadth and detailed nature of the request. However, contact was maintained with the requester to explain the reasons for the delay in response.

Cyber Essentials accreditation was achieved during the year, and work is progressing to achieve Cyber Essentials Plus certification in 2025/2026.

## Whistleblowing (raising concerns)

All our people are encouraged to raise issues of concern about wrongdoing that comes to their attention while at work or undertaking activities on behalf of Llais. We regard internal identification of wrongdoing as an important contribution to managing corporate risk and ensuring good governance.

We have an internal whistleblowing (raising concerns) policy and procedures which reflect the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and sets out how to raise such matters.

In 2024/2025 there were no concerns raised under the policy.





# Remuneration and staff

## Remuneration report

### Pay policy statement

This pay policy statement covers the period, 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 and provides the framework for decision making on pay and decision making on senior pay.

### Remuneration (including salary) and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of Llais' Board, Independent Audit and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee members and senior staff and their remuneration and pension interests.

### Single total figure of remuneration

'Salary' includes gross salary, overtime, and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation. This report is based on accrued payments made by the Commissioner and thus recorded in these accounts. No benefits in kind or bonuses were paid in 2023/2024 or 2024/2025.

## Remuneration (including salary) and pension entitlements of Llais Board members (subject to audit)

| Name                       | Title                | Salary                            |                                   | Pension Benefits                           |                                            | Total                             |                                   |
|----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                            |                      | 2024/2025<br>(bands of<br>£5,000) | 2023/2024<br>(bands of<br>£5,000) | 2024/2025<br>(to the<br>nearest<br>£1,000) | 2023/2024<br>(to the<br>nearest<br>£1,000) | 2024/2025<br>(bands of<br>£5,000) | 2023/2024<br>(bands of<br>£5,000) |
| Medwin Hughes <sup>1</sup> | Chair                | 15-20                             | 5-10                              | 0                                          | 0                                          | 15-20                             | 5-10                              |
| Grace Quantock             | Vice Chair           | 10-15                             | 10-15                             | 0                                          | 0                                          | 10-15                             | 10-15                             |
| Bami Adenipekun            | Non Executive Member | 5-10                              | 5-10                              | 0                                          | 0                                          | 5-10                              | 5-10                              |
| Barabra Harrington         | Non Executive Member | 5-10                              | 5-10                              | 0                                          | 0                                          | 5-10                              | 5-10                              |
| Jack Evershed              | Non Executive Member | 5-10                              | 5-10                              | 0                                          | 0                                          | 5-10                              | 5-10                              |
| Jason Smith                | Non Executive Member | 5-10                              | 5-10                              | 0                                          | 0                                          | 5-10                              | 5-10                              |
| Karen Lewis                | Non Executive Member | 10-15                             | 10-15                             | 0                                          | 0                                          | 10-15                             | 10-15                             |
| Dr Rajan Madhok            | Non Executive Member | 5-10                              | 5-10                              | 0                                          | 0                                          | 5-10                              | 5-10                              |

(1) For part of 2023/2024, the Chair declined remuneration as he was employed as Vice-Chancellor, University of Wales, and University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

The Chair's remuneration commenced from August 2024.

The full year equivalent salary for 2023/2024 was £15,000-£20,000.

## Single total figure of remuneration for senior managers (subject to audit)

| Name          | Title                                                                     | Salary                            |                                   | Pension Benefits                        |                                         | Total                             |                                   |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|               |                                                                           | 2024/2025<br>(bands of<br>£5,000) | 2023/2024<br>(bands of<br>£5,000) | 2024/2025<br>(to the nearest<br>£1,000) | 2023/2024<br>(to the nearest<br>£1,000) | 2024/2025<br>(bands of<br>£5,000) | 2023/2024<br>(bands of<br>£5,000) |
| Alyson Thomas | Chief Executive                                                           | 125-130                           | 115-120                           | 38                                      | 0                                       | 160-165                           | 115-120                           |
| Joanne Bolton | Strategic Director of Operations and Corporate Services <sup>2</sup>      | 60-65                             | 0                                 | 15                                      | 0                                       | 75-80                             | 0                                 |
| Ben Eaton     | Strategic Director of Organisational Strategy and Engagement <sup>3</sup> | 85-90                             | 60-65                             | 22                                      | 15                                      | 110-115                           | 80-85                             |
| Angela Mutlow | Director of Operations <sup>4</sup>                                       | 75-80                             | 75-80                             | 16                                      | 84                                      | 95-100                            | 160-165                           |
| Richard Bevan | Interim Board Secretary <sup>5</sup>                                      | 75-80                             | 0                                 | 0                                       | 0                                       | 75-80                             | 0                                 |

(2) Joanne Bolton commenced in post on the 22 July 2024, the banding for the full year equivalent salary for 2024/2025 was £85,000-£90,000.

(3) Ben Eaton commenced in post on the 26 June 2023, the banding for the full year equivalent salary for 2023/2024 was £80,000-85,000.

(4) Angela Mutlow commenced in post on a temporary basis as the Strategic Director of Operations and Corporate Services on the 1 May 2023, the banding for the full year equivalent salary for 2023/2024 was £80,000-£85,000. On the 22 July 2024, Angela became the Director of Operations, the banding for the full year equivalent salary for 2024/2025 was £75,000-£80,000.

(5) Richard Bevan commenced in post, via the NHS bank, on a variable hour's part-time temporary basis as the Interim Board Secretary on the 1 April 2024. The banding for the full year equivalent salary for 2024/2025 was £105,000-£110,000. Pension figures from the NHS pension scheme provider are not available to Llais for disclosure for Richard Bevan as Richard is in receipt of an NHS pension. Richard Bevan's salary costs are included within 'other staff costs' in the staff costs table on page 109.

Accrued pension benefits included in this table for any individual affected by the Public Service Pensions Remedy have been calculated based on their inclusion in the legacy scheme for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, following the McCloud judgement.

The Public Service Pensions Remedy applies to individuals that were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a public service pension scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. The basis for the calculation reflects the legal position that impacted members have been rolled back into the relevant legacy scheme for the remedy period and that this will apply unless the member actively exercises their entitlement on retirement to decide instead to receive benefits calculated under the terms of the previous pension scheme.

## Remuneration of Non-Executive Members

In January 2024, Llais appointed 2 independent members to its Audit and Risk Assurance Committee to further strengthen the Committee's expertise in financial, cyber and IT matters. During 2024/2025, each of the members received remuneration within the band £0 – £5,000. They are not eligible for pension benefits.

## Pension

The Chief Executive and most staff are members of the NHS pension scheme.

Llais signed up to the NHS pension scheme and staff transferring on 1 April 2023, from the former Board and Community Health Councils in Wales, who were members of the scheme continue to be members of the scheme.

The Chief Executive and directly employed staff are eligible for membership of the NHS Pension Scheme.

The scheme is an unfunded, defined benefit scheme that covers NHS and other employers, General Practices, and other bodies, allowed under the direction of the Secretary of State, in England and Wales. The scheme is not designed to be run in a way that would enable NHS and other bodies to identify their share of the underlying scheme assets and liabilities.

Therefore, the scheme is accounted for as if it were a defined contribution scheme: the cost to the body of participating in the scheme is taken as equal to the contributions payable to the scheme for the accounting period. The latest NHS Pension Scheme valuation results indicated that an increase in benefit required a 3.1% increase (20.68% to 23.7%) which was implemented from 1 April 2024.

As an organisation within the full funding scope, the joint (in NHS England and NHS Wales) transitional arrangement operated from 2019/2020 where employers in the Scheme would continue to pay 14.38% employer contributions under their normal monthly payment process, and in Wales the additional 9.4% would be funded by Welsh Government directly to the Pension Scheme administrator, the NHS Business Services Authority (BSA, the NHS Pensions Agency).

Whilst Llais budgets and accounts for their staff employer contributions of 14.38% in the financial plan and finance reports, the notional cost of the additional 9.4% is directly funded by Welsh Government.

The amount of pension benefits for the year which contributes to the single total figure is calculated in a similar way to the method used to derive pension values for tax purposes and is based on information received from actuaries. The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increases due to inflation or any increase or decreases due to a transfer of pension rights.

This is not an amount which has been paid to an individual by Llais during the year; it is a calculation which uses information from the pension benefit table. These figures can be influenced by many factors e.g. changes in a person's salary, whether or not they choose to make additional contributions to the pension scheme from their pay and other valuation factors affecting the pension scheme as a whole.

## Salary and pension disclosure tables (subject to audit)

| Name                       | Title                                                        | Total accrued pension as at 31/03/25<br>(bands of £5,000) | Real increase in pension as at 31/03/25<br>(bands of £2,500) | Total accrued lump sum as at 31/03/25<br>£'000 | Real increase / (decrease) in lump sum as at 31/03/25<br>£'000 | CETV as at 31/03/25<br>£'000 | CETV as at 31/03/24<br>£'000 | Real increase / (decrease) in CETV as at 31/03/25<br>£'000 |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Alyson Thomas              | Chief Executive                                              | 35-40                                                     | 2.5-5                                                        | 0                                              | 0                                                              | 349                          | 281                          | 34                                                         |
| Joanne Bolton              | Strategic Director of Operations and Corporate Services      | 0-5                                                       | 0-2.5                                                        | 0                                              | 0                                                              | 16                           | 0                            | 8                                                          |
| Ben Eaton                  | Strategic Director of Organisational Strategy and Engagement | 0-5                                                       | 0-2.5                                                        | 0                                              | 0                                                              | 35                           | 14                           | 9                                                          |
| Angela Mutlow              | Director of Operations                                       | 15-20                                                     | 0                                                            | 40-45                                          | (2.5-5)                                                        | 366                          | 351                          | (18)                                                       |
| Richard Bevan <sup>1</sup> | Interim Board Secretary                                      | 0                                                         | 0                                                            | 0                                              | 0                                                              | 0                            | 0                            | 0                                                          |

(1) Pension figures are not available to Llais for disclosure for Richard Bevan.

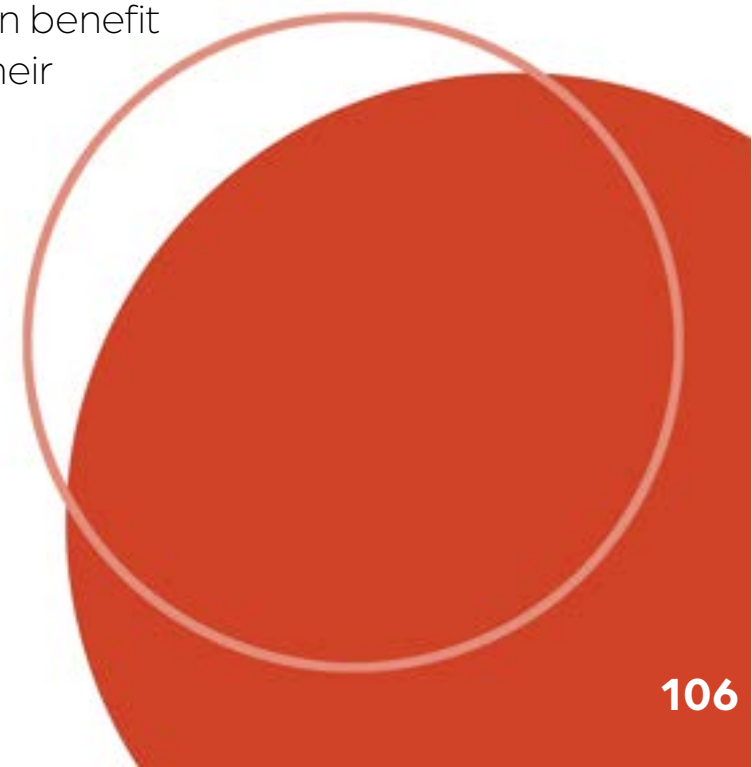
The Chief Executive is an ordinary member of the NHS pension scheme.

The Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme.

It is a payment made by a pension scheme, or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme, or arrangement when a member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the pension benefits, they have accrued in their former scheme.

The pension figures shown related to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures and other pension details include the value of any pension in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years at their own cost. CETVs are calculated within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries.

The real increase in the value of the CETV reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It takes account of the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee, including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement, and uses common market valuation factors from the start and end of the period.



## Staff report

Our staff turnover rate for 2024/2025 has decreased, showing as 14% compared to 19.78% of staff with Llais in 2023/2024. This figure again reflects a year where some staff left via a Voluntary Early Release Scheme.

We remain committed to recruiting and retaining a high-quality workforce to deliver our services. To do this, we offer fair pay to new starters, which respects existing employees' salary levels and adheres to equal pay legislation.

All staff below the Chief Executive level are employed on NHS Agenda for Change terms and conditions.

All new appointees will automatically be placed at the bottom salary point and annual leave entitlement for the role to which they have been appointed. No appointing manager can agree any variation to this, without making an evidenced application where previous reckonable service and transferable skills can be considered, in line with our policy and procedure for determining starting salaries.

All our posts have been subject to job evaluation. All roles below the Chief Executive have been banded through the NHS job matching, job evaluation process to ensure fairness, consistency, and equality for all members of staff. The Chief Executive salary was determined via the Job Evaluation for Senior Posts (JESP) scheme.





Changes to existing roles are only accepted when there's a significant and permanent increase in job responsibilities due to progress, innovation, or new technology. Simple changes to tasks or adding more work at the same level does not qualify. These are defined in detail in the evaluating new jobs and re-evaluation of changed jobs policy.

Although all roles are subject to annual appraisals, pay step meetings (to increase a pay increment) no longer occur annually and occur every 2, 3 or 5 years depending on pay band.

Annual pay awards for staff on Agenda for Change are determined by Welsh Ministers and actioned in line with Welsh Government pay circulars.

The Chief Executive role does not automatically receive any pay step (increment) but is subject to the pay award as per arrangements for Very Senior Managers (VSM) in NHS organisations, including a final decision by the Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee.

## Staff and associated costs (subject to audit)

|                                                          | 2024/2025                |                       | 2023/2024                  |                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
|                                                          | Permanent Staff<br>£'000 | Other Staff*<br>£'000 | Total Staff costs<br>£'000 | Total Staff costs<br>£'000 |
| Salaries                                                 | 4,152                    | 474                   | 4,626                      | 4,063                      |
| Social Security costs                                    | 456                      | 0                     | 456                        | 364                        |
| Pension costs (NHS)                                      | 541                      | 0                     | 541                        | 446                        |
| <b>Total net salary costs</b>                            | <b>5,149</b>             | <b>474</b>            | <b>5,623</b>               | <b>4,873</b>               |
| Voluntary Early Release Scheme and settlement agreements | 396                      | 0                     | 396                        | 175                        |
| Apprentice Levy                                          | 6                        | 0                     | 6                          | 3                          |
| Notional 9.4% Pension Contribution (2023/2024; 6.3%)     | 353                      | 0                     | 353                        | 195                        |
| <b>Total Staff Costs</b>                                 | <b>5,904</b>             | <b>474</b>            | <b>6,678</b>               | <b>5,246</b>               |

\*Other staff include agency and bank staff

## Fair pay disclosure (subject to audit)

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid Director in their organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce. Total remuneration includes only salary and does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

### Pay Ratios

|                                                                                    | 2024/2025 | 2023/2024 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Highest earner's total remuneration (£'000)                                        | 125 – 130 | 115 – 120 |
| Percentage change in salary from the previous financial year of the highest earner | 5%        | 0         |
| Percentage change in average salary from prior year                                | 9%        | 0         |
| 25th Percentile Pay (£)                                                            | 29,551    | 28,010    |
| 25th percentile pay ratio                                                          | 4:3:1     | 4.8:1     |
| Median Percentile Pay (£)                                                          | 37,898    | 35,922    |
| Median pay ratio                                                                   | 3:4:1     | 3:4:1     |
| 75th Percentile Pay (£)                                                            | 46,840    | 43,257    |
| 75th percentile pay ratio                                                          | 2:7:1     | 2:8:1     |

### Range of staff remuneration

|                       | 2024/2025<br>(£'000) | 2023/2024<br>£'000) |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Highest paid employee | 125-130              | 115-120             |
| Lowest paid employee  | 20-25                | 20-25               |

The percentage change in average salary from prior year has been impacted mainly by 5.5% cost of living award and the introduction of Director of Operations into the organisational structure. The pay ratios evidence that overall staff salaries have improved very slightly, which may be attributable to the fact that staff received a 5.5% cost of living award, and the Chief Executive received a 5% cost of living award.

The banded remuneration of the highest paid Director (Chief Executive) was £125,000 – 130,000 in 2024/2025 (2023/2024; £115,000 – £120,000). In line with the NHS pay arrangements for employees covered by executive and senior pay terms and conditions of service, a cost-of-living increase of 5% was awarded to the Chief Executive in 2024/2025.

The Chief Executive's remuneration remains 3.4 times (2023/2024; 3.4) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £37,898 (2023/2024; £35,922).

In 2024/25, no employee (2023/2024; nil) received remuneration in excess of the role of the Chief Executive. Remuneration ranged from £20,000 – £25,000 to £125,000–£130,000 (2023/2024; £20,000 – £25,000 to £115,000 – £120,000).

## Staff numbers

As at the end of March 2025 Llais employed 107 staff. 80 of these staff work full-time hours and 27 members of staff work part-time hours. The Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) for the organisation was 98.64.

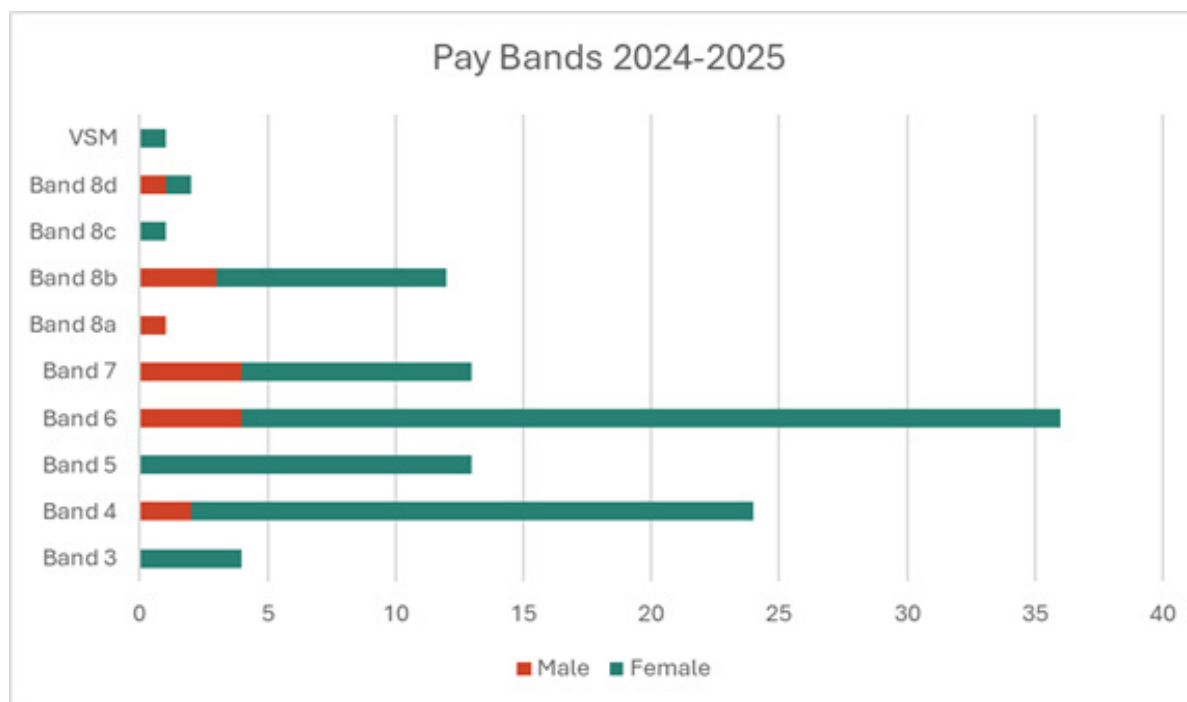
Of the 107 staff, there are 92 females and 15 males.

This means that for every male member of staff working for Llais, there are 6 females.



# Percentage of males and females in pay bands

The charts below show the different pay bands that we use in our organisation along with the number of males and females working at those pay bands.



## Recruitment

Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, Llais advertised 13 positions externally. A total of 9 positions were filled during the reporting period, 2 were male and 7 were female.

NB: 3 of the posts are currently under conditional offer and have not yet started with the organisation but are 2 female and 1 male.

# Gender pay gap (not subject to audit)

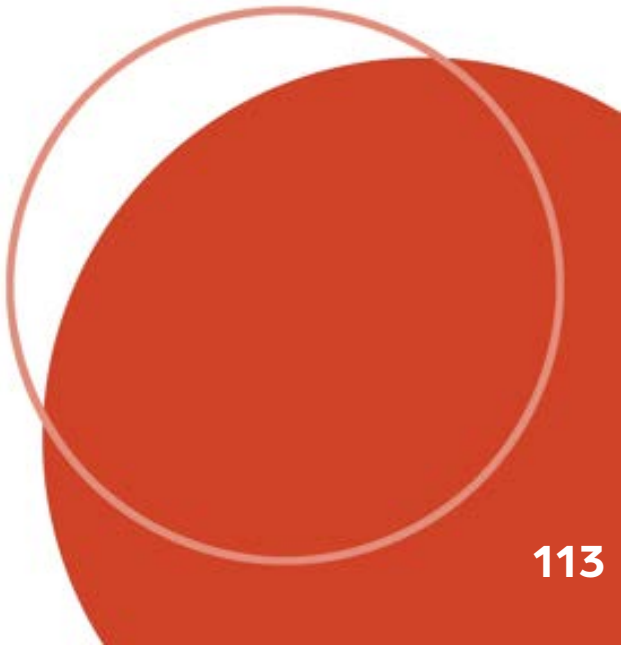
This is the second year we have reported on gender pay gap since we were established in April 2023.

We produce a separate gender pay gap statement each year which will have more detail around what our data is telling us and what action we will take to address any differences we have found. You can find our 2023/2024 report [here](#). Our 2024/2025 report will be published by September 2025.

# Median and mean hourly rates and pay gaps (not subject to audit)

The table below shows our median and mean hourly rates and the percentage gap for both.

| Gender     | Median Hourly Rate<br>(£ per hour) | Mean Hourly Rate<br>(£ per hour) |
|------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Male       | 24.02                              | 25.82                            |
| Female     | 19.43                              | 20.99                            |
| Difference | 4.59                               | 4.83                             |
| Pay Gap %  | 19.10%                             | 18.70%                           |



## Sickness absence policy

Reporting of absence is via an Electronic Staff Record system operated on our behalf by NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership.

This year, Llais monitored staff sickness absence against a level set at 3.30%. This is in line with the levels set for our predecessor organisations. This report considers our performance against this level, and how we might improve absence levels moving forward.

Since April 2024, absence levels have continued to exceed the 3.30% level. Over the last 12 months, we have seen an average absence rate of 5.42%, reaching a peak of 9.00% in February 2025. A number of long-term absences contributed to these levels, with 14 cases of long-term sickness absence occurring between the period September 2023 – April 2024 alone.

11 of those cases have now returned to work fully having been supported with interventions such as adjusted duties, referrals to support services such as specialist counselling and occupational health. In some cases, bespoke office or ICT equipment has been procured to assist the employees with the required alterations required to be able to perform their duties with required comfort and safety considerations.





## **Our commitment to our people, diversity, and language**

### **Listening to our people**

Since we started in April 2023, we've run regular staff update meetings, usually led by our Chief Executive or senior staff. All staff are invited to join these virtual sessions, where we share updates on current initiatives, activities, and developments at Llais. These meetings also provide an open forum for staff to ask questions, share ideas, offer feedback, or voice any concerns.

We believe in involving staff in shaping our organisation. This has included gathering input through staff conferences, feedback sessions, and involving staff in the design, development, and review of our vision, mission, values, behaviours framework, our organisational strategies, policies, procedures, and ways of working.

An example of this was the well-being survey issued in October 2024 which saw a response rate in excess of 85%. This has been key to understanding the issues affecting staff and how we can work together to address these. A focus group was established from employees across the organisation to concentrate on key themes, with the emphasis being on delivering tangible improvement.

Immediate responses included promotion of daily well-being breaks, celebrating success and ensuring staff were not working excessive hours. More complex responses are being considered and planned as part of the medium- and long-term solutions.

Staff have a voice at our Board through an associate member, ensuring their perspectives are considered in decision-making, as well as involving regional teams in each Board meeting to hear more about their work and involve them in Board level activity.

We work closely with our trade union colleagues, valuing their insights and feedback on issues that matter to our workforce.

This collaborative approach helps us create a positive and inclusive work environment where everyone's voice is heard and respected.



# People assistance programme

We offer our people access to the following range of services:

- Access to fully qualified counsellors and support specialists 24 hours 365 days a year. This offers an opportunity to discuss emotional, personal, or work-related issues.
- Face to face and virtual counselling sessions.
- In the moment support – which offers real-time counselling support at the very moment someone needs to talk.
- Self-help workbooks are available in easy read format and as an audio book on a wide range of subjects ranging from bereavement, anxiety, and stress. These allow an insight into the topic, advice, and support.
- Podcasts and blogs on over 60 topics relating to health and wellbeing.
- Debt advice offering advice on solutions and support available either in person or virtually and specifically with household utility bills.
- Domestic abuse support for anyone in an abusive relationship or for anyone who may be concerned about someone they believe to be in one.

As well as the well-being provisions listed above, we offer our people 'Lifestyle Savings' – this provides an opportunity to save money on everyday essentials to money off cinema tickets, family days out, retail discounts and savings on leisure activities and eating out.



## Flexibility

We support staff to work a hybrid pattern of home and office locations and the opportunity to work flexibly subject to the needs of our services.

We also support and encourage our people to utilise Wellbeing at Work Breaks.

Just over 25% of our workforce worked non-standard hours (less than 37.5 hours a week or compressed hours) which is a slight increase to the previous year's figure of 22%.

We offer our all-Wales roles on a pan Wales basis. This means staff can select the nearest Llais office as their base.

## Expenditure on consultancy

There was no expenditure on consultancy during 2024/2025. (2023/2024; £30,000).

## Off-payroll engagements

There were no off payroll arrangements during 2024/2025. (2023/2024; £nil).

## Compensation for loss of office (Subject to audit)

No compensation payments were made in 2024/2025. (2023/2024; £nil).



# Exit packages (subject to audit)

In 2024/2025, we introduced a Voluntary Early Release Scheme (VERS) to help us improve efficiency and delivery, allowing the redesign of roles to better meet the needs of Llais as a stand-alone independent all-Wales organisation.

Information about the scheme was shared with all staff, including those not currently at work. In line with scheme remit and rules, 10 individuals within the organisation were successful in their applications and left our organisation on 31 March 2025. In addition to the individuals mentioned above, 1 member of staff left via a settlement scheme.

| Exit Package         | 2024/2025               |                      | 2023/2024               |                      |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
|                      | Voluntary Early Release | Settlement Agreement | Voluntary Early Release | Settlement Agreement |
| Under £10,000        | 0                       | 0                    | 0                       | 0                    |
| £10,000–£25,000      | 3                       | 1                    | 0                       | 0                    |
| £25,001–£50,000      | 4                       | 0                    | 5                       | 0                    |
| £50,001–£75,000      | 3                       | 0                    | 0                       | 0                    |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>10</b>               | <b>1</b>             | <b>5</b>                | <b>0</b>             |
| <b>Resource Cost</b> | <b>£355,000</b>         | <b>£18,000</b>       | <b>£167,000*</b>        | <b>£0</b>            |

\*2023/2024 costs have been restated from £175,000 to remove income tax and employer national insurance costs.

There were no compulsory redundancies in 2024/2025 or 2023/2024. Redundancy and other departure costs have been paid in accordance with the provisions of the NHS Voluntary Early Release Scheme.

# Staff learning and development

As well as a requirement for mandatory e-learning, the main learning and development opportunities offered to staff during the year were:

| Course / Outcomes                                                                                                                                    | Participants   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Talking with service users who stammer – a session run by Stamma UK (Video and materials also online for all staff)                                  | 46             |
| Proper management of public funds                                                                                                                    | 87             |
| Social Care – Safeguarding, including suicide awareness                                                                                              | 94             |
| Social Care – Session 3 – Social services complaints, including joint health and social services complaints and joint NHS and social care complaints | 24             |
| Social Care – Gillick Competence, Fraser Guidelines and Mental Capacity Act                                                                          | 20             |
| Social Care – Mental Health Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards                                                                                   | 19             |
| Our approach to service changes in health and social care                                                                                            | 29             |
| Certificate in Advocacy Practice                                                                                                                     | 5              |
| Peer Learning Sessions – 12 Sessions (12 hours)                                                                                                      | 10 per session |
| Institute of Learning and Management 5                                                                                                               | 3              |
| Institute of Learning and Management 4                                                                                                               | 1              |
| Institute of Learning and Management 3                                                                                                               | 1              |
| Business Administration Level 4                                                                                                                      | 1              |

We also provided tailored learning for all our staff to operate new systems like our Customer Relationship Management System.



## Our volunteers

Our volunteer network plays a vital role in helping us reach more people and build trusted local connections. Volunteers bring lived experience and local insight, helping us understand what matters most to communities.

They inspire others to get involved and contribute to long-term thinking by maintaining a consistent local presence that keeps services grounded in both present and future needs.

In August 2024, we launched a new [Volunteering Strategy](#) to support our flexible volunteering model. This enables people to get involved in ways that suit them, whether that's by supporting community engagement, joining visits, representing Llais at meetings and events, or contributing to specific projects.

We continue to focus on attracting new and diverse volunteers through targeted campaigns. Across Wales we have 164 volunteers, including 43 who are new to Llais. Volunteers gave over 4,000 hours of their time this year.

We have worked to make our volunteer offer as flexible as possible. People choose to volunteer for a variety of reasons and give their time in several ways:

## **Online feedback collector**

Collecting people's experiences of health and social care services via online forums, review sites, social media, and formal consultations.

## **Visiting volunteer**

Meeting people or their families/carers online or in person at health and social care settings on pre-arranged visits to understand what they like and what could be better.

## **Community engagement volunteer**

Joining a local Llais team to meet people online and face-to-face out and about in the community to capture their views and experiences of local health and social care services.

## **Representation volunteer**

Attending meetings and events on behalf of Llais, putting forward our viewpoint when required, make notes of the meeting and feeding back relevant information.

These videos featuring our volunteers offer a glimpse into what it's like to be part of Llais and the difference our volunteers help make:

[What it's like to Volunteer with Llais](#)  
[Gwent Volunteering Video](#)



## Volunteer impact

In the past year we went to lots of Freshers Fairs at universities to encourage younger people to volunteer with us.

1 of our volunteers, a student at Cardiff Metropolitan University, put her research skills to use by looking into social care premises across Cardiff and the Vale. Her data and research helped us to devise a schedule for us to visit these sites and find out more about people's experiences of receiving social care in the region.



## Diversity and inclusion initiatives

The last 12 months has seen a lot of review and change in terms of equity, diversity, and inclusion to ensure that who we are and the way we work reflects us as an organisation and who we want to be.

We recruited a full-time Head of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing in February 2025 to lead our work programme.

We created 2 internal networks to help support staff and volunteers that provide spaces for our people to talk about what is important to them and their regions relating to the Welsh language and equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

In April 2024 we launched our first [\*\*Strategic Equality Plan\*\*](#). There are many things that we have been working towards over the last year to achieve the actions that we identified as part of our equality objectives. You can find more information on these in our [\*\*Annual Equality Report 2024/2025\*\*](#).

Below are a few ways that we have worked with different communities within Wales this year to ensure that we listen, understand and represent the voices of people in Wales, particularly those who are less likely to be heard:

## Llais Local

We have continued our open listening engagement activities across Wales, through our Llais local approach and regional public forums.

We have worked with a number of organisations to support our engagement with different communities including EYST, Sign, Sight, Sound, Cymorth Cymru, Chinese Association in Wales, Race Equality First and attended various events like the Minority Ethnic Communities Health Fair, Creating an Anti-Racist Wales Conference, Pride, Eisteddfod and many more.

## Regional projects

Our regional teams across Wales have undertaken different projects to understand people's experiences of health and social care. These are some of the projects that we did this year.



# Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan

We listened to minority ethnic communities' experiences of having a baby.

We heard consistent themes from pregnant women and birthing people including issues with communication, access to care being challenging and inconsistencies with empathy and emotional support from care providers.

We made representations to the health board based on what we heard during this engagement, relating to translation services, clearer information for post-natal care and building on the existing pilot of rolling out minority ethnic antenatal clinics in the region.

Watch our project video [here](#).



## Cwm Taf Morgannwg

We worked with the charity Behaviour Support Hub between December 2024 – January 2025 to gather feedback from parents about their children's experiences accessing support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the Neurodevelopmental Team.

We made urgent representations to CAMHS about some of what we were hearing, including waiting lists, confusing referrals, and a lack of support for children who were self-harming or having suicidal thoughts.

We are currently writing a review of those findings. Continuing our work with the Behaviour Support Hub, we are inviting CAMHS and the Neurodevelopmental Team to a public meeting set to take place this summer to hear parents' experiences directly and encourage wider conversations.



## West Wales

We listened to people with learning disabilities about their health and social care services.

We heard from a range of people, with different ages and who were living in different settings, some with their families and others who were in supported accommodation or care homes.

We heard about many different experiences both positive and negative, including birth, school and education, support to go places, respite and carers, residential care, social services, using health care services and more.

We made representations to the health board and the local authority around what we heard during this engagement. These included:

- Asking the health board to help us understand more around long-term residential placements following negative feedback on the perception of the processes surrounding long term residential placements.
- Requesting the local authority provide us with information on the processes around organising residential and respite care.
- Asking both the health board and the local authority to provide us with further information on how they use the feedback of patients and service users, friends, and families to inform their processes. Read our full report [here](#).



## All-Wales team

The All-Wales team have been leading on our work with children and young people.

Our staff received training on how to engage with children and young people, including designing our engagement activities.

Our Neath, Port Talbot and Swansea region utilised this training, co-producing an engagement project with children and young people in their region.

We engaged with over 800 people around their mental health, bringing together people with lived experiences and the professionals that deliver these services to encourage understanding, listening, and learning. This led to representations being made to the Directors of Education and Social Services and a showcase event to highlight good practice.

[Watch our project video](#)

We are working with experts to develop a facilitator guide to engage with children and young people, and this workstream will continue into 2025/2026 as we grow our organisational understanding.



# The Certificate and independent auditor's report

# Finance overview

## Llais Financial Statements 2024/2025

### Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025

|                                                   | Note | 2024/2025<br>£'000 | 2023/2024<br>£'000 |
|---------------------------------------------------|------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Operating Expenditure</b>                      |      |                    |                    |
| Staff costs                                       | 2    | 6,378              | 5,246              |
| Other Operating Expenditure                       | 3    | 1,627              | 1,591              |
| Depreciation/Amortisation                         | 3    | 368                | 196                |
| Loss on disposals of PPE                          | 3    | 6                  | 0                  |
| Provision provided and released                   | 3    | (3)                | 129                |
|                                                   |      | <b>8,376</b>       | <b>7,162</b>       |
| <b>Finance Activities</b>                         |      |                    |                    |
| Interest Payable – Right of Use Asset             | 4    | 10                 | 8                  |
| Interest Payable – Permanent Injury provision     | 11   | 2                  | 0                  |
| <b>Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year</b> |      | <b>8,388</b>       | <b>7,170</b>       |

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing operations.

There are no unrecognised gains or losses in 2024/2025 or 2023/2024.

The notes that follow on pages 134 to 153 form part of these accounts.

# Statement of Financial Position for the year ended 31 March 2024

|                                              |      | 31/03/2025 |              | 31/03/2024 |                |            |
|----------------------------------------------|------|------------|--------------|------------|----------------|------------|
|                                              | Note | £'000      | £'000        | £'000      | £'000          |            |
| <b>Non-current assets:</b>                   |      |            |              |            |                |            |
| Right of use assets                          | 4    | 158        |              | 353        |                |            |
| Property, Plant and Equipment                | 6    | 26         |              | 8          |                |            |
| Intangible assets                            | 7    | 498        |              | 622        |                |            |
| <b>Total non-current assets</b>              |      |            | <b>682</b>   |            | <b>983</b>     |            |
| <b>Current Assets:</b>                       |      |            |              |            |                |            |
| Trade and other receivables                  | 8    | 201        |              | 155        |                |            |
| Cash and cash equivalents                    | 10   | 93         |              | 72         |                |            |
| <b>Total current assets</b>                  |      |            | <b>294</b>   |            | <b>227</b>     |            |
| <b>Total assets</b>                          |      |            | <b>976</b>   |            | <b>1,210</b>   |            |
| <b>Current liabilities:</b>                  |      |            |              |            |                |            |
| Trade and other payables                     | 9    | (669)      |              | (731)      |                |            |
| IFRS16 Finance lease within 1 year           | 4    | (132)      |              | (218)      |                |            |
| Provisions                                   | 11   | (75)       |              | (73)       |                |            |
| <b>Total current liabilities</b>             |      |            | <b>(876)</b> |            | <b>(1,022)</b> |            |
| <b>Total assets less current liabilities</b> |      |            | <b>100</b>   |            | <b>188</b>     |            |
| <b>Non-current liabilities</b>               |      |            |              |            |                |            |
| IFRS16 Finance Lease                         | 4    | (28)       |              | (136)      |                |            |
| Provisions                                   | 11   | (127)      |              | (195)      |                |            |
| <b>Total non-current liabilities</b>         |      |            | <b>(155)</b> |            | <b>(331)</b>   |            |
| <b>Total assets less total liabilities</b>   |      |            | <b>(55)</b>  |            | <b>(143)</b>   |            |
| <b>Taxpayers' equity (SOCTE)</b>             |      |            | <b>(55)</b>  |            | <b>(143)</b>   |            |
| <b>General Reserves</b>                      |      |            | <b>(55)</b>  |            | <b>(143)</b>   | <b>131</b> |

Note 1.2, within Llais' accounting policies, provides further information on Llais' reported net liabilities and the continued provision of Grant-in-Aid by the Welsh Government

Alyson Thomas  
Date: 5th  
November 2025

## Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 March 2025

|                                                                  |      | 31/03/2025     | 31/03/2024     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------|----------------|
|                                                                  | Note | £'000          | £'000          |
| <b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>                      |      |                |                |
| Net expenditure                                                  |      | (8,388)        | (7,170)        |
| Adjustments for non-cash transactions                            | 3    | 371            | 325            |
| Adjustment for Notional 9.4% Pension Contribution                | 2    | 353            | 195            |
| (Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables               | 8    | (46)           | (155)          |
| Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables                  | 9    | (62)           | 583            |
| Increase/(decrease) in provision                                 | 11   | (66)           | (15)           |
| <b>Net cash outflow from operating activities</b>                |      | <b>(7,838)</b> | <b>(6,237)</b> |
| <b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>                      |      |                |                |
| Purchase of property, plant and equipment                        | 6    | 26             | 0              |
| Purchase of intangible assets                                    | 7    | 0              | (622)          |
| <b>Net cash outflow from investing activities</b>                |      | <b>(26)</b>    | <b>(622)</b>   |
| <b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>                      |      |                |                |
| Funding from Welsh Government                                    |      | 8,123          | 6,849          |
| Cash to match Assets and Liabilities transferring from Powys tHB |      | 0              | 269            |
| Payments of lease liabilities                                    | 4    | (250)          | (195)          |
| Right of Use Assets; interest                                    | 4    | 10             | 8              |
| Permanent injury provision; interest                             | 11   | 2              | 0              |
| <b>Net financing</b>                                             |      | <b>7,885</b>   | <b>6,931</b>   |
| <b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash equivalents in the period</b> |      | <b>21</b>      | <b>72</b>      |
| <b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period</b>  | 10   | <b>72</b>      | <b>0</b>       |
| <b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period</b>        | 10   | <b>93</b>      | <b>72</b>      |

## Statement of Changes in Taxpayer's Equity for the year ended 31 March 2025

|                                                                       | General Reserve              | General Reserve              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
|                                                                       | 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 | 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 |
|                                                                       | £'000                        | £'000                        |
| Balance as at 1 April                                                 | (143)                        | (21)                         |
| Right of Use Lease Adjustment                                         | 0                            | 4                            |
| Net expenditure                                                       | (8,388)                      | (7,170)                      |
| <b>Total recognised income and expense</b>                            | <b>(8,531)</b>               | <b>(7,187)</b>               |
| Funding from Welsh Government                                         | 8,123                        | 6,849                        |
| Notional Welsh Government Funding (Pension contribution) <sup>1</sup> | 353                          | 195                          |
| <b>Balance as at 31 March</b>                                         | <b>(55)</b>                  | <b>(143)</b>                 |

<sup>1</sup> See note 1.5 Pensions, for information on the notional Welsh Government funding.

# Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025

## 1. Statement of Accounting Policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government Accounts Direction and the 2024/2025 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM).

The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context.

Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which has been judged to be most appropriate to the circumstances of Llais for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The policies adopted by Llais are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

### 1.1 Accounting Convention

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government Accounts Direction and the 2024/2025 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM).

## 1.2 Going Concern

There is no intention to discontinue the service provided by Llais for the public sector as evidenced by the award of funding from the Welsh Government for 2025/2026 and/or the lack of regulations/legislation necessary to wind up Llais.

Llais' Statement of Financial Position as of 31 March 2025 shows net liabilities of £55,000. This reflects the inclusion of liabilities falling due in 2025/2026 which would fall to be met by Grant-in-Aid from the Welsh Government. Under the normal conventions applying to control over income and expenditure, as detailed in Managing Welsh Public Money, Grant-in-Aid may not be issued in advance of need. However, there is no reason to believe that, if required, Grant-in-Aid and Senedd approval of any associated resource budget would not be forthcoming.

It has accordingly been considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for these financial statements.

## 1.3 Establishment of Llais 1 April 2023

The Non-Current and Current Assets and Liabilities transferring to Llais from Powys tHB were transferred in line with Welsh Government issued guidelines and statements. These Assets and Liabilities are recorded in Llais accounts as being transferred on 1 April 2023, and they are included within the 2023/2024 comparative figures.

## 1.4 Income, Funding and Expenditure

The main source of funding for Llais is from Welsh Government via an annual funding allocation.

The accruals basis of accounting means that income and expenditure disclosed in the accounts are accounted for in the year that it takes place, not when cash payments are made or received.

Expenditure is that which relates directly to the activities of Llais.

Llais met its financial obligations by ensuring net expenditure did not exceed the net revenue resource allocation.

## 1.5 Pensions

Llais' Chief Executive and staff are eligible for the NHS Pension Scheme, a defined benefit scheme accounted for as a defined contribution scheme due to its structure. As of 1 April 2024, employer contributions increased from 20.68% to 23.7%. Under a transitional arrangement since 2019/2020, Llais continues to pay 14.38% directly, while the additional 9.4% is funded by the Welsh Government and paid to the NHS Business Services Authority. Although Llais budgets for the 14.38%, the notional cost of the additional 9.4% (£353,000) is reflected in its annual accounts.

Further information is provided within the Remuneration Report on page 109.

## 1.6 Employee Benefits

Salaries and national insurance contributions for current employees are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure as the employees' services are delivered.

Llais accounts for paid annual leave as a liability where the compensation for absence is due to be settled within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the service.

## 1.7 Property, Plant and Equipment

The minimum level for capitalisation for Property, Plant and Equipment is £5,000 inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the assets by equal instalments over their estimated useful lives. Depreciation is provided from the date the asset commences its useful life.

Asset lives are normally as follows:

| <b>Asset</b>            | <b>Asset Life</b>                                               |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Office equipment        | 5 years                                                         |
| I.T related equipment   | 5 years                                                         |
| Leaseholds improvements | Term of the lease or to break clause up to a maximum of 5 years |
| Right of use asset      | Term of the lease or to break clause up to a maximum of 5 years |

Property, plant, and equipment are included at cost as any adjustments arising from revaluation would not be material. Assets are assessed each year for any indications of impairment. Where indications exist and any possible differences are estimated to be material, the recoverable amount of the asset would be estimated and, where this is less than the carrying amount of the asset, an impairment loss would be recognised for the shortfall. To date, it has not been necessary to recognise any impairments of assets. All property occupied by Llais is leased.

## 1.8 Intangible Assets

The minimum level for capitalisation for an intangible asset is £5,000 inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Information technology software has been capitalised as intangible assets and amortised on a straight-line basis over their expected useful lives (normally 5 years). Amortisation is calculated from the date that the asset commences its useful life.

## 1.9 Right of Use Assets

IFRS 16 has replaced the current leases standard IAS 17 and requires that contracts are assessed to confirm if they convey the right to use an asset in exchange for consideration. If they do, they are accounted for in accordance with IFRS16 with a right of use asset and lease liability being recognised at the commencement date. The right of use asset is initially measured at cost, which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for initial direct costs, prepayments, and incentives.

The right of use asset is depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right of use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of the right of use assets are determined on the same basis as those of property, plant, and equipment assets.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, using the HMT issued incremental borrowing rate. As Llais' leases for the offices do not contain an implicit rate of interest, the HMT discount rate has been used.

In accordance with IFRS 16 – Leases, as interpreted and applied by the HM Treasury Financial Reporting Manual (FReM), Llais recognises a right-of-use asset and corresponding lease liability for most leases of assets.

However, in line with the optional recognition exemptions permitted under IFRS 16 paragraph 5(a) and adopted by the FReM, Llais has elected not to recognise leases where:

- The lease term is 12 months or less, and
- The lease does not contain a purchase option or
- The underlying Right of Use asset is immaterial.

## **1.10 VAT**

Llais is not registered for VAT. All expenditure is reported inclusive of VAT where applicable, as VAT is irrecoverable.

## **1.11 Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include all funds held in accounts to which Llais has instant access. Funds are drawn down into the bank account to pay liabilities as they fall due.

## **1.12 Prepayments**

A prepayment is an amount paid in advance, usually for items such as rent or rates. It is initially recognised as an asset and is expensed in the period when the benefit is received.

## 1.13 Trade payables

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided prior to the end of the financial year and which are unpaid. Due to their short-term nature, they are measured at amortised cost and are not discounted. The amounts are unsecured.

## 1.14 Accrued Leave

Staff annual leave accrual is accounted for within staff costs and Note 9. The accrual is a calculation to reflect the net annual leave owed by staff or owing to staff at the year end. Any movement in year is charged as an accrual within salaries.

## 1.15 Provisions

Provisions are included in the accounts for liabilities that are likely or certain to arise but uncertain as to the amount or dates on which they will arise. Provisions are created or increased by making a charge to revenue expenditure in the year of creation. When the expenditure is actually incurred, the expenditure is charged directly to the provision. The provision included within these accounts are regarded as short term, within 1 year and medium term, between 2 and 5 years. All provisions are subject to annual review, to ensure they are still relevant and sufficient to fund the specific future liability.

The provision in the accounts includes that for the works required to restore the property back to its original condition prior to tenancy. This is a requirement of lease agreements, and the clause is activated when Llais vacates offices.

Future reimbursements for an historic Permanent Injury Benefit claim have also been provided for.

## 1.16 Accounting Standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted

IAS 8 requires disclosure in respect of new accounting standards, amendments and interpretations that are, or will be, applicable after the accounting period.

Changes to the 2025/2026 FReM will be made in respect of non-investment asset valuations and guidance will be provided on accounting for social benefits.

The financial impact of these changes is not yet known.

**IFRS 17: Insurance Contracts** replaces IFRS 4: Insurance Contracts and is to be included in the FReM for mandatory implementation from 2025/2026. It establishes the principles for the recognition, measurement, presentation, and disclosure of insurance contracts within the scope of this Standard.

It is not anticipated that Llais will be impacted by the implementation of this standard.



## 2. Staff costs

### 2.1 Employee costs

|                                                      | 2024/2025       |             | 2023/2024         |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------|
|                                                      | Permanent staff | Other staff | Total staff costs |
|                                                      | £'000           | £'000       | £'000             |
| Salaries                                             | 4,152           | 474         | 4,626             |
| Social Security costs                                | 456             | 0           | 456               |
| Employer contributions to NHS Pension Scheme         | 541             | 0           | 541               |
| <b>Total net salary costs</b>                        | <b>5,149</b>    | <b>474</b>  | <b>5,623</b>      |
| Voluntary Early Release Scheme                       | 396             | 0           | 396               |
| Apprentice Levy                                      | 6               | 0           | 6                 |
| Notional 9.4% Pension Contribution (2023/2024; 6.3%) | 353             | 0           | 353               |
| <b>Total Staff Costs</b>                             | <b>5,904</b>    | <b>474</b>  | <b>6,378</b>      |

Further information on staff costs is included within the Remuneration & Staff Report.  
Other staff costs includes agency and bank staff.

### 3. Other Operating Expenditure

Other operating expenditure consists of:

|                                    |      | 2024/2025    | 2023/2024    |
|------------------------------------|------|--------------|--------------|
|                                    | Note | £'000        | £'000        |
| <b>Operating Expenditure</b>       |      |              |              |
| Rentals under operating leases     |      | 224          | 254          |
| Other accommodation costs          |      | 250          | 219          |
| Software Licences                  |      | 309          | 94           |
| Information technology             |      | 80           | 207          |
| Professional fees                  |      | 44           | 86           |
| Training & development             |      | 35           | 88           |
| Travel & subsistence               |      | 55           | 41           |
| Audit fees – Internal audit        |      | 18           | 19           |
| Audit fees – External audit        |      | 43*          | 30           |
| Specific Programmes                |      | 240          | 252          |
| Service Level Agreements           |      | 149          | 147          |
| Other staff related costs          |      | 33           | 18           |
| Other administrative expenses      |      | 147          | 136          |
|                                    |      | <b>1,627</b> | <b>1,591</b> |
| <b>Non-cash items</b>              |      |              |              |
| Depreciation on right of use asset | 4    | 242          | 192          |
| Depreciation of PPE                | 6    | 2            | 4            |
| Loss on disposals of PPE           | 6    | 6            | 0            |
| Amortisation                       | 7    | 124          | 0            |
| Provision                          | 11   | (3)          | 129          |
|                                    |      | <b>371</b>   | <b>325</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>                       |      | <b>1,998</b> | <b>1,916</b> |

The information technology line from 2023/2024 has been disaggregated to show software costs and information tech costs. \*Includes an accrual from prior year for £6,000, that had not previously been adjusted

## 4. Rights of Use Assets

|                                        | Digital<br>£'000 | Buildings<br>£'000 | Total<br>£'000 |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| <b>Cost or valuation</b>               |                  |                    |                |
| <b>At 1 April 2024</b>                 | 454              | 91                 | 545            |
| Additions                              | 0                | 47                 | 47             |
| Disposals                              | 0                | 0                  | 0              |
| <b>At 31 March 2025</b>                | <b>454</b>       | <b>138</b>         | <b>592</b>     |
| <b>Depreciation</b>                    |                  |                    |                |
| <b>At 1 April 2024</b>                 | 162              | 30                 | 192            |
| Charged in the year                    | 195              | 47                 | 242            |
| Disposals                              | 0                | 0                  | 0              |
| <b>At 31 March 2025</b>                | <b>357</b>       | <b>77</b>          | <b>434</b>     |
| <b>Net book value at 31 March 2025</b> | <b>97</b>        | <b>61</b>          | <b>158</b>     |
| Net book value at 31 March 2024        | 292              | 61                 | 353            |

In accordance with IFRS 16 – Leases, as interpreted and applied by the HM Treasury Financial Reporting Manual (FReM), Llais recognises a right-of-use asset and corresponding lease liability for most leases of assets.

## Maturity Analysis

|                                                                               | 2025         |             | 2025         | 2024         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
|                                                                               | Digital      | Buildings   | Total        | Total        |
|                                                                               | £'000        | £'000       | £'000        | £'000        |
| Contractual undiscounted cash flows relating to lease liabilities             |              |             |              |              |
| Within one year                                                               | 100          | 36          | 136          | 0            |
| Between one and five years                                                    | 0            | 30          | 30           | 366          |
| After five years                                                              | 0            | 0           | 0            | 0            |
| <b>Sum</b>                                                                    | <b>100</b>   | <b>66</b>   | <b>166</b>   | <b>366</b>   |
| <b>Less future charges allocated to future periods</b>                        | (1)          | (5)         | (6)          | (12)         |
| <b>Minimum lease payments</b>                                                 | <b>99</b>    | <b>61</b>   | <b>160</b>   | <b>354</b>   |
| Included in                                                                   |              |             |              |              |
| Current trade liabilities                                                     | 90           | 33          | 132          | 218          |
| Non current trade liabilities                                                 | 0            | 28          | 28           | 136          |
|                                                                               | <b>99</b>    | <b>61</b>   | <b>160</b>   | <b>354</b>   |
| <b>Amount recognised in SoCNE</b>                                             |              |             |              |              |
| Depreciation                                                                  | 195          | 47          | 242          | 192          |
| Interest on lease liabilities                                                 | 5            | 5           | 10           | 8            |
| <b>Amount recognised in Statement of Cashflows (net of irrecoverable VAT)</b> |              |             |              |              |
| Interest expense                                                              | 5            | 5           | 10           | 8            |
| Repayments of principal on leases                                             | (200)        | (50)        | (250)        | (195)        |
| <b>Total cashflows</b>                                                        | <b>(195)</b> | <b>(45)</b> | <b>(240)</b> | <b>(187)</b> |

## 5. Other commitments under leases

|                                               | 31 March 2025 | 31 March 2024 |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
|                                               | £'000         | £'000         |
| <b>Obligations under leases</b>               |               |               |
| Land and buildings                            | –             | –             |
| Expiry within 1 year                          | 16            | –             |
| Expiry after 1 year but not more than 5 years | 11            | –             |
|                                               | <b>27</b>     | <b>–</b>      |

In line with the optional recognition exemptions permitted under IFRS 16 paragraph 5(a) and adopted by the FReM, and IAS 1, Llais has elected not to recognise leases where:

- There were no receivables falling due after more than 1 year
- The lease term is 12 months or less, or
- The lease does not contain a purchase option, and
- The lease is not material to the financial statements

During the reporting period, Llais entered into 2 short-term licences commencing in March 2025 for office accommodation. 1 of which is for Welsh Government Buildings in Carmarthen, which has a licence term of 12 months and a lease commitment of £4,700. The other corresponds to a 24-month licence (with a 3 month notice period) with Neath Port Talbot Brecon College for an annual commitment of £10,700.

In line with the exemption above:

- The leases are not recognised on the Statement of Financial Position. However, the lease payments
- Will be expensed to the Statement of Net Expenditure on a straight-line basis over the lease term

This treatment is consistent with Llais' accounting policy on short-term leases and is applied across all such qualifying arrangements.

## 6. Property, Plant and Equipment

|                                        | Office<br>Equipment | Leasehold<br>Improvements | Total     |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------|
|                                        | £'000               | £'000                     | £'000     |
| <b>Cost or valuation</b>               |                     |                           |           |
| <b>At 1 April 2024</b>                 | 20                  | 0                         | 20        |
| Additions                              | 0                   | 26                        | 26        |
| Disposals                              | (20)                | 0                         | (20)      |
| <b>At 31 March 2025</b>                | <b>0</b>            | <b>26</b>                 | <b>26</b> |
| <b>Depreciation and impairment</b>     |                     |                           |           |
| <b>At 1 April 2024</b>                 | 12                  | 0                         | 12        |
| Charged in the year                    | 2                   | 0                         | 2         |
| Disposals                              | (14)                | 0                         | (14)      |
| <b>At 31 March 2024</b>                | <b>0</b>            | <b>0</b>                  | <b>0</b>  |
| <b>Net book value at 31 March 2025</b> | <b>0</b>            | <b>26</b>                 | <b>26</b> |
| Net book value at 31 March 2024        | 8                   | 0                         | 8         |

During 2024/2025, Llais disposed of its telephone system and transitioned to Microsoft Teams for telephony services. The transition work was carried out internally using existing Microsoft licenses, with no additional external costs incurred. The net book value of the disposed telephone system has been written off accordingly.

Prior to the commencement of Llais' lease in April 2025 at Cathays Park, Cardiff, and at the request of Llais, the Welsh Government undertook various construction works on the designated leased area. In accordance with IAS 16 Property, Plant and Equipment, the related asset has been recognised prior to the lease commencement date, as Llais was contractually liable to pay for the improvements.

There has been no impairment of any assets and they are shown at cost which is considered to be the 'fair value'.

## 7. Intangible Assets

|                                        | Information<br>Technology | Total      |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|
|                                        | £'000                     | £'000      |
| <b>Cost or valuation</b>               |                           |            |
| <b>At 1 April 2024</b>                 | 622                       | 622        |
| Additions                              | 0                         | 0          |
| Disposals                              | 0                         | 0          |
| <b>At 31 March 2025</b>                | <b>622</b>                | <b>622</b> |
| <b>Amortisation</b>                    |                           |            |
| <b>At 1 April 2024</b>                 | 0                         | 0          |
| Charged in the year                    | 124                       | 124        |
| Disposals                              | 0                         | 0          |
| <b>At 31 March 2025</b>                | <b>124</b>                | <b>124</b> |
| <b>Net book value at 31 March 2025</b> | <b>498</b>                | <b>498</b> |
| Net book value at 31 March 2024        | 622                       | 622        |

There has been no impairment of any assets and they are shown at cost which is considered to be the 'fair value'.

Llais has purchased all intangible assets.

## 8. Trade and other receivables

|                                       | 31 March 2025 | 31 March 2024 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
|                                       | £'000         | £'000         |
| <b>Current Assets:</b>                |               |               |
| Trade and other receivables           | 0             | 0             |
| Prepayments and accrued income        | 201           | 155           |
| <b>Total trade and other payables</b> | <b>201</b>    | <b>155</b>    |

There were no receivables falling due after more than 1 year.

## 9. Trade payables and other current liabilities

|                                               | 31 March 2025 | 31 March 2024 |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
|                                               | £'000         | £'000         |
| <b>Current liabilities:</b>                   |               |               |
| Trade payables                                | 46            | 25            |
| Other payables & accruals                     | 164           | 448           |
| Pay accruals                                  | 404           | 215           |
| Taxation and social security costs            | 22            | 15            |
| Accrual for holiday entitlement not yet taken | 33            | 28            |
| <b>Total trade and other payables</b>         | <b>669</b>    | <b>731</b>    |

The pay accruals line has been disaggregated to show taxation and social security costs and the accrual for untaken holiday entitlement.

10. Cash and Cash Equivalents

|                                                  | 2024/2025 | 2023/2024 |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
|                                                  | £'000     | £'000     |
| Balance at 1 April                               | 72        | 0         |
| Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances  | 21        | 72        |
| <b>Balance at 31 March</b>                       | <b>93</b> | <b>72</b> |
| The following balances at 31 March were held at: |           |           |
| Commercial banks and cash in hand                | 93        | 72        |
| <b>Balance at 31 March</b>                       | <b>93</b> | <b>72</b> |

## 11. Provision for Liabilities and Charges

|                            |                  | 31 March 2025 |            | 31 March 2024 |
|----------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
|                            | £'000            | £'000         | £'000      | £'000         |
|                            | Permanent Injury | Dilapidations | Total      | Total         |
| Balance at 1 April         | 86               | 182           | 268        | 154           |
| Provided in year           | 5                | 7             | 12         | 129           |
| Provision utilised in year | (16)             | (48)          | (15)       | (2)           |
| Unwinding of Discount      | 2                | (6)           | (65)       | (15)          |
| Provision released         | 0                | 0             | 2          | 2             |
| <b>Balance at 31 March</b> | <b>77</b>        | <b>125</b>    | <b>202</b> | <b>268</b>    |
| <b>Falling Due:</b>        |                  |               |            |               |
| Within 1 year              | 16               | 59            | 75         | 73            |
| Between 2 and 5 years      | 61               | 66            | 127        | 182           |
| Later than 5 years         | 0                | 0             | 0          | 13            |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>77</b>        | <b>125</b>    | <b>202</b> | <b>268</b>    |

The Permanent Injury provision relates to an injury benefit of a former employee of the Board of Community Health Councils, this liability was transferred from Powys Health Board to Llais on the 1st April 2023.

During 2024/2025, Llais relinquished 4 leases and a dilapidation liability arose on 3 of those leases. Based upon the dilapidation costs incurred, the provision across the rest of Llais' estate has been reviewed for accuracy and adjusted.

## 12. Financial Instruments

Llais' cash requirements are met through funding provided by the Welsh Government. Llais is not therefore exposed to significant liquidity risks.

The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with Llais' expected purchase and usage requirements and the Commissioner is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity, interest rate or foreign currency risk.

There is no material difference between the book values of the organisation's financial assets and liabilities at 31 March 2025 (31 March 2024; £nil).

## 13. Capital Commitments

There were no contracted capital commitments at 31 March 2025 (31 March 2024; £nil)

## 14. Related-Party Transactions

In 2024/2025, Llais received cash funding of £8.123m (2023/2024; £6.849m) from the Welsh Government, against confirmed Grant-in-Aid funding of £8.123m (2023/2024; £7.744m).

The Welsh Government is regarded as a related party. In addition to the Grant in Aid funding aforementioned, material transactions with the Welsh Government during 2024/2025 were:

- notional funding of £0.353m (2023/2024; £0.195m) from Welsh Government to cover Notional 9.4% Pension Contribution
- £0 Reimbursement to the Welsh Government for staff salaries and corresponding deductions paid on our behalf (2023/2024; £0.104m)
- Llais had no accruals with the Welsh Government (2023/2024; £0.017m) in relation to staff costs

No employees including key management personnel or board members, nor their related parties were involved directly or indirectly in any transactions with Llais during the year, apart from normal expense claims, salary payments etc.

Information about key management personnel is included in the Remuneration Report. However, for transparency we do disclose transactions with organisations in which senior staff or members or any of their family held positions of influence during the year.

During 2024/2025 Llais, in the normal course of its business, entered into transactions with the following organisation in which Board or Executive Members or other related parties had an interest.

| Name                | Relationship with related party                       |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Bamidele Adenipekun | Associate – Practice Solutions Limited                |
| Alyson Thomas       | Married to an associate of Practice Solutions Limited |

Practice Solutions Limited was paid £3,240 during 2024/2025 (2023/2024; £29,400), these costs are included in note 3.

Neither party were involved in the commissioning of the work.

**15. Events After the Reporting Period**

There were no significant events occurring between the year end and the approval of these accounts.

These financial statements were authorised for issue on 5th November 2025 by Alyson Thomas.

# Glossary of terms

**Agenda for Change** – These are the pay and conditions framework used in Llais. It provides a fair and transparent system of pay, job evaluation, conditions and pay progression.

**Capital** – Spending on land and premises and provision, adaptation, renewal, replacement or demolition of buildings, equipment and vehicles.

**Community care** – A way of providing services to people to help them stay in their own homes as long as they are able, or in other settings in the community such as residential homes.

**Complaints advocacy** – Complaints advocacy is a specialist service which supports people who are considering, or wishing to make a complaint about the health and social services they receive.

**Consultation** – The action or process of formally consulting or discussing.

**Co-production** – Co-production is when professionals work in partnership with people who have lived experience, to develop solutions to challenges in public services and communities.

**Corporate governance** – A system of accountability to citizens, service users, stakeholders and the wider community within which health and social care organisations work, take decisions and lead their people to achieve their objectives.

**Digitally excluded** – Not able to use digital devices (such as computers or smart phones and the internet).

**Engagement** – An active and participative process by which people can influence and shape policy and services that includes a wide range of methods and techniques as explained within the National Principles for Public Engagement Wales.

**Equity** – Recognising that we do not all start in the same place, and we may have to change to make things more balanced for everyone.

**General practice** – Refers to the services provided by general practitioners (GPs), also known as family doctors.

**Insights** – Insights are valuable pieces of information or understanding that are gained from analysing data or observations from our engagement work. They provide a deeper understanding of a situation or issue and can help in making informed decisions.

**Mean** – Is the average of a set of numbers. To calculate the mean, you add up all the numbers in the set and then divide that sum by the total number of numbers. For example, if you have the numbers 2, 4, and 6, the mean would be  $(2 + 4 + 6)$  divided by 3, which equals 4. The mean gives you an idea of the “central” value of the numbers in the set.

**Median** – The middle value in a set of numbers when they are arranged in order from smallest to largest. If there is an odd number of values, the median is the number right in the middle. If there is an even number of values, the median is the average of the 2 middle numbers. The median gives you a good sense of the “middle” of the data, especially when there are extreme values that might skew the ‘mean’.

**Outpatient** – Provided on an appointment basis without the need to be admitted to or stay in hospital, e.g. assess need for further treatment, follow up appointment after a period of treatment.

**Primary care** – Primary care refers to services provided by providers who act as the principal point of consultation e.g. GP practices, dental practices, community pharmacies and high street optometrists.

**Representation** – Representations made by LLAIs to NHS bodies and local authorities, and those acting on their behalf or working jointly e.g., Regional Partnership Boards regarding the provision of health or social services.

**Secondary care** – Also known as acute care, this refers to specialist medical care or surgery provided in a hospital setting either as an in-patient or outpatient service. Patients seen in hospitals are generally under the care of consultant, not a GP.

**Service change** – Service change can include service reorganisation, reconfiguration, service redesign, service variation, service improvement, or service expansion.

**Stakeholder** – An individual or organisation with an interest in health and/or social care initiatives. Stakeholders can be organisations such as local authorities or individuals such as residents.

**Terms and conditions** – The specific details of a job agreement between an employer and an employee. These terms outline important aspects of the employment relationship, such as salary, benefits, leave entitlements and working hours.

**Third sector** – The part of an economy or society comprising non-governmental and non-profit-making organisations or associations, including charities, voluntary and community groups, cooperatives, etc.

**Under-represented groups** – This refers to groups of people who are socially marginalized or under-recognised. This can include people from minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities, people who are neurodivergent, people from a lower socioeconomic background, LGBTQIA+ people and people with different religious backgrounds.

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