

LLAIS NEATH PORT TALBOT & SWANSEA REGION ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Llais Local:
Swansea City Centre
Autumn Winter 2025

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:

NPTandSwansea.enquiries@llaiscymru.org

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

Our contact information can be found at the end of this report.

What is a Llais Local?

Llais Local is our way of listening directly to people in their own communities about health and social care services. We meet people where they are and spend time in those places for a set period. This helps us reach more people in a way that is friendly, open, and easy for everyone to join in.

We used a multi-method approach including face-to-face conversations, local surveys (both digital and paper-based), and drop-in sessions. We engaged with community groups, held pop-up events, and visited GP surgeries, building partnerships with local organisations to amplify resident voices.

What did Swansea City Centre Llais Local aim to do?

Swansea City Centre Llais Local had some clear goals. These included:

- **Creating safe spaces to talk** – making sure people felt welcome and comfortable sharing their thoughts about health and care.
- **Listening and recording feedback** – listening carefully and writing down what people said, so their voices were heard.



- **Speaking up on people's behalf when needed** – using what people told us to raise concerns with health or social care services. We call these concerns **representations**, which help decisionmakers understand what matters to people.
- **Sharing what happens next** – telling people what we learned, what actions were taken, and what would happen next.

How we engaged with the community

We spent time in Swansea city centre during the autumn and winter of 2025, meeting people in places they already use. Being present in familiar settings helped us have relaxed, friendly conversations about health and social care.

Who did we hear from?

We heard from 192 people including:

- local residents
- people at community groups and events
- staff from local businesses and organisations

Joining existing groups worked well, and our pop-up activities helped us reach even more people. All the feedback people shared has been grouped into themes in this report. These themes will guide how we represent local people's voices in health and social care.



What we did

We:

- joined community events such as the Annual Unpaid Carers Event, World Mental Health Day, Unity & Diversity, Cwtch Coffee Morning and Chai and Chat
- visited local organisations and venues including Swansea.com Stadium, the National Waterfront Museum, St Mary's Church, Collaboration Station, Swansea MAD and Crisis Swansea
- set up pop-up information stands in places like Swansea Leisure Centre and the One Stop Info Shop
- ran our own activities, including a Llais conversation about Winter Health and Social Care
- spoke with members of the public across the city centre

What People Told Us

This is a summary of what we heard during our Llais Local engagement.

Clear and Open Communication

What people told us:

- Some said that after getting an acknowledgement of their referral letter, they did not hear anything else. This left them unsure about waiting times or what would happen next.



- People described long waits when phoning their GP practice — sometimes nearly an hour. They explained that calls often went to a central call centre instead of their local surgery.
- This left some feeling less connected to their practice and unsure about how best to get support.

Ideas people suggested:

- Add estimated waiting times or progress updates to referral letters.
- Make phone lines easier to use, with shorter waits and clearer routes to local practices.
- Share information more openly so people feel informed and reassured.

Access to NHS Dental Care

What people told us:

- Many said they found it hard to get NHS dental care, with some practices moving to private services.
- People described confusion and differences between practices about whether NHS services were still available, which left them unsure about what care they could access.
- Some explained they were left in pain and unable to get an NHS appointment, even after calling 111. They felt they had no choice but to pay privately, which was difficult for those on low incomes.



- People highlighted that costs for dental treatment can be very high, even for short routine appointments and repairs.
- Some said they were advised to find temporary fixes themselves, rather than being offered affordable NHS treatment.

People's suggestions to make services better:

- Provide clearer information about why NHS dentists are moving to private care.
- Explain how people can access affordable treatment without long waits or high costs.
- Make sure practices give consistent updates so patients know what services are available.

Respect and Inclusivity in Care

What people told us:

- Some shared that being addressed with the wrong gender in healthcare settings caused them distress.
- People said staff sometimes made assumptions about identity, rather than asking in a respectful way.

People's suggestions to make services better:

- Provide basic training for staff on inclusivity and communication, including guidance to ask simple questions such as "*How do you identify?*"



- Encourage an open and respectful culture, so patients feel comfortable and build trust in services.

Getting Routine Appointments on Time

What people told us:

- Some said they faced long waits for important tests and follow-up appointments.
- Others explained that missed or unconfirmed bookings meant they had to wait weeks longer for care.

People's suggestions to make services better:

- Improve booking and confirmation systems to avoid missed appointments.
- Reduce waiting times for routine tests and follow-ups, especially for those with ongoing health conditions.

Getting Help with Mental Health

What people told us:

- Some said they struggled to get support when experiencing a mental health crisis.
- People described feeling dismissed or unsupported when reaching out for help.



- They explained that being listened to, even briefly, made them feel valued.

People's suggestions to make services better:

- Show empathy and use active listening in all patient interactions.
- Make mental health services more responsive and compassionate, especially during a crisis.

What People Said in Their Own Words

Examples of feedback we heard:

““ Waiting time on phone for reception to answer. Can be up to 58 mins. Phone calls go to one call centre not to our doctor's. ””

““ Had to wait 2 months for a blood test for a diabetic appointment. Booked first appointment but did not confirm it so unable to see me in hospital and had to re book another appointment which was in 4 weeks' time. ””

““ I called for an emergency appointment when my denture broke. He saw me and said there was nothing he could do. Advised for a glue in Boots – as making a new one is around £600 which I didn't have. He charged me £57 for that appointment. The following month he sent me a regular appointment which I pay £43 for 5 min check-up. ””



“ I would like there to be more information on appointment letters such as a rough waiting time estimate even if it is subject to change, communication would be a lot easier if everything was all in the same place! ”

Next Steps

Llais will look at all the feedback we gathered during our engagement activities.

If needed, we may raise formal concerns (called representations) with NHS services or local councils. This is part of our legal role under the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020.

A representation means we share what people have told us with decision-makers. This helps services improve and better meet people's needs. If we make a representation, the service must reply. They will either:

- Explain what they will do, or
- Give a reason if they cannot make changes.

You can read more about how Llais represents your views on our website: <https://www.llaiswales.org/representation>

When we have updates and responses to our representation of these concerns, we will return to the community events, groups and spaces that we visited to keep the conversation going!



Looking Ahead

We are planning our future Llais Local activities as part of our 2026–2027 work programme. We'll share updates as they become available.

You can contact us at any time if you'd like to find out more or share your experiences of health or social care. We'd love to hear from you.

Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who spoke with us during this project. We're also grateful to the venues, community groups, and events that welcomed us into their spaces.

We look forward to returning to the groups and communities who shared their experiences with us, to share our report and explain how their feedback is now being used by services to help improve people's experiences of health and social care



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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