

LLAIS

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



Annual Plan 2026-2027



Accessible formats

This document is also available in Welsh.

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You can download it from our website or ask for a copy by contacting our office.

Who we are and what we do

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 can choose what we work on, how, and who we work with.

We were established in April 2023 and work across all areas of Wales. Our Board sets our strategic direction. It ensures we are on track to do what we said we would – in the way that best meets people's needs.

Our strategic vision and priorities 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.



As we enter the final year of our 3-year Strategic Plan, Llais stands at a pivotal moment.

We have established ourselves as the independent voice of people in health and social care in Wales. We have built relationships across communities, services and government. We have demonstrated that lived experience, when gathered carefully and presented credibly, can influence change.

This year, we face both challenge and opportunity. A new Welsh Government will take office following the May 2026 Senedd elections, bringing fresh priorities and renewed focus on the issues that matter most to communities.

But the context remains challenging.

Health and social care services remain under intense pressure, with demand outstripping capacity and staff working in difficult circumstances. Inequalities persist. And trust in public systems depends increasingly on whether people feel heard and see change as a result.

We also see progress. Services are listening more carefully. Partnerships are deepening. Digital innovation is creating new possibilities for engagement and access. And communities are telling us they want to be heard. Not just consulted but genuinely involved in decisions that affect their lives.

In 2026–27, our focus is clear:

not simply to hear more voices, but to make sure those voices lead to demonstrable improvement.

We will convene communities, challenge constructively where services fall short, hold services to account against the People's Principles, and work with partners to improve outcomes.

System improvement is our ultimate aim. Convening, challenge and accountability are the means by which we can achieve it.

Foreward

Professor Medwin Hughes, Chair



Context: Where we are now

3 years after our establishment, Llais operates in a system that is both more connected and more strained than when we began. People continue to wait too long to access the care and support they need, whether that is seeing a GP or dentist, or getting social care support to be able to live independently.

Unpaid carers remain under immense pressure, often reaching crisis point before help arrives. Mental health services are overstretched, with children and young people particularly affected by long waits for assessment and support.

At the same time, we see growing recognition that the status quo is unsustainable.

Our manifesto, *The People's Priorities*, set out what communities across Wales want to see: fairer access, earlier intervention, person-centred care, and services that work together.

We will use **what** people told us they want to see, together with *The People's Principles* a set of 8 principles that reflect **how** people told us they want their services to be delivered, to explore how services are planned, designed and delivered throughout our work in 2026 and beyond.

Our role in 2026–27

This is the final year of our current Strategic Plan. It is a year to bring together, deepen, and demonstrate our impact. We will build on our community engagement approaches, strengthen our evidence base, and use our independence to challenge constructively where change is needed.

We will also prepare for the future. By March 2027, we will have co-designed our next Strategic Plan, working with communities, services, our people and our partners to set our direction for the years ahead.

This will help us to make sure we continue to focus on the areas people have told us is important to them, at the same time allowing us to adapt as the needs of the people we serve change, doing so in a way that helps shape the priorities of the incoming government.

While this Annual Plan sets out the areas where we will focus our effort, there may be a lot of change in health and social care after a new government is formed, so we will also maintain the flexibility and capacity to respond to emerging issues affecting services and people's experiences of care. Listening to people in real time, identifying patterns in what we hear, and raising concerns where necessary will remain a central part of our role.

Our core challenge for 2026–27 is making sure that people's lived experiences drive the design, development and delivery of their health and social care services in a way that shows how their voices have made a difference for everyone. In a pressured system, influence must be disciplined, evidence-based and persistent.



Alyson Thomas
Chief Executive, Llais

Our plan on a page

Our statutory purpose

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.

Our 5 strategic priorities

Drive a national conversation about the future of health and social care

Push for services that meet everyone's needs

Work together better

Help people and services use technology in ways that work for them

Grow and improve as an organisation

Our 8 principles

Access that works for everyone

Dignity and respect, every time

Clear and honest communication

Joined-up care that feels seamless

Timely care, and support while waiting

Care should recognise and respond to the whole person

Inclusive, accessible and fair services for all

Care and support that enables independence

What success looks like

People's experiences shape decisions

Services respond and improve, and

The difference we make is visible to communities across Wales

Planning our community engagement activities deliberately, with a clear focus on under-represented voices.



Supporting individuals to share their experiences safely and confidently.



Working within our communities to understand whether change is being felt in practice.



How Llais creates change

Llais exists to help make sure that people's lived experience leads to better health and social care for everyone living in Wales.



Translating those experiences into clear, evidence-based calls for action.



Reporting publicly on what has changed, and what has not.



Following up persistently with decision-makers until we can see the actions being taken in response.



Our aim is not simply to amplify people's voices, but to help make sure those voices lead to meaningful improvements that are visible to the people who shared them.

The five ways of working described in the Future Generations Act have guided how we built this Plan. Long-term thinking shapes our national conversation and the development of our future strategy; prevention comes through sharing early insight and learning from complaints; integration is strengthened through our work with Regional Partnership Boards and service change; involvement runs through our community engagement; and collaboration underpins all five priorities. By focusing on fairness, access, inclusion and more joined-up care, the Plan also supports the national well-being goals and helps create a healthier, more equal and more cohesive Wales.

The People's Principles: our public standard

Through our national engagement work, people told us what they wanted from their health and social care services.

The resulting People's Principles describe how good care and support should look and feel:



Access that works for everyone

Care should be accessible whenever it is needed - online, by phone, or in person - without barriers caused by geography, language, or digital exclusion.



Dignity and respect, every time

People want to be listened to, believed, and treated with kindness at every stage of care.



Clear and honest communication

No one should be left out. People want timely updates, plain language, and honesty about delays.



Joined-up care that feels seamless

Services should work together around the person, so people don't have to repeat their story or find their way through services alone.



Timely care, and support while waiting

Care where and when people need it is essential for safety, wellbeing, and trust. When waiting is unavoidable, support and clear communication should ensure people never feel forgotten.



Care should recognise and respond to the whole person

People want services that understand their unique circumstances, treat them with compassion, and consider all aspects of their health and life, not just a condition.



Inclusive, accessible and fair services for all

Care should reflect rights and identities, and remove barriers related to language, culture, disability, and digital access.



Care and support that enables independence

Care and support should help people live with dignity, connection, and choice. Meaningful support for unpaid carers is needed, including respite, advice, and emotional support.



These Principles represent our mandate from communities across Wales

In 2026–27, we will use them not only as a values framework that drives our own activities, we will use them to help make sure health and social care services are accountable to the communities they serve.

We will assess engagement practice, service change and representations against these Principles and report transparently on progress.

Our strategic focus for 2026–27

We will continue to work to deliver the 5 priorities set out in our Strategic Plan:

1. Drive a national conversation about the future of health and social care
2. Push for services that meet everyone's needs
3. Work together better
4. Help people and services use technology in ways that work for them
5. Grow and improve as an organisation.

Our small organisation has a big set of responsibilities. So its important that each year we focus our activities where we can make the biggest difference for people and communities across Wales.

This year, we will focus on:

- Engaging effectively with people in communities with poorer health and wellbeing, and children and young people.
- Learning from complaints and lived experience, to make meaningful representations that lead to positive change.
- Demonstrating change through follow-up and reporting.
- Embedding the People's Principles as a public accountability standard that's used to frame the way services are planned, designed and delivered.

Alongside these priorities, we will continue to deliver our core statutory functions and day-to-day work, listening to people across Wales. This includes supporting people to have their voices heard through our enquiries and complaints advocacy services, gathering insight through engagement and lived experience, and working with partners and communities to ensure that people's views inform decisions about health and social care.

Our Strategic Leads will continue to provide thematic leadership on issues that matter most to people, working with communities, services and national partners to deepen understanding of people's experiences and identify opportunities for improvement. Insight gathered through this work will contribute to our representations to decision-makers and help shape national discussions about the future of services.

Equality, diversity and inclusion will continue to underpin all of our work. We will deliver the commitments set out in our Strategic Equality Plan so that no one is left behind, and that the voices of people whose experiences are less often heard are reflected in our engagement, insight and influence.

01

Priority 1: Drive a national conversation



Health and social care services cannot improve without honest, inclusive discussion with people and communities about what people value, what is safe and sustainable, and how communities balance competing demands.

Too often, conversations about the future happen behind closed doors, with proposals being developed and announced rather than being co-designed with communities from the start.

People across Wales have told us they want to be part of shaping services, not just users of them. They want to understand the challenges and constraints services face, but they also want transparency about where resources are going and why some areas may be prioritised over others.

In 2026–27, we will:

- Explore how services are responding to what people have told us they want from their health and social services in the future.
- Lead a national conversation on rights and responsibilities in health and social care, with particular focus on:
 - Women's health and maternity/neonatal services
 - Primary and community care services
 - Mental health
 - Social care access, sustainability and integration
 - Services for neurodivergent people and their families
 - Armed forces
 - Safety and emergency care.
- Reporting on the themes we hear across Wales where people's lived experiences highlight systemic challenges.
- Understand the real 'end-to-end' experiences of people using services so these can be used by services to improve.
- Share learning about what enables meaningful engagement and what limits progress with different groups of people.

02

Priority 2: Push for services that meet everyone's needs

Not everyone experiences health and social care equally. People in the most deprived communities in Wales live, on average, 20 years fewer in good health than those in the most affluent areas. Yet GP practices serving deprived areas typically have fewer GPs and nurses per patient.

Access to services is worse in rural and remote areas, where transport and distance create additional barriers. Welsh speakers cannot always access care in their first language. And when things go wrong, the challenges of using complaints systems means that many people give up rather than pursue their concerns.

We hear these patterns in every region. They are not inevitable, they are the result of choices about where resources are directed, how services are organised, and what standards are set and enforced.

In 2026–27, we will:

- Further develop our approach and involvement in major proposals to change services, including multi regional proposals, and make our involvement clearer for communities.
- Prioritise engagement in communities experiencing the greatest health inequalities.
- Strengthen the links between individual complaints and wider learning, while adapting to the new Listening to People NHS Wales complaints model.

We will also put stronger foundations in place so people and communities can get involved in health and social care services in ways that really work for them:

- Launch and develop the People's Principles Alliance, creating a network of community and representative organisations to support better engagement practice across Wales.
- Embed regional Sounding Boards as structured forums linking communities and decision-makers.

We want to make sure that when people get involved, it leads to better care and support for everyone living in Wales.



03

Priority 3: Work together better



Health and social care services are not delivered by one organisation or sector. They involve NHS bodies, local authorities, third-sector organisations, private providers, and informal support networks. When these work well together, people experience joined-up, seamless care.

When they don't, people fall through gaps, repeat their stories endlessly, and struggle to find their way through fragmented systems. Integration is not a new idea, it has been a policy priority for years, but progress has been slow and inconsistent.

People tell us they still experience services that don't talk to each other, transitions that feel unsafe (especially for young people moving from child to adult services), and complaints processes that are confusing when care and support crosses boundaries or services.

We cannot deliver on our mission without strong, productive partnerships. This year we'll work more closely with our key partners to help make sure the whole health and social care system takes real steps towards joined up care.

In 2026–27, we will:

- Use engagement and complaints advocacy data to inform regional planning and conversations about integration through the Population Needs Assessments.
- Get involved in national and regional forums to help make sure lived experience shapes decision-making.
- Bring our Board directly into communities through structured engagement activities.
- Co-design our next Strategic Plan with our communities and partners.

Digital technology has the potential to make health and social care more accessible, efficient, and responsive to people's individual needs and circumstances. But it can also create new barriers if not designed and introduced with people's needs at the centre.

In the year ahead we will strengthen how people's voices on digital inclusion inform national discussions. We will work with partners such as the Digital Inclusion Alliance and Digital Health and Care Wales, to help make sure the lived experiences of people facing digital exclusion shape the development of digital health and care services.

We consistently hear that people want technology to work for them, not to replace human contact or make it harder to get help. The challenge is to make sure that digital innovation improves access and experience for everyone, not just those who are already digitally confident or have access to technology.

In 2026–27, we will:

- Launch and take forward our own digital strategy.
- Represent people's views and experiences in the development of digital tools such as the NHS Wales App.
- Work with partners including the Digital Inclusion Alliance to create a citizen panel on digital inclusion – so that people's lived experiences inform and influence national digital inclusion work.
- Bring communities and services together to talk about new technologies, including AI, so that they're developed and used safely in ways that work for everyone.





Our impact starts with us. When we're clear, consistent and working well together, we can make a bigger difference for people and communities across Wales.

As we head into the final year of our Strategic Plan, we'll bring all our internal development and improvement work together into one simple programme. This will help us work in a clearer and more joined-up way, and make sure our people, ways of working and resources all support the People's Principles.

Being clear, accountable and showing continuous progress matters - for the difference we make for people and communities and for the wellbeing of our people.

In 2026-27, we will:

- Report on our impact in a clear and consistent way, using the People's Principles to guide how and what we share.
- Build our all-Wales standards into our people's work objectives, so everyone knows what good looks like and how to achieve it.
- Improve how we recruit and welcome new colleagues, so we bring in the right people and help them settle in well.
- Introduce new and strengthened leadership, role based and personal learning and development support, so people feel confident and set up to succeed.
- Strengthen our performance management and supervision frameworks, so people get the feedback, support and guidance they need to do their best work.
- Review how our financial systems are working and agree improvements where needed.
- Keep improving how we collect and use data and information, including through our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system so our insight is strong and reliable.
- Stay up to date with legal, and policy, changes that may affect our work and make sure we are ready for anything new.
- Continue developing our governance, ways of working, and statutory reporting responsibilities so that we make the best use of our resources.

Measuring success

We'll measure success by whether people and communities can see real change happening and not just by how busy we've been.

We'll look for clear signs that our work has made a positive difference, and we'll be open about what has changed and what still needs to happen.

We'll check that we are working to our standards in the same way across Wales, listen to what communities, partners and our people tell us, and make sure we follow up on every representation we make.

Our Board will keep a close eye on this so that our work stays focused on what matters most to people and communities across Wales.



Contact us

If you would like to give us feedback on this publication or wish to receive this information in an alternative format or language, please contact us on the details below.

We welcome telephone calls in Welsh. If you write to us in Welsh, we will answer in Welsh.

This will not lead to a delay in responding to your correspondence.

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