LLAIS

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

Annual Report & Accounts

2025-2026



The Annual Report and Accounts of the Citizens Voice Body for Health and Social Care, Wales (also known as Llais) for the year ended 31 March 2026, 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 Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020 Schedule 1, Part 6, Paragraph 21 (1).

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

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Professor Medwin Hughes CBE DL
Llais Chair

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

This year has been an important step forward in how Llais is making a difference for people.

Across Wales, people continue to share their experiences of health and social care, what works well, where things fall short, and what needs to change.

Those experiences are often deeply personal, but the messages behind them are consistent. People want, and need, services that are easier to access, that communicate clearly, support them earlier, and that treat them with dignity and respect.

Our role is to help make sure that people's experiences are not only heard but clearly reflected in the decisions that shape health and social care services in Wales.

During the year, we have strengthened how we do this. We have focused more clearly on making sure that organisations not only hear from people but demonstrate how what they hear shapes their decisions.

This means challenging services where engagement is not meaningful and holding organisations to account where it is not clear how people's views have influenced changes to services.

This has made a difference.

We are seeing more examples where people's experiences are clearly influencing how services are designed, delivered, and improved. In some cases, this has led to practical changes to access and communication.

In others, it has meant that decisions are paused, reconsidered, or improved because of the active involvement of communities.

These changes may not always be visible nationally, but they matter to people in their everyday lives.

A significant development this year has been the We Want report and the development of the People's Principles. These set out clearly what people expect from health and social care services, based on what they have told us. They provide a shared understanding of what good feels like for people, and a framework against which services can be judged and improved.

This is important because it moves the conversation on. It shifts the focus from whether people have been asked for their views, to whether those views have made a difference.

That shift sits at the heart of our role.

This annual report shows how Llais is continuing to develop as an organisation that not only listens but helps make sure that people's experiences shape decisions and drive improvement across the system.

There is more to do. We need to strengthen our impact further, particularly in social care, and continue to reach people whose voices are less often heard. But this year provides clear evidence that the voice of communities is starting to show greater influence on how services are planned and delivered.

> I would like to thank our staff, volunteers, our Board, and partners for their commitment throughout the year.
>
> Above all, I would like to thank the people and communities across Wales who have shared their views and experiences with us. Their voices remain central to everything we do.



PERFORMANCE REPORT

Performance overview

During 2025–2026, Llais continued to mature as a statutory public voice body, building scale, confidence and increasing our influence within national policy, service change and system-wide discussions in Wales and the UK. We connected with more communities, strengthened advocacy and representation, and became more embedded in the conversations that shape health and social care services.

Strong delivery across all 5 of our priority areas has positioned us well for the year ahead. As we move into 2026–2027, Llais is shifting from establishment and growth to consolidation and impact. We are using what we have heard to drive clearer change where people need it most.

Our strategic objectives are:

01
Drive a national conversation about the future of health and social care services

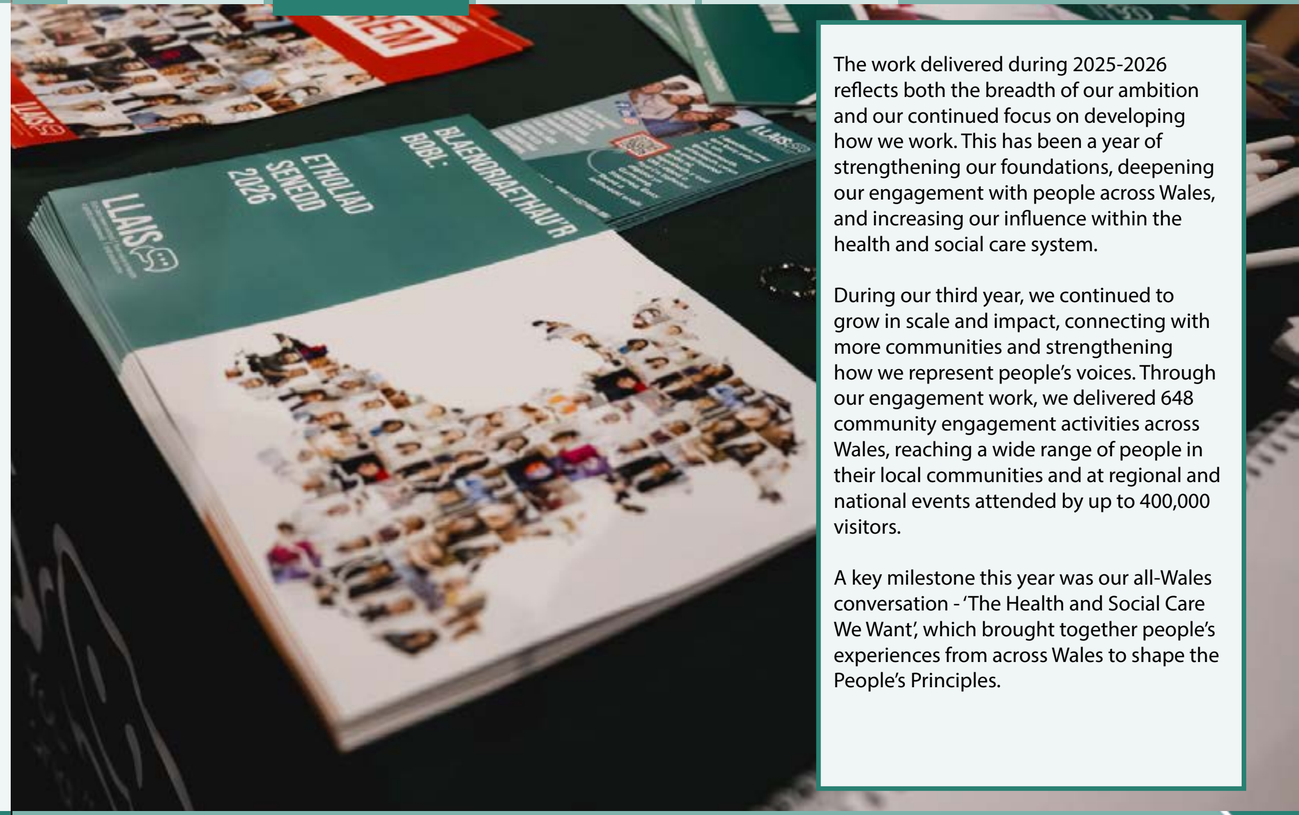
02
Push for services that meet everyone's needs

03
Working together better

04
Help people and services to use technology in ways that work for them

05
Grow and improve as an organisation

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The work delivered during 2025-2026 reflects both the breadth of our ambition and our continued focus on developing how we work. This has been a year of strengthening our foundations, deepening our engagement with people across Wales, and increasing our influence within the health and social care system.

During our third year, we continued to grow in scale and impact, connecting with more communities and strengthening how we represent people's voices. Through our engagement work, we delivered 648 community engagement activities across Wales, reaching a wide range of people in their local communities and at regional and national events attended by up to 400,000 visitors.

A key milestone this year was our all-Wales conversation - 'The Health and Social Care We Want', which brought together people's experiences from across Wales to shape the People's Principles.

The People's Principles are not a policy position or a set of demands. They are a set of 8 principles which explain what people expect in practice. They are:

01

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.

02

Dignity and respect every time

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

03

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.

04

Care that recognises, and responds 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.

05

Clear and honest communication

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

06

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.

07

Inclusive, accessible, and fair services for all

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

08

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.



The People's Principles provide a clear framework to assess whether policy changes made nationally have a positive effect on health and social care provision across Wales, in the areas that matter most to people. They will play a major part in our future work.

We have continued to play an active role in shaping services and supporting change. This year, we were involved in 361 service changes across Wales and contributed to over 30 national consultations and calls for evidence, helping to make sure that the voices of people and communities inform decisions at local, regional and national levels.

Our role in representing people within the health and social care system has also grown. We attended over 250 different forums, bringing people's experiences directly into decision-making spaces across health and social care.

We made 488 representations to decision-makers, to make sure that services acted on the things we heard. While this figure is lower than in the previous year, it reflects improvements in how we define and record our representations, giving greater confidence in the quality and consistency of our data.

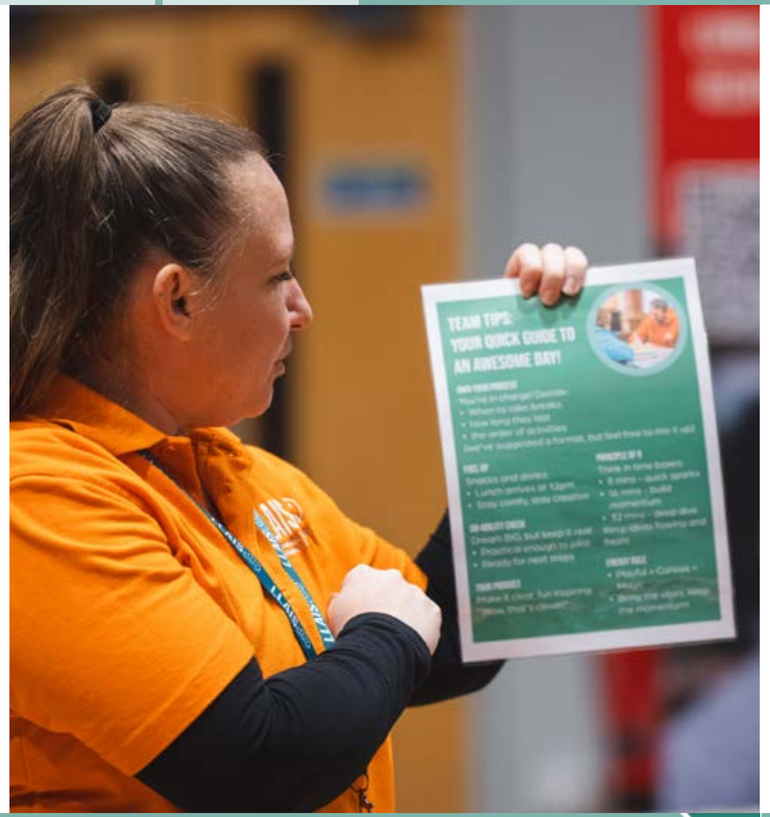
Our complaints advocacy service has continued to support large numbers of people across Wales. During the year, just over 5,000 people contacted the service, with almost 2,500 issues resolved without escalating to formal complaints.

We also raised just over 2,500 concerns on behalf of individuals, helping make sure their voices are heard and their experiences contribute to wider learning and improvement.

We have also begun to see improvements in how we use data to understand our impact. Development of our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and improved processes is helping us better track activity, identify trends and demonstrate the difference our work is making.

While we have made strong progress, we know that we have not achieved everything we set out to do this year. This reflects both the scale of our ambition and some capacity challenges experienced during the year. However, the progress made has strengthened our position as a trusted and influential organisation within the health and social care system.

As we move into 2026-27, our focus will be on consolidating this progress, building on what we have heard from people to drive clearer, more measurable change where it matters most.



ABOUT LLAIS

We are Llais (it means "voice" in Welsh).

We are a Welsh Government sponsored public body. This means we receive 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.

As a Welsh Government sponsored public body, we are primarily governed by public sector frameworks, such as our Framework Document, which defines our relationship and responsibilities with Welsh Government. We are also issued with a remit letter. Llais is aware of the UK Corporate Governance Code and uses its principles as a guide for good practice in transparency and accountability.

We became operational in April 2023, and we have about 104 staff and 156 volunteers, operating in every corner of Wales. We also have some agency staff working for us who support specific projects or cover vacant positions.



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 one team with shared goals, both within our organisation and externally.

INTEGRITY

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

ABOUT LLAIS

The way we work

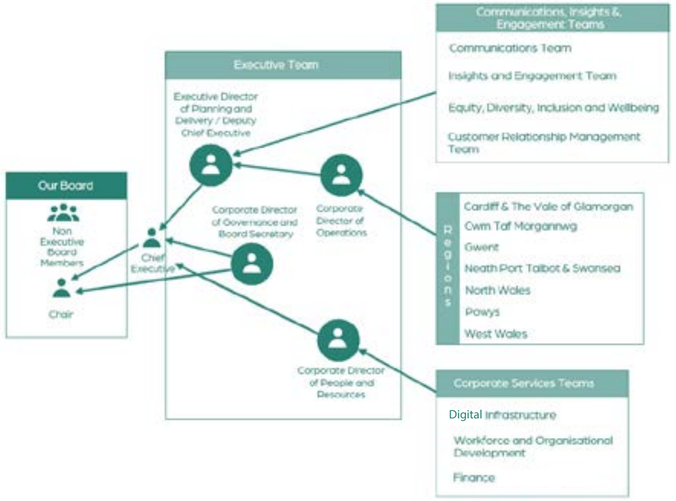
We're focused on listening carefully and working with others to make sure we get the job done well. Our values, and what matters to you, will guide us.

We are governed by a publicly appointed Board, and we organise ourselves into 7 regions across Wales and a national team.

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 leads on strategy, key decisions, and overseeing how we operate and perform. The Executive Team works closely with and on behalf of the Board and its committees to work effectively within our organisation's governance and assurance arrangements.

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



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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.

Tîm Arwain is an important development and advisory forum for Llais, especially regarding our range of organisational policies, strategy development and operational activity.

Our regional teams make sure we have a strong local presence in communities across Wales and engage with people about their experiences of health and social care services, particularly those whose voices are less often heard. Each region gathers and analyses feedback through outreach, events and direct engagement, and uses this intelligence to represent the views of people to health boards, local authorities and other decision-makers and partners, who are required to consider and respond to the issues raised.

In addition, all regions provide an independent complaints advocacy service, supporting individuals to raise concerns and navigate complaints processes, thereby making sure that local insights directly inform the planning, improvement and accountability of health and social care services at both regional and national levels.

We set out our plans and priorities for 2025-2026 in an Annual Plan. Our third full year has continued to be about listening, learning, and working with others to understand and respond to what the people of Wales want and need from health and social care services.

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 continued to undertake a range of governance and development work so that Llais has in place what is needed to deliver as an effective organisation and increase our operational maturity to work on behalf of the people of Wales.

VISION

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.



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.

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

MISSION

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.





Alyson Thomas
Chief Executive

STATEMENT FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON OUR PERFORMANCE

This year has been one of growing reach, stronger influence, and deeper understanding for Llais.

In our third year, we have continued to build as a national organisation with a clear purpose, to make sure people's experiences shape health and social care services in Wales. We have listened widely, acted consistently, and strengthened the way we turn insight into influence.

What stands out most to me this year is not only the volume of our work, but the way it is becoming more connected, more focused, and more impactful.

Across Wales, people have continued to trust us with their experiences, concerns and ideas. In turn, we have worked hard to make sure those voices are heard where they matter most, in communities, in services, in regional partnerships, and in national decision-making.

Our Annual Plan for 2025–2026 set out objectives across our 5 strategic priorities and our everyday work.

We have made good progress across all 5 priority areas. This includes 96% of objectives achieved under Priority 1 (driving a national conversation about the future of health and social care services), 98% under Priority 2 (pushing for services that meet everyone's needs), 100% under Priority 3 (working together better), 100% under Priority 4 (helping people and services to use technology in ways that work for them), and 70% under Priority 5 (growing and improving as an organisation).

Performance under Priority 5 is lower than we planned at the start of the year.

This reflects the need to prioritise delivery across our core services during a period of resource pressure, particularly within our corporate services functions. While this meant that some planned development work was delayed, it made sure we maintained strong delivery for people across Wales.

We have used this learning to strengthen our approach for 2026–2027, including targeted investment in our corporate capacity and infrastructure, so that we can continue to deliver day-to-day services while also progressing the organisational development needed for the longer term.

A few objectives will continue into 2026–2027 as part of our longer-term programme of improvement and delivery.

This has been a year where our engagement with people and communities across Wales has continued to grow. We delivered almost 650 community engagement activities, listening to people in towns, neighbourhoods, events, forums and local community spaces.

Through our Llais Local approach, our teams continued to spend time in communities across Wales, making it easier for people to speak to us directly about what matters most to them. We also strengthened our work on social care, including targeted engagement events in every region, and regional health and social care summits to bring partners together around shared challenges.

A major focus this year was our all-Wales conversation, The Health and Social Care We Want. Through this work, we brought together the experiences and expectations of people across Wales to help shape the People's Principles, a clear identification of what good health and social care should look and feel like.

I believe this is one of the most important things we have done as an organisation so far. It gives us, and health and social care services, a stronger shared framework for accountability, one rooted not in structures or process, but in what people themselves say matters.

This work came together at our Senedd event in January 2026, where we brought people's experiences directly into the heart of national decision-making. That moment helped move the People's Principles from insight into influence, creating a clear expectation that people's voices should shape how services are designed, delivered and held to account.

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We have also seen local impact from what people told us. Across Wales, our work has helped secure practical changes to services, from improving rehabilitation care and mental health settings, to supporting better access to dentistry and women's health services, to making sure people's experiences of discharge, communication and access are not ignored.

These changes matter because they show that listening is not a courtesy. It is a route to improvement.

Alongside this, we have increasingly used what we hear to inform national conversations and played an active role in national programmes, including contributing to stakeholder panels, advisory groups and review processes.

This has helped to make sure that people's experiences shape how these programmes are designed, delivered and improved over time. This includes our work on areas such as maternity services through the national review, rural health and care, cross border care, and our contribution to national groups and partnerships.



Alongside our engagement work, we continued to use our formal powers and our relationships to make representations where people's voices needed to be heard more clearly.

During 2025–2026, we recorded 488 representations to NHS bodies, local authorities and their partners. While this is lower than the previous year, it reflects more consistency and stronger quality in how we now define and record this work. That matters. It means we can be more consistent in how we track outcomes, and clearer in showing the difference people's voices are making.

We were also involved in over 350 proposals to change services across Wales, helping make sure people are involved when services are reviewed, redesigned, or relocated.

We contributed to more than 30 national consultations and calls for evidence, including on issues such as dementia, unpaid carers, disabled people's rights, dental reform and cross-border services. This is important because our role is not only to respond when things go wrong, but to make sure people's experiences help shape decisions earlier.

Our complaints advocacy service has remained a vital part of what we do. Between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, over 5,000 people contacted our service. Of those, almost 2,500 enquiries were resolved without escalating to a formal complaint, and we raised just over 2,500 concerns on behalf of people across Wales.

This reflects both the need for independent support and the value of providing it in a way that is compassionate, practical and focused on what matters to the person involved.





This year, we also continued to contribute to major changes in the way complaints are handled in the NHS through the move from Putting Things Right to the new Listening to People approach in readiness for it to be launched on 1 April 2026. We welcomed the opportunity to help shape a system that is intended to be more responsive, more focused on early resolution, and better at learning from people's experiences.

We developed a valuable new partnership with Tenovus Cancer Care, enabling a dedicated cancer complaints advocate to support people affected by cancer raise any concerns about their care.

Internally, we have continued to strengthen our organisation. We developed our Customer Relationship Management system further and began work on better ways to report on our activities.

These developments are helping us improve data quality, work more consistently across teams, and build a clearer picture of our impact. They are important developments for a national organisation that wants to be both people-focused and evidence-led. Work will continue on this for next year.

We also continued to strengthen how we communicate our work. We delivered 3 national campaigns, The Health and Social Care We Want, which brought together people's experiences to shape the People's Principles; Silly Rules, which highlighted everyday frustrations and unnecessary barriers in the system; and our Senedd 2026 manifesto calls, which set out people's priorities for the future of health and social care.



Our website was used by more than 21,500 users, with over 213,000 page views and more than 12,000 report downloads. Our social media audience grew to over 6,000 followers, and Llais was mentioned in at least 556 news stories during the year.

These are not just communications metrics. They are signs that more people are seeing us, hearing us, and engaging with what we do.

We have also remained committed to accessibility, inclusion and the Welsh language. We know that if we are to be the people's voice for health and social care in Wales, then people must be able to engage with us in ways that work for them, in the language they choose, and with confidence that their experience matters.

During the year, we have taken practical steps to strengthen this. We have continued to develop accessible formats for our work, including bilingual content, Easy Read materials and British Sign Language (BSL) resources, making it easier for more people to understand and engage with what we do.

We have also reviewed and redesigned our website, working with staff and informed by user testing, to improve accessibility, navigation and clarity ahead of a new launch.

Alongside this, we have developed new ways to engage with people who are often less heard, including the co-production of our 'Listen to us guides' with communities such as deaf and BSL users, people with learning disabilities, and minority ethnic communities.



There is still more to do. We know we must continue to build our impact in social care. We must keep improving how we capture and communicate the difference we make.

We must do more to hear from children and young people, disabled people, minority ethnic communities, Welsh speakers, and others whose voices are too often quieter when services change. And we must continue to grow as an organisation, with the right culture, systems and leadership to meet the ambition set out in our strategic plan.

But this year gives me confidence. It shows that Llais is becoming more established, more trusted, and more effective in bringing people's voices into the heart of health and social care in Wales.

I want to thank our staff, volunteers, Board members and partners for everything they have contributed this year. Most of all, I want to thank the people across Wales who shared their experiences with us. Your voices continue to guide our work, shape our priorities, and strengthen our resolve.

We are still growing as an organisation, but we are doing so with greater clarity and confidence. This year has shown that Llais can do more than listen. We can connect people's experiences to improvement, turn insight into influence, and help build services that listen better, respond earlier, and work more fairly for everyone.

J A Thomas

Alyson Thomas
Chief Executive

21.10.26

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Progress against our strategic objectives within the Annual Plan 2025–2026

Our Annual Plan set out over 50 objectives across 5 strategic priority areas and our everyday work. These objectives are grounded in what people have told us matters most, alongside feedback from partners, staff and wider system insight.

Overall, we have made good progress across all priority areas, recognising that this has been a year of continued delivery alongside organisational development.

Performance under Priority 5 is lower than originally planned. This reflects the need to prioritise delivery of our core services during a period of resource pressure, particularly within corporate services functions. While some development work was delayed, this approach helped make sure we maintained delivery across our key services for people across Wales.

We have used this learning to strengthen our approach for 2026–2027. This includes targeted investment in our capacity and infrastructure, so that we can deliver day-to-day services while continuing to develop as an organisation.



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OBJECTIVES CONTINUING INTO 2026–2027

A number of objectives will continue into the next year to build on the progress already made. These include:

- further work to understand people's experiences of Integrated Care Hubs
- strengthening our volunteer programme, including recruitment, development and recognition
- progressing our location strategy and developing our net zero approach and reporting
- improving recruitment processes
- enhancing governance and organisational development
- continuing development of our Customer Relationship Management system and performance reporting
- delivering our wellbeing plan and reviewing key policies.

In some cases, this reflects resourcing pressures during the year. In others, it reflects the longer-term nature of the work.

AREAS FOR CONTINUED FOCUS

While progress has been strong, we know that further work is needed to:

- strengthen our impact in social care
- improve how we consistently capture and communicate the difference we make (our outcomes)
- increase our engagement with children and young people
- reach groups whose voices are less often heard
- further embed consistent ways of working across the organisation.

These priorities will shape our focus for the coming year.





WHAT THIS PERFORMANCE MEANS IN PRACTICE

The figures above show that we have delivered against the majority of our planned objectives. More importantly, they reflect a shift in how our work is coming together.

Across 2025–2026, we have strengthened the connection between:

- what people tell us
- how we act on that insight
- the changes that follow.

This is seen most clearly in the way our engagement, complaints advocacy, representations and influencing work now operate as a single, connected system rather than separate activities.

This scale of activity is important. It means that people's voices are not only heard in individual cases or local discussions but are more consistently brought into decision-making across the system. By combining what we know and what we do through our engagement, complaints advocacy, representations and participation in policy development and discussion, we are able to influence change at multiple levels at the same time, from local services through to national policy and system design.

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LISTENING TO PEOPLE ACROSS WALES

We delivered almost 650 community engagement activities throughout the year. These included:

- community-based events through our Llais Local approach
- targeted engagement on social care in every region
- regional health and social care summits in Cardiff and Vale, Gwent, Powys, and Neath Port Talbot and Swansea
- participation in major national events, including the Urdd Eisteddfod, Royal Welsh Show, Pride Cymru, National Eisteddfod and Rural Health and Care Conference.

Through our Llais Local approach, we maintained a consistent presence in communities across Wales. Our teams spent time in towns and neighbourhoods, working alongside local groups, community organisations, charities and health and social care services to make it easier for people to share their experiences. Each of our 7 regions delivered at least 3 Llais Local activities during the year.

Together, these activities reached a wide and diverse range of people, including at large-scale events attended by up to 400,000 visitors. Of these activities, 475 focused on both health and social care, with just over 120 specifically relating to health and just over 50 to social care.





During the year, we undertook 72 on-site visits:

- 44 to healthcare premises
- 10 to social care settings
- 18 covering both health and social care.

This approach is important because it allows us to hear directly from people while they are out and about in the places where they live. It helps us to better understand what matters most to different communities and strengthens the evidence we use to influence change locally, regionally and nationally.

Alongside this, our staff and volunteers regularly visited people in the places where they receive care, including maternity wards, care homes, urgent care settings and community environments. These visits are an important part of how we hear directly from people about their experiences of services as they use them.

These visits help us identify emerging issues early and act where needed. They also allow us to hear from people who may not otherwise engage with us, strengthening the range and depth of insight that informs our work.

This combined approach helps us to hear from people in different settings and circumstances, including those who may not engage with formal consultation processes.



One of our major strategic objectives within Priority 1 this year was to explore people's rights, expectations and responsibilities in health and social care, and to use what we found to highlight gaps and push for change.

We did this through The Health and Social Care We Want project, which brought together the views and experiences of over 4,000 people across Wales.

Our work identified a number of important gaps. Many people told us they did not understand their rights, were unclear about what to expect from services, and did not know how to raise concerns when things went wrong. At the same time, people consistently described a system that can feel fragmented, difficult to navigate, and not always centred on what matters to them.



Our We Want report set out what we heard and how we used this insight to develop the People's Principles.

We have used the report and the People's Principles to strengthen how we influence change. During the year, we:

- brought the findings directly into national thinking and decision-making through our Senedd event
- used the Principles to inform our consultation responses, representations and policy work
- positioned the Principles as a shared benchmark for services and partners when planning and delivering care.

This has helped move the work beyond insight into influence. It provides a clear framework for holding services to account, supports more consistent conversations about what good looks like, and strengthens our ability to challenge where people's expectations are not being met.

We will continue to build on this by embedding the People's Principles across our work in 2026–2027, so they become a practical tool for shaping services and improving people's experiences.

INFLUENCING NATIONAL POLICY AND SYSTEM CHANGE

Alongside our engagement and representation work, we use what people tell us to shape national policy, influence system change, and support wider improvements in how health and social care services are designed and delivered. This is a key part of our role in delivering Priority 1, driving a national conversation about the future of health and social care.

Through our partnerships, we have also influenced how other organisations approach engagement and service improvement. For example, our approaches to community engagement have informed the work of partners such as the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, helping to strengthen how people's voices are heard across the wider system. This increases our impact beyond our direct activity and supports more consistent, people-centred approaches across health and social care.

During the year, we also brought people's experiences into wider UK and national discussions beyond Wales. This included providing evidence to the parliamentary inquiries on cross-border healthcare and contributing to discussions with the UK's Chief Medical Officers on rural health and care.

This helped make sure that the lived experiences of people in Wales were reflected in broader policy discussions and helped raise the visibility of the issues people face, particularly in rural and cross-border communities.



TURNING INSIGHT INTO INFLUENCE

During the year, we published national reports and position statements, including "No one left behind: rural health and care in Wales" and The Health and Social Care We Want' report.

Through this work, we identified consistent issues affecting people's experiences, including:

- barriers to accessing care, particularly in rural communities
- a lack of clarity around rights and expectations
- fragmented services that are difficult to navigate
- communication and co-ordination challenges.

We used this evidence to engage directly with Welsh Government, NHS bodies, local authorities and other partners, making sure that these issues are reflected in national policy discussions and service planning.

This work has helped strengthen the focus on accessibility, equity and person-centred care in ongoing national conversations.



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INFLUENCING SERVICE CHANGE AND SYSTEM DESIGN

We were involved in over 360 proposals to change health or social care services across Wales during the year, helping make sure that people's views and experiences were considered as services were reviewed, redesigned or reconfigured.

Our role in proposals to change services is to:

- bring forward consistent themes from what we hear from people and communities
- make sure organisations involve people meaningfully, from the earliest stages of developing proposals
- scrutinise whether organisations have properly considered what people have said and used it to shape their plans
- challenge where engagement is not meaningful or where it is not clear how people's views have influenced decisions
- support services to improve how they involve and respond to people.

We set out below some of the major service changes we were involved with.



EMERGENCY MEDICAL RETRIEVAL AND TRANSFER SERVICE

We continued to play an active role in supporting public assurance during the Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transfer Service (EMRTS) service change process led by the NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee (JCC).

Following the decision to consolidate air ambulance service bases, and the legal challenge that followed, people in Mid and North Wales raised concerns about what this could mean for access to critical care, particularly in rural communities.

We made sure those concerns continued to be heard as discussions moved forward. We also kept a close focus on the commitments made through the review, including plans to strengthen road-based critical care for rural areas.



As a result:

- commitments to improve access, including the enhanced road-based critical care model, remained in focus
- communication and accountability were strengthened by the Joint Commissioning Committee as the programme progressed
- community involvement remained part of ongoing discussions about the future of the service.

This mattered because it helped make sure that an important change to services remained subject to public scrutiny, and that commitments made to communities were followed through in practice.

LUNG SCREENING PROGRAMME

We worked closely with Public Health Wales to support the development of a new lung screening programme for Wales. Through this work, we brought forward insights from people and communities about access, communication and participation, helping to make sure that the programme's design reflects what matters to those it is intended to serve.

As a result:

- Public insight is being embedded into the design of the programme
- Engagement plans and materials, including leaflets and letters, are being tested with key stakeholders, including community groups.

This work is important as it helps make sure that a new national screening programme is not only clinically effective but also designed in a way that people can understand, access and benefit from.



CLINICAL SERVICES PROGRAMME

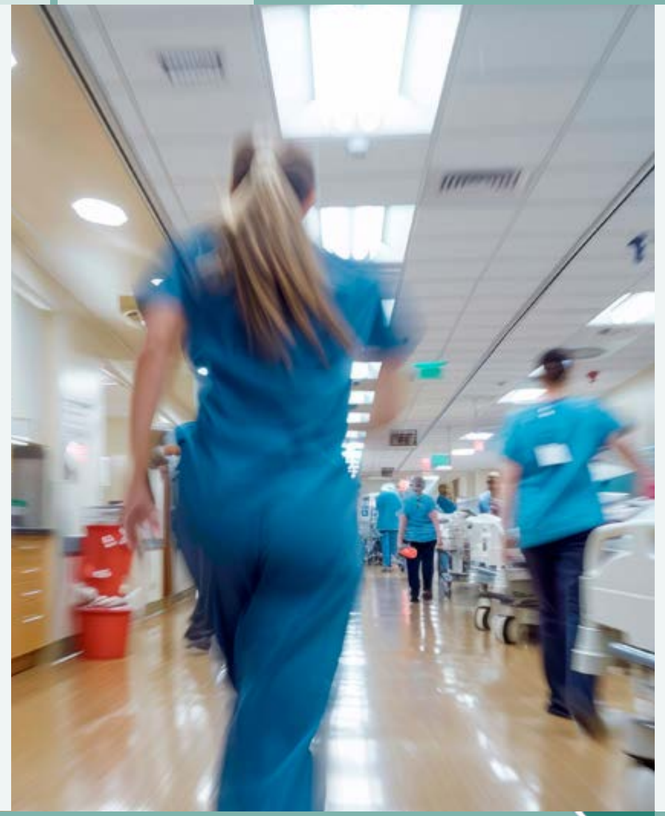
Llais worked alongside Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDUHB) as it consulted with affected communities on its Clinical Services Plan for West Wales, so that the voices of people across West Wales, Powys and North Wales were central to the service change programme. Spanning 9 separate service areas, the process was designed to make sure there was meaningful public input across all proposed changes.

Significant concerns were raised by communities in West Wales, Powys and North Wales who were affected by proposals to change the way stroke services were provided, particularly those communities who rely on Bronglais Hospital.

We worked to make sure these concerns were clearly heard and understood. This meant that the health board needed to take more time to fully review the high volume of responses and consider other proposals put forward through the consultation.

This has led to further engagement with the public on an option for stroke services that was developed through the first consultation.

Through this approach, we provided assurance that people were not only listened to, but that their views influenced decision-making in practice.



BETTER TOGETHER

Through our ongoing involvement in the Powys Better Together programme, Llais highlighted concerns that the public engagement approach was not reaching communities as effectively as it could.

We raised issues regarding limited promotional activity, which relied heavily on the Health Board's website and social media channels, alongside consistently low attendance at engagement events. We also shared feedback from our networks, many of whom were unaware that the engagement was taking place.

As a result, the Health Board strengthened its outreach activity during the engagement period and gave greater consideration to how communities could be reached beyond its existing communication channels. It subsequently paused the engagement to allow for the inclusion of additional services within a broader programme of work.

Llais is now working with the Health Board on the development of this refreshed approach to public engagement, with a focus on ensuring that future activity is transparent, inclusive and accessible. This is intended to enable more people across Powys to have their voices heard in shaping proposed service changes.

While it is too early to assess the full impact of these changes, our contribution has influenced ongoing discussions about the importance of inclusive engagement and the need for a broader, more effective communications approach.

The decision to integrate engagement into a wider programme also creates an opportunity for lessons learned to inform future engagement and consultation activity across Powys.



STROKE SERVICES

We have kept a consistent focus on the centralisation of stroke services in Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board area, raising this regularly with the Health Board as part of wider service change discussions.

We have asked for updates on both current performance and future plans and made representations to make sure that people's experiences and concerns are reflected in ongoing discussions.

We have also listened directly to people in communities affected by the removal of services, particularly their concerns about communication and the level of engagement they have experienced. We have used this insight to inform how we engage with the Health Board and the questions we raise.



As a result:

- the issue has remained visible within Health Board discussions
- there is continued focus on improving communication with the public
- the importance of meaningful public engagement has been consistently reinforced.

This matters because it shows the role Llais plays in helping to make sure that people's concerns continue to be heard, particularly where decisions are complex or ongoing, and that services remain accountable to the communities they serve.

All of these examples of our involvement with service change demonstrate how we help so that service change is informed not just by operational or financial considerations, but by people's real experiences and needs.

SHAPING KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

We contributed to over 30 national consultations and calls for evidence, bringing people's experiences into policy development at an early stage.

This included work on:

- the Disabled People's Rights Plan
- cross-border services
- support for unpaid carers
- dementia strategy
- reform of General Dental Services
- British Sign Language legislation.

We are beginning to see the impact of this work; with the issues people raise reflected in emerging strategies and policy discussions.

We have influenced the emphasis on:

- clearer communication with people
- more person-centred approaches to care
- earlier support and prevention
- improved coordination across services.



INFLUENCING IMPROVEMENTS IN COMPLAINTS AND PATIENT EXPERIENCE

During the year, we played an active role in shaping the move from the NHS Wales complaints system 'Putting Things Right' to the new system 'Listening to People'.

Through our complaints advocacy, insight and engagement work, we highlighted:

- the need for a more trauma-informed approach
- the importance of early resolution
- the need for services to learn more effectively from complaints
- the importance of clearer, more compassionate communication.

This input has helped shape a model that places greater emphasis on:

- responding to people more quickly
- learning from lived experience
- improving how services communicate with and support people.



SHAPING NATIONAL POLICY AND PRIORITIES

We used what we heard from people through our 'Health and Social Care We Want' project to develop The People's Priorities, our manifesto for the Senedd Elections 2026.

This work brought together insight from thousands of people across Wales and set out 12 clear asks, across 4 clear priority areas.

These priorities provide a clear, accessible description of what people expect from health and social care. We have used the people's priorities to inform our engagement with political parties and policymakers. We were extremely pleased to see a number of our asks on behalf of the people of Wales featuring in party manifestos prior to the Senedd elections in May 2026.



A NATIONAL MOMENT: PUTTING PEOPLE'S VOICES INTO DECISION-MAKING

In January 2026, we brought our work together at a Senedd event to launch The Health and Social Care We Want report and introduce the People's Principles.

This was not just a launch, but a point of influence.

By bringing together decision-makers, system leaders and the people who use services, we created a direct connection between lived experience and decision-making.

As a result, we

- strengthened our engagement with Welsh Government, the Senedd and system leaders
- positioned the People's Principles as a shared benchmark for what good looks like
- created momentum for wider conversations about accountability, integration and person-centred care

This helped us make sure that what people told us is actively informing national discussions and shaping how services are considered for the future.



SUPPORTING PEOPLE THROUGH COMPLAINTS ADVOCACY

Our complaints advocacy service remains central to our role.

Demand for the service continued to grow, with over 5,000 people getting in touch over the period, 1,400 more than the previous year.

The team resolved almost 2,500 enquiries without the need for escalation, an increase of more than 700 cases, while also raising just over 2,500 concerns on behalf of individuals, nearly 700 more than the year before.

Together, this shows both growing awareness of the service and its ability to support more people effectively.



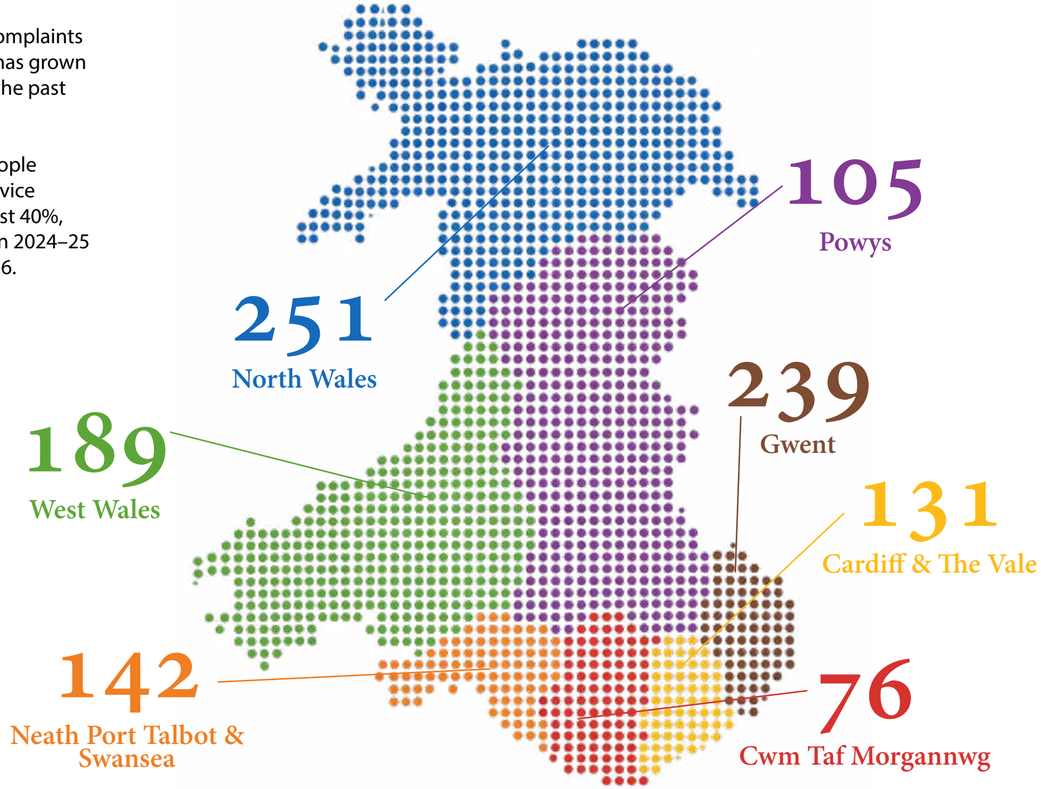
5,006
people contacted the service (an increase of 40%)

2,457
enquiries were resolved without escalation (an increase of 43%)

2,549
concerns were raised on behalf of individuals (an increase of 37%)

Demand for our complaints advocacy service has grown significantly over the past year.

The number of people contacting the service increased by almost 40%, rising from 3,584 in 2024–25 to 5,006 in 2025–26.



We also saw a 42% increase in enquiries resolved without needing to escalate to a formal complaint, showing our ability to provide early support and resolve issues quickly.

At the same time, the number of concerns we raised on behalf of people grew by over a third (37%), reflecting both increased demand and greater reach of our service.

In response, and in line with strategic priority area 5 (grow and improve as an organisation) we strengthened how we deliver our complaints advocacy enquiry and complaints service. We invested in improving our approach to allocating cases, managing case complexity and supporting our complaints advocacy staff through professional supervision.

This helped us to make sure our teams are better supported to handle more complex cases and that people receive a more consistent, effective service.

Our complaints advocacy service provides direct support to individuals while also identifying patterns in people's experiences.



During the year, we have seen recurring themes including:

- communication issues
- delays and waiting times
- complexity in navigating services
- lack of involvement in decision-making.

This insight feeds into our wider work, helping us make sure that individual experiences contribute to system-level change.

We also strengthened our complaints advocacy offer by establishing a new partnership with Tenovus Cancer Care.

We identified a clear gap in support. While Tenovus provides holistic support to people affected by cancer, specialist complaints advocacy was not part of their offer. At the same time, we were seeing increasingly complex cases linked to cancer care through our own service.

In response, we worked with Tenovus to bring together our respective strengths. We provide the specialist, independent complaints advocacy service, and Tenovus brings their reach and expertise in supporting people affected by cancer.



Through this partnership:

- we secured funding from Tenovus for a dedicated cancer complaints advocate
- we established a new specialist advocacy function within our service
- we have had a dedicated advocate in post since June 2025.

This has strengthened our ability to support people with complex, cancer-related concerns and ensured that people affected by cancer can access more tailored, specialist advocacy support.

ACTING ON WHAT WE HEAR FROM PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

We take what people tell us directly into the places where decisions are made, so that people's views and experiences influence how services are designed and improved.

During 2025–2026, we:

- attended over 250 boards and forums across health, social care and partnership structures
- made 488 representations to NHS bodies, local authorities and partners
- contributed to over 350 service change proposals
- responded to more than 30 national consultations and calls for evidence.

These activities enable us to:

- raise consistent themes from people's experiences directly with decision-makers
- influence how services respond locally, and
- shape national policy and programme discussions.





Our work has contributed to national conversations on areas such as rural health and care, maternity services, cross-border provision and wider system challenges. We played an active role in national programmes, including contributing to stakeholder panels, advisory groups and review processes, helping make sure people's experiences shaped how these programmes were designed and delivered.

The national programmes we have been involved in include:

- All-Wales Maternity and Neonatal Assurance Assessment
- Planned care
- Call4Concern (acute deterioration)
- Code and Revalidation reviews
- Embedding research in the NHS
- National Survey editorial board.
- Patient Experience Framework
- Digital in Social Care
- National Social Care Conference Network
- National Office for Care and Support Strategic Advisory Group
- Integrated community care system oversight group.

We also work closely with national oversight and regulatory bodies, including Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales, Social Care Wales and professional regulators.

By sharing what people tell us, we help shape their priorities, influencing the areas they focus on and how they carry out inspections, reviews and regulatory activity.

This helps to make sure that their work is grounded in people's experiences and helps to support improvement in services based on what matters most to the public.

Our regional teams play a key role in building strong partnerships in health and social care and the third sector.

Through this work and work with local organisations, community groups and service providers, they help to make sure people's experiences are understood in their local context and reflected in how services are planned and delivered.





This includes working collaboratively with organisations such as Lingen Davies in Powys, the Behaviour Support Hub in Gwent, CYCA in West Wales and Mantell Gwynedd in North Wales.

These partnerships also help us to identify emerging issues early, join up insights across organisations, and support more co-ordinated, place-based responses to the challenges people face.

We have strengthened how we define and record our representations, improving consistency and data quality. This supports better tracking of outcomes over time.

We have also strengthened how we feedback to people on what has changed because of their input. This helps us make sure that people can see the difference their experiences make and encourages continued involvement, building trust in both our work and the wider system.

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FROM INSIGHT TO CHANGE: EXAMPLES OF IMPACT

The value of our community engagement, complaints advocacy, and policy work, is demonstrated through the changes that follow.

Here are examples which show how people's experiences have led to improvement. These are illustrative of wider patterns seen across our work. You can read further case studies of our engagement impact on our website

CARDIFF AND VALE
IMPROVING REHABILITATION CARE

Following concerns raised with us about care on Lansdowne Ward, at St David's Hospital in Cardiff, we visited the unit to understand whether planned health board actions to make improvements were being experienced by patients.

We heard about ongoing issues with personal care, communication and rehabilitation activity. These findings, and our representations, were shared with the health board.

As a result, the health board acted:

- hygiene monitoring was strengthened
- clearer patient information was introduced
- activity and rehabilitation support was increased.

While progress has been made, some concerns remain, so we will revisit the ward to help make sure improvements are being experienced by the people who use them.



CWM TAF MORGANNWG
IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Child and adolescent mental health services and neurodevelopmental services

We worked with partners to bring together over 130 parents, carers and professionals to explore experiences of child and adolescent mental health services and neurodevelopmental services.

Families told us they needed clearer communication, better support and more consistent processes. We took what we heard and made representations to health and social care services who responded by making changes to these areas.

As a result of this work, partners reported:

- earlier support for families
  improved multi-agency working
- development of clearer information, including new guidance materials
- greater recognition of private diagnoses
  increased respite provision.

This work shows how bringing people together around shared experiences can lead to practical changes in how services respond.



GWENT

RESTORING ACCESS TO WOMEN'S HEALTH SERVICES

People raised concerns with us about the withdrawal of vaginal pessary services in a GP practice, particularly affecting older women and those in rural areas.

We raised these issues, and the effect it was having on women in the area directly with the health board.

As a result:

The health board reinstated the service from October 2025, and people were able to access care closer to home, reducing travel, delays and barriers to treatment for local communities.



NORTH WALES

IMPROVING DIGNITY AND SAFETY IN MENTAL HEALTH SETTINGS

During an on-site visit to acute mental health units, people raised concerns about dignity and access to appropriate facilities. One issue highlighted was the lack of suitable sanitary disposal facilities.

A protocol had been introduced to reduce the risk of self-harm by removing certain materials. However, this had the unintended consequence of requiring people to physically hand over used sanitary products, leading to feelings of embarrassment and loss of dignity.

We used this insight to make representations not only to the individual unit, but across the wider health board, including directly to the Director of Mental Health.

As a result:

- secure and appropriate disposal facilities were introduced
- care planning processes were reviewed and strengthened
- these changes formed part of a wider programme of improvement across the Health Board.

This work is important because it highlights how some procedures, while well intentioned, can unnecessarily impact dignity in practice. By bringing people's experiences directly into decision-making, we supported changes that better balance safety, privacy and dignity in care.



POWYS
EXPANDING ACCESS TO NHS DENTISTRY

People in North Powys told us they were struggling to access NHS dental care, including long waiting times, limited local provision, and the need to travel significant distances for treatment.

We raised these concerns directly with the Health Board, highlighting both the impact on individuals and the gaps in provision across rural communities.

As a result:

- an additional mobile dental unit is being introduced and so access is being extended to communities that were previously underserved.

This will reduce travel times, increase the number of people able to access care locally, and improve access for those needing urgent dental treatment.

This work demonstrates how local insight, particularly from rural communities, can be used to highlight gaps in provision and support practical changes that improve access and equity in services.



NEATH PORT TALBOT AND SWANSEA
IDENTIFYING SYSTEM-WIDE ISSUES

Through a series of "Let's Talk" events, we heard from people about winter care, hospital discharge and mental health services.

The people we spoke to reported:

- Issues with access to primary care services
- Lack of support for unpaid carers navigating systems
- Fragility and inconsistent care within social worker workforce
- Poor communication and information sharing across services
- Use of learning disability passports and appropriate communication tools
- Difficulties navigating services
- Lack of multi-agency working, leading to unsafe discharge
- Over reliance on digital consultations

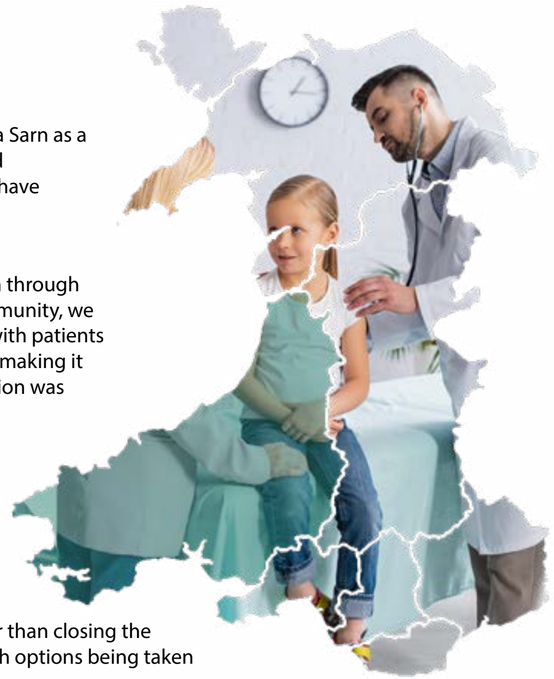
We used this information to make representations, asking for clarity and assurances on:

- The impact on carers within decision-making processes
- Carer assessment targets
- Current strategies for providing greater stability for service users
- Digital systems integration with information sharing
- Specialist learning disability provision and capacity
- Measures to prevent unsafe discharge
- Progress monitoring of equitable services and access for communities.

We are following these up to make sure action is taken in response to what people raised.



WEST WALES
PUTTING THE COMMUNITY'S VOICE FIRST



At the start of 2026, Hywel Dda University Health Board identified Meddygfa Sarn as a practice they were considering closing. A report to the Board recommended transferring all patients to other GP surgeries from June 2026, which would have affected thousands of people in the Pontyates area and removed a highly valued locally provided service.

We were not informed of these plans in advance and became aware of them through published Board papers. Recognising the potential impact on the local community, we acted quickly to raise concerns, particularly about the lack of engagement with patients and the wider community. We wrote to the Health Board to formally object, making it clear that people needed the opportunity to have their say before any decision was made.

As a result, the health board:

- paused its plans to close the practice
- engaged more with local people
- reconsidered its original proposal.

Following this, the health board agreed to explore alternative options rather than closing the practice. There are now organisations interested in running the practice, with options being taken forward through a formal procurement process.

This work is important because it made sure that decisions affecting local services were informed by the people who use them. By acting quickly and challenging the initial approach, we supported a more transparent process and helped create the conditions for a more sustainable solution for the community.

COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION OF OUR SERVICES

Over the past year, we have strengthened how we communicate and promote our work, helping to raise awareness of our role and amplify people's voices across Wales.

Communications play an important role in how we deliver our objectives. They help us to extend the reach of what people tell us, bringing lived experience into wider conversations.

While we experienced some capacity challenges, including vacancies within the team and the absence of a dedicated operational lead for communications, we continued to deliver a broad programme of activity in support of our organisational priorities.

We ran 3 national campaigns – The Health and Social Care We Want, Same Day Urgent Care follow-up, and Silly Rules. These campaigns highlighted people's experiences and helped bring their voices into national debate, supporting our wider influencing work.





We also supported our presence at events across Wales, helping to raise awareness of our services and making it easier for people to engage with us. Alongside this, we published and shared key insight, including our spotlights on rural health and maternity services, making sure that what people tell us continues to inform discussion and decision-making.

As part of developing how we engage with different audiences, we have been working on a new podcast series featuring influential people in the health and social care sector in Wales, which will launch in 2026–2027.

We have also co-produced a new brand identity, Criw Llais, to support our work with children and young people, helping us connect with them in more meaningful and accessible ways.

Overall, this work has strengthened our profile, increased engagement with our work, and supported our role as a visible and trusted organisation across Wales.

NEWSLETTERS AND DIRECT ENGAGEMENT

We continued to publish both our internal and external newsletters.

Y Gair

Our internal monthly newsletter supports communication across the organisation, encouraging peer learning and helping to strengthen our sense of community. It also showcases how our behaviour framework is applied in practice, demonstrating how our values shape decisions and influence our work.

Effaith

Our external monthly newsletter highlights the difference our work is making, sharing insight from across Wales and demonstrating how we are responding to issues raised by people and communities.



Over the past year, engagement with the newsletter has continued to grow. Across 12 editions, the newsletter achieved 19,734 opens, with an average open rate of 37.41%. We have also maintained a low unsubscribe rate of 0.22%.

This level of engagement shows that people continue to value the insight we share and want to stay connected to our work. It also provides a consistent way for us to demonstrate how people's voices are influencing change. You can read our newsletter here.

ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATIONS

We have continued to develop accessible materials in a range of formats, including bilingual content, Easy Read and British Sign Language (BSL), so that more people can engage with our work.

We have produced a wide range of materials to support our activities, including leaflets, videos, posters, infographics, radio adverts, and both online and print media.

This work is important because it helps us make sure people can engage with us in ways that work for them, supporting our commitment to inclusion and accessibility.



OUR WEBSITE

Our website remains an important way for people to access information about our services and connect with us.

During the year:

- more than 21,500 users visited the site
- page views increased to over 213,000
- report and document downloads exceeded 12,000, compared with 4,844 the previous year.

Users are also spending longer on the site, with average visit times increasing to over 7 minutes.

This increased use reflects growing demand for our insight and information and shows that more people are using our website to access support and understand our work.

We also reviewed our website, working with staff and informed by user testing. This will lead to a redesigned site in 2026–2027, improving accessibility, navigation and clarity.



OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

We have continued to build our social media presence, using these platforms to raise awareness of our work, share insight and engage directly with communities.

During the year:

- our audience grew to over 6,000 followers
- post impressions increased to over 646,000
- engagement rates improved to 7.6%.

While we posted less often, we focused on producing more targeted and effective content, which has helped improve overall engagement.

Different social media platforms support different aspects of our work:

- LinkedIn enables us to engage with professionals and organisations
- Facebook provides reach, particularly through our regional pages
- Instagram helps us connect with younger audiences.

This work helps us to extend the reach of people's experiences so that they are visible to wider audiences in real time.



MEDIA ACTIVITY

We achieved strong and consistent media coverage across Wales and the UK, including national outlets such as BBC News, WalesOnline and S4C, alongside regional and local press.

During the year, Llais was mentioned in over 550 news stories, nearly 3 times higher than the previous year.

Media coverage increasingly reflects Llais' role as the independent voice of people using health and social care services. Our insight is regularly used to inform reporting on health and social care challenges, patient safety and public confidence.

This is important because it helps make sure that people's experiences are reflected in public debate and national reporting, strengthening our ability to influence how issues are understood and addressed.

This includes high-profile coverage of NHS performance, patient safety incidents and concerns about public confidence, where Llais' perspective has helped frame the human impact behind the headlines and reinforce the importance of listening to people's experiences.

The coverage also reflects Llais' growing influence in shaping debate about the future of health and care in Wales. Media mentions highlight our role in supporting national conversations, publishing insight from the public, and advocating for improvements such as joined-up care, better communication and earlier support.

Llais received coverage across a broad mix of media channels, with most mentions appearing in online news outlets (around three quarters), supported by regular coverage in print publications (one fifth) and broadcast media including television and radio.



OUR COMMITMENT TO THE WELSH LANGUAGE

We want to make sure that the Welsh language is a natural and integral part of how we work, reflecting its importance to identity, culture and inclusion in Wales.

Over the past year, we have continued to strengthen how we embed the Welsh language across our organisation; from how we communicate with the public, to how we engage with communities, support our staff and shape our services.

Our approach is guided by the Welsh Language Standards and a wider ambition to create a Welsh language first culture, where people can access our services and share their experiences in the language that works best for them. Last September, as required, we made or first statutory report, which is available via the link below.

You can find out more here: welsh language standards annual report 2024-2025

DIGITAL INITIATIVES AND IMPROVEMENTS

This year, we have continued to strengthen our digital infrastructure and ways of working to better support our people to deliver our services.

We continued to develop our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. This has included working closely with teams to understand our needs, provide training, and establishing super user groups to test, refine and improve how we use the system, with a strong focus on improving data quality.

During the year, we changed the way we work with the system to streamline processes, reduce duplication, and improve oversight. This is making our work more efficient and better connected, helping us to manage data more effectively, track our impact, and identify trends in health and social care. We are already seeing improvements in key areas such as our complaints advocacy service.

We have also strengthened how we use insight and data. We worked with a specialist to deliver a suite of organisational performance dashboards, providing real-time insights for operational teams, executives and Board members. Alongside this, we delivered training and reporting tools within the system, giving teams greater visibility of their work and supporting more informed decision-making.





To support consistency and stability in our delivery, we introduced clearer project governance approaches and successfully delivered a number of key projects, including the full end-to-end delivery of our Listening to People (LTP) updates and the migration to a new Objectives and Key Results (OKR) system. These improvements are helping us to better manage performance and align our work with organisational priorities.

We have also invested in developing our people to be more digitally confident, delivering training that brings together both functional and digital aspects of our systems to support effective use across the organisation.

This year also saw the launch of our internal intranet, providing a central hub for communication, resources and tools. This is helping colleagues across Wales stay connected, access key information, and work more consistently, regardless of location.

We are continuing to standardise our processes and improve how we capture and use information, so that people receive a consistent and high-quality service wherever they live in Wales. As our systems continue to develop, they will further reduce reliance on manual processes, improve efficiency, and help us respond more quickly to the needs of the people we support.

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SUSTAINABILITY

We are committed to making sure our services are accessible to people across Wales, while minimising the environmental, financial and social impact of how we operate. This supports our wider role in contributing to a more sustainable and equitable Wales.

During 2025–26, we continued to make progress in improving the accessibility and sustainability of our estate. Building on changes made in the previous year, we relocated a further office to a site that is more accessible for both our people and the public. These changes support our aim of delivering services that are easier to access and more sustainable.

We continue to align with wider public sector approaches to sustainability, including through procurement. While we are not required to participate in the Welsh Government's Net Zero reporting framework, we have chosen to take part.

Progress has been slower than originally anticipated due to capacity constraints within our corporate functions, but we remain committed to this approach and to developing our reporting over time.

This year, we have maintained a focus on reinforcing key policies such as travel and agile working, supporting more environmentally responsible and cost-effective ways of working. We continue to encourage our people to consider both environmental impact and value for money when making travel choices.





During 2025-26, we began to collect carbon emissions data to support the development of a baseline for the organisation. While this work is at an early stage and the data is not yet sufficiently complete or robust for external reporting, it represents an important step in strengthening our understanding of our environmental impact and long-term sustainability.

During 2026-27, we intend to build on these foundations by further developing our approach to sustainability. This will include improving the quality and completeness of our emissions data, setting clear priorities, and embedding sustainability considerations more consistently into organisational decision-making. This will be supported by a sustainability strategy and action plan.

In doing so, we will take a long-term and preventative approach, ensuring that sustainability is considered alongside accessibility, value for money and service impact.

By taking a measured and proportionate approach, we aim to ensure that sustainability becomes an integral part of how we operate, supporting accessible, effective services for people across Wales now and in the future.

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OUR FUTURE PLANS AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

STRATEGIC GOALS FOR 2026–2027



STRATEGIC GOALS FOR 2026–2027

As we move into the third and final year of our strategic plan, our focus will be on strengthening the impact of people's voices on the decisions that shape health and social care services.

We will continue to organise our work around 5 priorities:

- Driving a national conversation about the future of health and social care - ensuring what people tell us is clearly reflected in national policy and system change.
- Pushing for services that meet everyone's needs - strengthening how services respond to inequalities and work for people in different communities.
- Working together better - supporting more joined-up services that reflect people's real experiences across health and social care.
- Helping people and services use technology in ways that work for them - ensuring digital services and data are developed in ways that are accessible, trusted and inclusive.
- Growing and improving as an organisation - building the capability, systems and culture needed to maximise our impact across Wales.



KEY AREAS OF FOCUS IN 2026–2027

Our programme of work for the year is shaped directly by what people have told us matters most, with a stronger focus on using lived experience to drive change at every level of the system.



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

We will build on our national work to better understand whether services are responding to what people have said they want from health and social care.

A key focus will be leading a national conversation on rights and responsibilities, exploring what people expect from services and where change is needed.

This work will focus on areas where people consistently tell us improvement is needed, including:

- women's health and maternity services
- primary and community care
- mental health
- social care access and sustainability
- services for neurodivergent people
- emergency and urgent care.

We will also strengthen our ability to understand the end-to-end experience of care, identifying where services feel fragmented or difficult to navigate, and using this insight to influence system design.

Alongside this, we will report on the national themes we hear from people across Wales, highlighting systemic challenges and where services need to respond more clearly.

PUSHING FOR SERVICES THAT MEET EVERYONE'S NEEDS

We will strengthen how people's experiences are used to influence decisions and hold services to account.

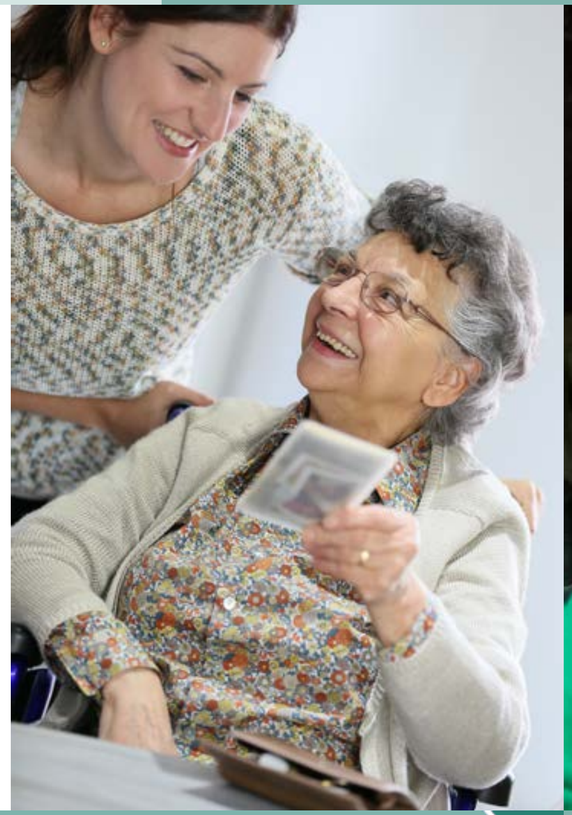
This includes:

- improving how we are involved in proposals to change services, particularly where these affect multiple regions, and making this role clearer to communities
- focusing our engagement in communities which experience the greatest health inequalities, ensuring their voices have greater influence
- strengthening the link between individual complaints and wider system learning, particularly as the new NHS "Listening to People" approach is introduced.

We will also introduce new ways to support stronger accountability:

- launching the People's Principles Alliance, bringing together organisations to improve how engagement is carried out across Wales
- embedding regional Sounding Boards, creating structured links between communities and decision-makers.

Together, this will help ensure that when people get involved, it leads to clearer and more consistent improvements in services.



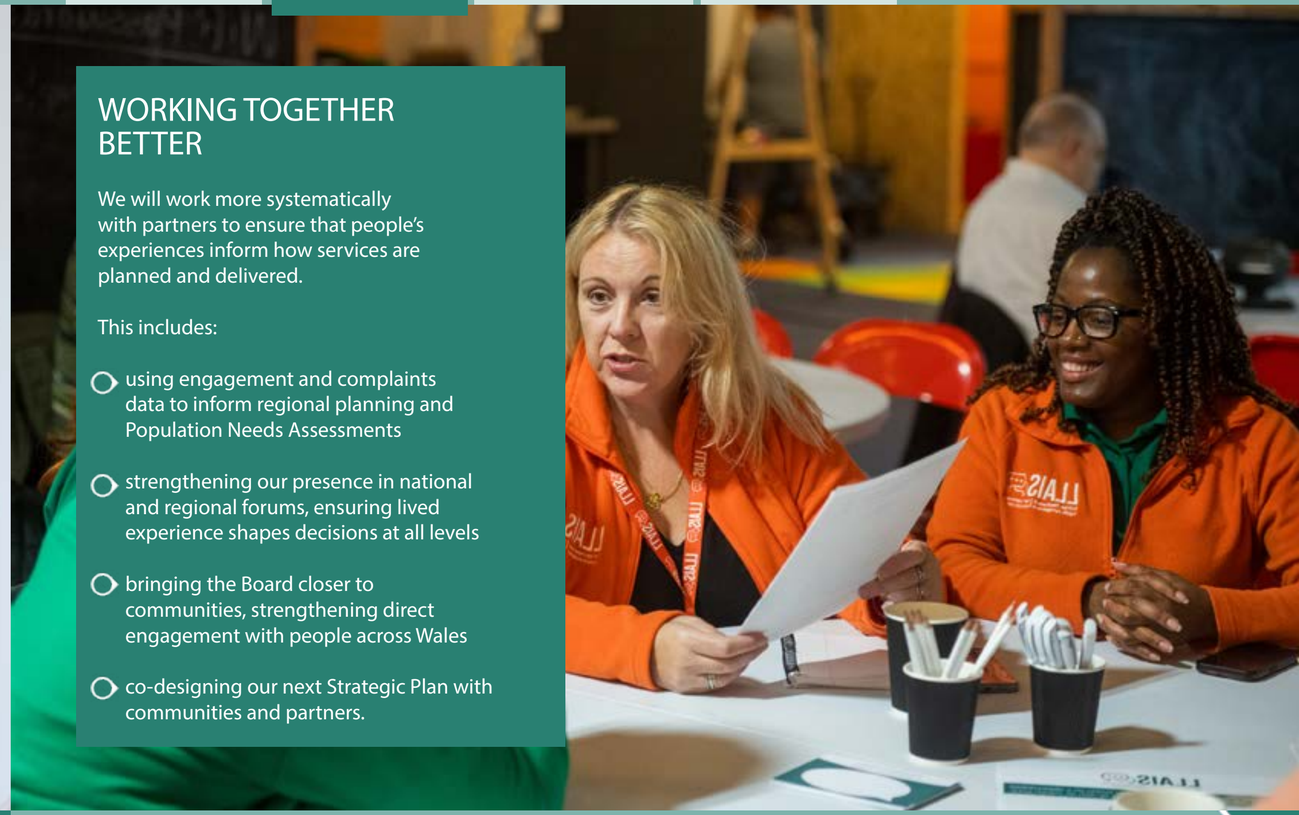
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WORKING TOGETHER BETTER

We will work more systematically with partners to ensure that people's experiences inform how services are planned and delivered.

This includes:

- using engagement and complaints data to inform regional planning and Population Needs Assessments
- strengthening our presence in national and regional forums, ensuring lived experience shapes decisions at all levels
- bringing the Board closer to communities, strengthening direct engagement with people across Wales
- co-designing our next Strategic Plan with communities and partners.

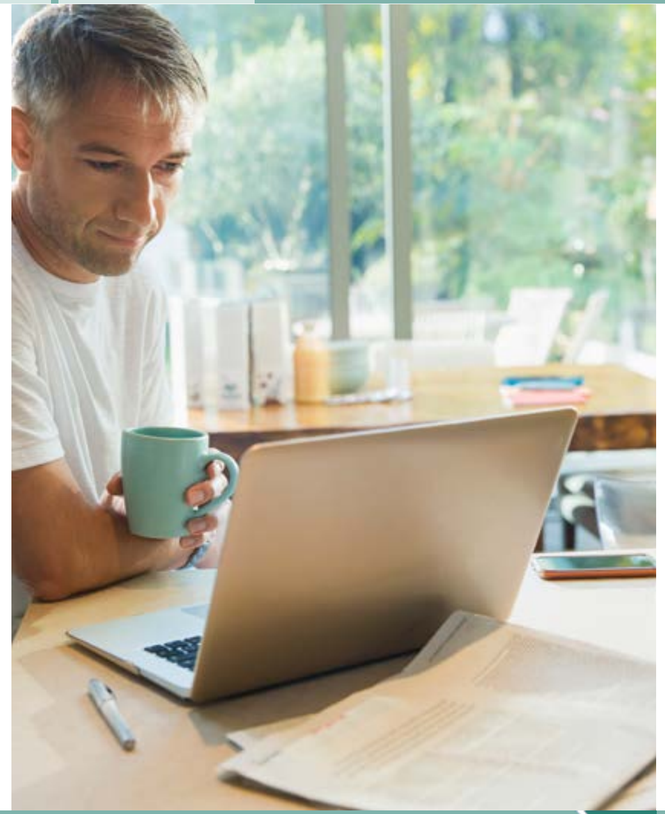


HELPING PEOPLE AND SERVICES USE TECHNOLOGY IN WAYS THAT WORK FOR THEM

We will continue to help make sure people's views and experiences shape how technology and data are used across health and social care.

This includes:

- launching our digital strategy and strengthening how we use digital tools to support engagement and influence
- representing people's experiences in the development of digital services, including the NHS Wales App
- working with partners to create a citizen panel on digital inclusion, ensuring national work reflects lived experience
- bringing communities and services together to explore new technologies, including artificial intelligence, focusing on trust, safety and accessibility.



GROWING AND IMPROVING AS AN ORGANISATION

We will continue to strengthen how we operate, ensuring we are clear, accountable and focused on the difference we make.

This includes:

- reporting our impact in a consistent and transparent way, using the People's Principles as a framework
- embedding our all-Wales standards into how we set expectations and measure performance
- strengthening recruitment, development and leadership capability across the organisation
- improving supervision, support and performance management to help staff deliver consistently

We will also:

- improve how we use data and insight, including further development of our CRM system
- continue to strengthen our financial systems and organisational governance
- ensure we remain responsive to legal, policy and system changes

This work will support us to deliver a more consistent and higher-quality service, while making best use of our resources.



FINANCE REVIEW

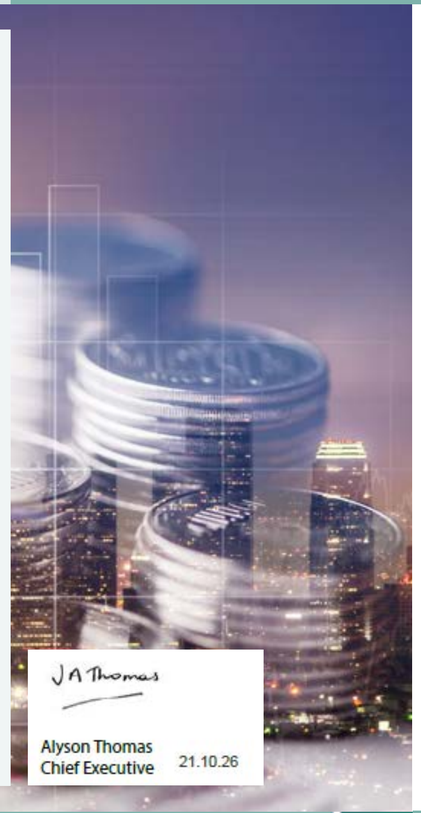
Llais' financial performance in 2025-2026 reflects a stable funding position and continued focus on delivering value within available resources. Total revenue funding of £8,427,000 was confirmed by Welsh Government through the Grant Offer Letter, forming the baseline for delivery of our Annual Plan.

Throughout the year, financial management has been underpinned by robust budgetary controls and regular engagement with budget holders, supporting clear oversight of expenditure and enabling timely decision-making. This has made sure that resources have been directed towards priority areas, while maintaining overall financial balance.

The year-end position indicates that Llais has operated within its funding allocation, with a small underspend reported. This reflects a combination of planned and in-year factors, including the timing of recruitment to vacant roles, the management of staffing changes, and continued scrutiny of non-pay expenditure. These arrangements have supported organisational flexibility while maintaining appropriate financial discipline.

In addition to revenue funding, Welsh Government provided targeted capital investment during the year to support specific organisational priorities, including the development of digital infrastructure and improvements to leasehold accommodation.

Overall, the 2025-2026 outturn demonstrates that Llais has maintained effective financial stewardship, supporting delivery against its objectives while providing a stable platform for future planning.



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. I also consider the annual report to be fair, balanced, and understandable.



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's auditors are aware of this information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

J A Thomas

Alyson Thomas,
Chief Executive, Accounting Officer, Llais
Date: 21.10.26



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 2025-2026 was Alyson Thomas.

Chair of Llais

The Chair of Llais for the financial year 2025-2026 was Professor Medwin Hughes CBE DL.

Board members serving during 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 are outlined in the Board membership and attendance table on page 86.



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. This Board position does not have a vote in Board decision-making.

During the last year the Board has also been joined by a representative of the Aspiring Board Members Programme organised by Academi Wales. This programme is open to UK residents from black, Asian, minority ethnic backgrounds, including gypsy, Roma and travellers, who have never held a public board position, to support their appointment to public boards in the future.

The programme particularly seeks to include those historically underrepresented on public boards, such as disabled people, young people under 35, and people from lower socio-economic groups. This representative has observer status and does not have a vote in Board decision-making.

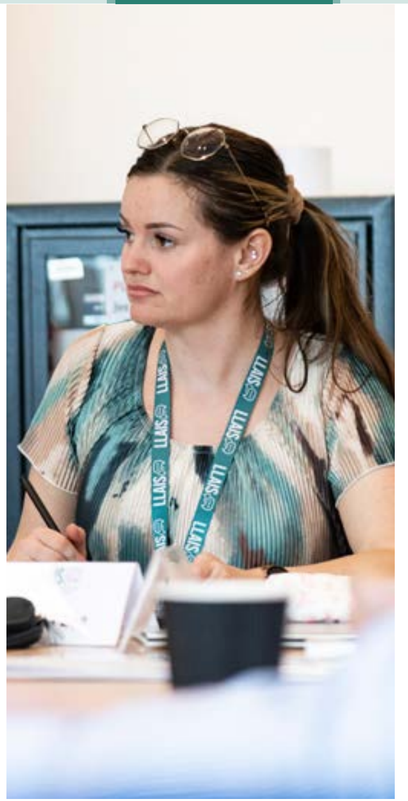
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Our Board works closely with the Chief Executive and our Executive Team and Senior Leadership Team, known as Tîm Arwain, to set our strategic direction through the approval of a 3-year strategic plan and annual plan. It also allocates our resources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

Our Board regularly reviews the components of the Llais governance framework. As a result, it has reviewed its standing orders, updated its standing financial instructions and scheme of delegation, which also includes a schedule of matters reserved for Board decision only.



Declarations of interest of Board members

Members' interest
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 and is subject to a full review at the end of each financial year.

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 and was confirmed at the 31 March 2026.

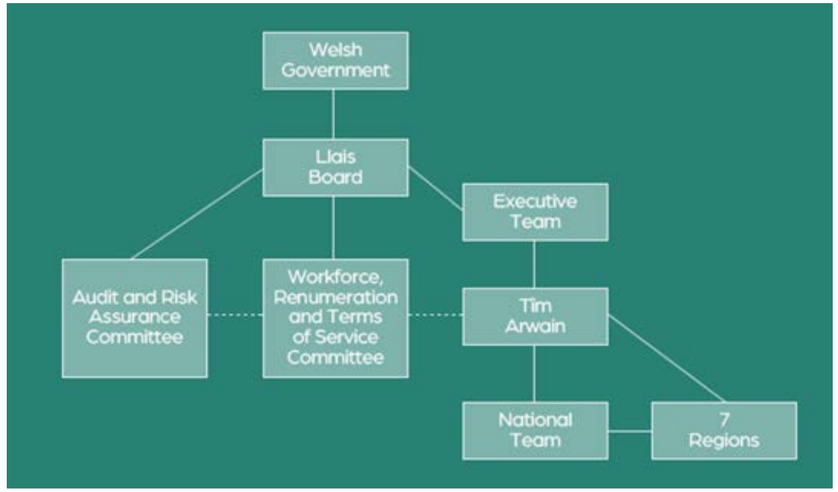
Declarations of Interest 2025-26

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. This has included the review work on our Standards of Business Conduct Policy.

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.

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



Governance framework and processes

In 2025-2026 we have continued to mature as an organisation. It is recognised that we are still a developing organisation, but we have made continued good progress during the last year. We have continued to build on our comprehensive governance review work undertaken in 2024-2025 so that we are best placed as an organisation to fulfil our roles and responsibilities.

The work in the last year has included having further updated governance structures, documentation, and processes that are becoming embedded across the organisation. As an organisation we want to continuously improve and strengthen our governance arrangements.

Our Board with advice from its committees keeps our governance arrangements under constant review. This Board undertook a Board effectiveness review in March 2025 and identified several areas for continued development and focus. These have been taken forward, and further improvements and refinements of our framework have been implemented as a result and are being embedding in day-to-day working across the organisation.

Further development work has included a full review of Standing Orders, an update of Standing Financial Instructions and the Scheme of Delegation and Schedule of Matters Reserved for Board decision. The organisation's committee framework has also been further strengthened.

In 2024-2025 new terms of reference for each committee were approved and the scope of the Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee was widened to provide alongside the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee coverage of the functional areas of Llais.

Further work has been taken forward in the last year to fully establish the new Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee and given this progress further work on cross committee assurance reporting with the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee will be formalised during the coming year.

In addition to our public board meetings that took place in 2025-2026, 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 has established 2 committees, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee.

These committees provide detailed scrutiny, insights, information, constructive challenge 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 in February 2024 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) to assist with organisation and committee development.

However, these arrangements came to an end in February 2025 following a new non-executive member being appointed to the Board and joining the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

Llais Board – roles and responsibilities include

- Makes decisions on those matters reserved for the Board and agrees the overall governance arrangements and policy framework 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 three-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 include

Advises and provides assurance to the Board on:

- the effectiveness and adequacy of the financial position and performance, risk management, digital/cyber and IT, the internal control framework, governance matters, the Welsh language and policies and procedures relating to these areas.
- the appropriateness, adequacy and integrity of the Annual Report and Accounts development and content.
- 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 and provides assurance to 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 2025-2026

Name	Committee membership	Attendance at Board Meetings	Attendance at Committee(s)	Terms of Appointment
Medwin Hughes, Chair	Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee. However, can also attend all meetings.	7 of 7	Attendance, as required.	1 April 2022 to 31 March 2030
Alyson Thomas, Chief Executive	None. However, is invited to attend all committees	6 of 7	Attendance, as required.	Not applicable
Grace Quantock (Deputy Chair)	Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee (Committee Chair)	5 of 7	4 of 4	6 June 2022 to 5 June 2026
Bamidele Adenipekun (Non-Executive Member)	Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee	6 of 7	4 of 4	1 July 2022 to 30 July 2029
Jack Evershed (Non-Executive Member)	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	7 of 7	4 of 5	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2028
Karen Lewis (Non-Executive Member)	Audit Risk and Assurance Committee (Committee Chair)	7 of 7	5 of 5	1 July 2022 to June 2030
Dr Rajan Madhok (Non-Executive Member)	Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee	6 of 7	3 of 4	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2030
Jason Smith (Non-Executive Member)	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	6 of 7	4 of 5	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2028
Mair Gwynant (Non-Executive Member)	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	3 of 3	2 of 2	1 Oct 2025 to 30 Sept 2029
Mwoyo Makuto (Associate member)	None	5 of 7	Not applicable	1 Nov 2023 to 30 Nov 2026
Israa Mohammed (Aspiring Board Members' Programme)	None	5 of 6	Not applicable	June 2025 to Dec 2026

Independent Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

Name	Committee membership	Attendance at Committee(s)	Attendance at Committee(s)	Terms of Appointment
John Baker (Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee)	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	Not applicable	3 of 3	1 Feb 2024 to 20 Nov 2025
Anthony Pritchard (Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee)	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	Not applicable	4 of 4	1 Feb 2024 to 31 Jan 2026

Independent Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

As enabled by our standing orders, Llais appointed 2 independent members to our Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in February 2024 to assist the organisation in its development phase.

They provided specialist advice and constructive challenge in the fields of finance and digital/IT and cyber. The tenures of the roles have now come to an end. Anthony Pritchard provided specialist expertise on digital/IT and cyber and John Baker on financial matters.

Llais would like to sincerely express our thanks for their help and guidance provided during our early years as an organisation. Sadly, John Baker unexpectedly passed away in November 2025 and Llais would like to extend our thanks and good wishes to his family.

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 2026 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts.



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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.

We have also developed 2 additional groups which advise Executive Team and Tîm Arwain. These are the Strategic Development Group and the Corporate Services and Governance Group. They comprise staff from across the organisation.

Our Corporate Director of Governance and 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. During the last year, we have also appointed a dedicated Governance and Risk Manager to take forward the further embedding of our risk arrangements across the organisation.

Depending on the nature of risk, other senior officers take ownership for management and mitigation, especially at a regional level and a framework of risk registers are in place to support these arrangements.

The Board has agreed a risk management policy and strategy and has also agreed a risk appetite statement, which is provided below. This will be reviewed in the coming year as Llais moves out of its establishment phase.



Llais Risk Appetite

Finance /VfM	RA 1	We have an averse risk appetite to any financial loss or impact. Value for money is a key objective.
	RA 2	We have an eager risk appetite to invest where there is benefit to the establishment of Llais systems, functions and services.
Governance	RA3	We have an averse risk appetite for decisions that may compromise compliance with statutory, regulatory or policy requirements particularly during our establishment phase.
	RA 4	We have an eager 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.
Operational and policy delivery	RA 5	We have an eager risk appetite to innovation. We are a new ambitious organisation wanting to make real change for the people of Wales.
Reputational	RA 6	We have a cautious 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.
Our people	RA 7	We have an averse 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.
	RA 8	We have an eager 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.
Information and data	RA 9	We have an averse 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.
	RA 10	We have an eager 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.

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The risk management framework

Significant development work has been undertaken during 2025-26 to redevelop and further embed our approach to risk management to implement the new Risk Management Policy and Strategy agreed in March 2025.

The Board also approved a Board Assurance Framework, which provides a framework for reporting regarding progress with the achievement of our identified priorities, especially those expressed in our 3-year strategy and annual plans, but it also seeks to outline the risk of non-delivery of these priorities.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee remain responsible for monitoring effectiveness of our approach to risk so that 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.

During the year the positive progress with the work on risk managements and the successful implementation of the Risk Management Strategy was noted through an internal audit report on risk management which provided reasonable assurance to the Board on progress.

The Board and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in partnership also held a risk workshop in March 2026, which confirmed the positive progress that had been made, but also identified further developments and refinements for the coming year, including a review of the organisation's risk appetite statement.

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Risk profile

As at end of March 2026, there were 18 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 following key risk themes on the corporate risk register are:

2 very high risks

- IT systems failure
- Learning and development arrangements.

2 high risks

- Finance and resources availability
- Our people - sickness and wellbeing levels.

12 moderate risks

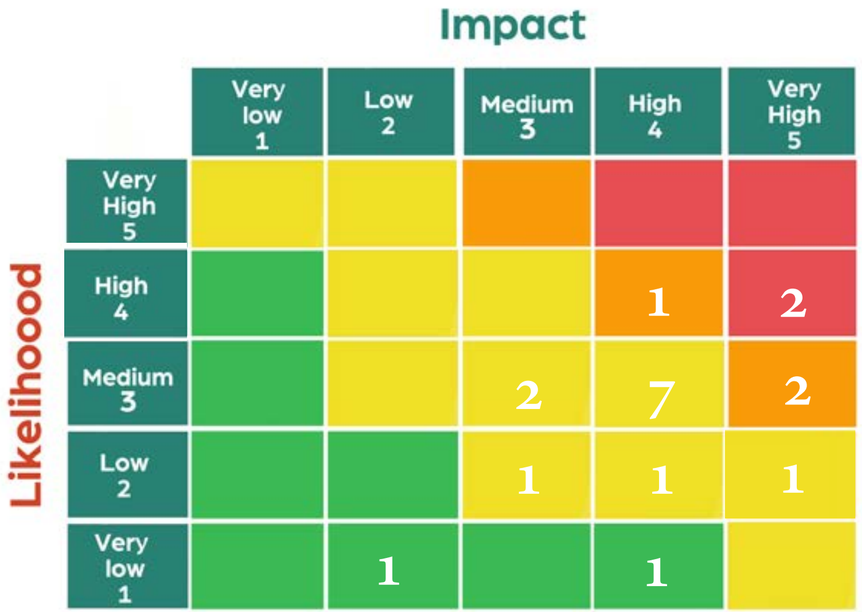
- Financial impact on delivery relating to people and skills
- Organisational culture
- Volunteers - recruitment and development
- Unexpected/uncertainty of demand
- Llais office and location strategy
- Digital and IT implementation
- Cyber resilience
- Statutory obligations
- Key partnership service provider arrangements
- Communication consistency
- Impact of Senedd Elections
- Listening to People statutory requirements.

2 low risks

- Public and stakeholder expectations
- Partnership relations.

A heat map showing the spread of risks on the corporate risks register as of the 31 March 2026 is provided opposite.

The risks contained within the risk register have been subject to risk owner scrutiny, and challenge through management review, Executive Team scrutiny and reporting to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Board during 2025-2026.



An overview of these key risks is as follows

Impact on delivery, people and skills

Several risks on the corporate risk register relate to this theme – they range between current risk levels of 12 and 20, and all have actions in place to seek to mitigate these risks.

These include ongoing reviews of requirements for key roles and adjusting to align with Llais' 3-year strategy and drive the approach of co-production of work plans for 2025-2026 to ensure spread of work streams will be more manageable compared to 2024-2025 where work programmes included more work at the latter part of the year.

Pressures in the wider health and social care system

Several risks on the corporate risk register relate to this theme – they are all a risk level of 12, 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. Active involvement in partnership meetings at regional and national levels. Managing the changes that arise from the implementation of new Listening to People statutory requirements and implementation arrangements to effectively and consistently embed these new requirements across Llais.



Learning and development

A risk on the corporate risk register relates to this theme. The current risk level for this area is 20, with actions in place to seek to mitigate the risk.

These include developing profession-specific learning and development pathways for engagement, advocacy, and other functions. Delivering CRM training aligned to standing operating procedures and user roles. Launching the policy/procedure through awareness sessions across all teams and the implementation of a middle manager development programme.

Office and location strategy

A risk on the corporate risk register relates to this theme. The current risk level for this area is 12, with actions in place to seek to mitigate the risk. These include further location reviews and renewal of leases at some Llais locations and identification of new premises where required.

Finance

A risk on the corporate risk register relates to this theme with a current risk level of 15, with actions in place to seek to mitigate the risk.

These include developing and implementing further training for staff on finance related policies and controls. Further engagement with budget holders to finalise agreed delegated budgets and to develop medium term financial plans to support the strategy planning work for next 3-5 years.



Digital, cyber and IT

A few risks on the corporate risk register cover this theme with scores between current risk levels of 10 and 20. This has been consistently the highest risk scoring area in Llais's risk profile over the last year but significant progress has been made in recent months. This progress includes achieving Cyber Essentials Plus and the drafting of a digital strategy.

There are further areas of work to be undertaken which include the continuation of the development of the strategy and identified operational leads in digital and IT.

There had been 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.



INTERNAL, EXTERNAL AUDIT AND COUNTER FRAUD

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

We have an internal audit plan using a risk-based approach. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Executive Team and Tîm Arwain advise and agree 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.



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Head of Internal Audit opinion 2025-26

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.

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 scope of the opinion covers areas examined in the risk-based audit plan which was agreed with senior management and approved by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, and other information obtained during the year that is deemed relevant to the work of internal audit.

The Head of Internal Audit assessment should be interpreted in this context when reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control and be seen as an internal driver for continuous improvement. The Head of Internal Audit opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management, and control is set out below.

The overall Head of Internal Audit opinion for 2025-2026 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 findings and required management actions are shown below.

Table 1 – Summary of Audits 2025-26

Substantial Assurance	None
Reasonable Assurance	• External partnerships – service providers • Risk management • Culture and values • Cyber resilience
Limited Assurance	None
Unsatisfactory	None
Advisory/non-opinion	None



A summary of the findings and required management actions are shown below.

External partnerships – service providers

This audit was undertaken during August and October 2025. Llais places reliance on third-party providers for critical services, including NHS Shared Services for finance, procurement and workforce systems and Centerprise for IT functions.

This review assessed the governance structures, risk management practices, and operational effectiveness of these partnerships, with a view to identifying areas for improvement and ensuring value for money. For Llais it is essential that partnership arrangements are robust, transparent, and aligned with organisational goals. The audit provided reasonable assurance.

There were a few development areas, which included fully reviewing the service level agreement with NHS Shared Services Partnership and formalising the monitoring and reporting arrangements, a review of the contractual arrangements with Centerprise and embedding risk management in agreement templates.

Risk management

This audit was undertaken during October and November 2025. Risk management plays a vital role in supporting Llais to deliver its functions and strategic objectives effectively. As a Welsh Government sponsored body, Llais must demonstrate sound governance, transparency, and accountability in all areas of its work.

This audit looked at the developing risk management arrangements in Llais following the adoption of a new risk management strategy in March 2025. The audit provided reasonable assurance.

It was recognised that positive progress had been made in a relatively short time. However, further development work was required around the tracking of risks, further embedding risk management across Llais including training and development and the tracking of risk trends over time.

Culture and values

This audit was undertaken between January and March 2026. Llais is still a relatively new organisation following significant organisational change in 2023. However, a strong organisational culture, aligned with clearly defined values, is intrinsic to the success of Llais.

Culture shapes behaviours, influences decision-making, and determines how effectively we can respond to challenges and opportunities. Llais is clear that when values are embedded throughout governance, leadership, and operational practices, they create a foundation for ethical conduct, good staff engagement, and stakeholder confidence. This audit provided reasonable assurance.

There was one area of proposed further development, which was a review of the current Board member regional ambassador role and clarifying it scope and implementation in practice and this has been undertaken and revised arrangements are being developed and rolled out.

Cyber resilience

This audit was undertaken in March and April 2026. This audit provided reasonable assurance. Cyber related risks are managed at both corporate and operational levels, with the cyber resilience risk on the corporate risk register subject to routine oversight by the Executive Team, which has operational responsibility for digital and cyber security and assurance reports provided to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. Good progress was noted in this area in recent months with Cyber Essentials Plus having been achieved with the accreditation for IASME in progress.



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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 2025-2026. 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 to discuss and monitor progress. The tracker is also reported to each meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee for assurance purposes, where 17 recommendations have been satisfactorily completed during the year.

6 remain to be fully completed as at the year-end, but progress has been made and new completion dates identified, where required. 2 recommendations are yet to reach their original target date. 3 new recommendations were added at the end of the financial year following the Cyber Resilience audit and the Values and Culture audit being considered by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.



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 6 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 12 requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. One request was delayed however, due to the size and scope of the request and the requester feeling unable to refine the parameters of the request. All other requests were responded to within the prescribed 20 working day timescales.

We received no Subject Access Requests during the year.

Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation was achieved during the year, and work is progressing to achieve IASME certification in 2026-27.

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 2025-2026 there were no concerns raised under the policy.

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REMUNERATION AND STAFF

REMUNERATION REPORT

Pay policy statement

This pay policy statement covers the period, 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 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 Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee 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 Llais and recorded in these accounts.

No benefits in kind or bonuses were paid in 2024-2025 or 2025-2026.

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

Name	Role	Salary		Pension Benefits		Total	
		2025/2026 (bands of £5,000)	2024/2025 (bands of £5,000)	2025/2026 (to the nearest £1,000)	2024/2025 (to the nearest £1,000)	2025/2026 (bands of £5,000)	2024/2025 (bands of £5,000)
Medwin Hughes	Chair	15-20	15-20	0	0	15-20	15-20
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
Barbara Harrington	Non-Executive Member	0	5-10	0	0	0	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
Mair Gwynant[1]	Non-Executive Member	0-5	0	0	0	0-5	0

1. Mair Gwynant commenced her appointment as a Non-Executive Member on 1 October 2025; the banding for the full year equivalent salary for 2025-26 was £5,000-£10,000.

2. Barbara Harrington's term of office as a Non-Executive Member ended on 1 January 2025.

Total single remuneration figure for senior managers (subject to audit)

Name	Role	Salary		Pension Benefits		Total	
		2025/2026 (bands of £5,000)	2024/2025 (bands of £5,000)	2025/2026 (to the nearest £1,000)	2024/2025 (to the nearest £1,000)	2025/2026 (bands of £5,000)	2024/2025 (bands of £5,000)
Alyson Thomas	Chief Executive	125-130	125-130	38	38	165-170	160-165
Joanne Bolton	Strategic Director of Operations and Corporate Servicesl[1]	45-50	60-65	29	15	75-80	75-80
Ben Eaton	Executive Director of Planning and Delivery / Deputy Chief Executive [2]	95-100	85-90	25	22	120-125	110-115
Angela Mutlow	Corporate Director of Operations	80-85	75-80	27	0	105-110	75-80
Richard Bevan	Interim Board Secretary[3]	35-40	75-80	0	0	35-40	75-80
RIchard Bevan	Corporate Director of Governance /Board Secretary[4]	60-65	0	43	0	100-105	0

1. Joanne Bolton commenced in post on the 22 July 2024, the banding for the full year equivalent salary for 2024-2025 was £85,000 to £90,000. Joanne resigned from her role in Llais on 3 October 2025, the banding for the full year equivalent salary for 2025-2026 was £90,000-£95,000. The remuneration disclosed reflects payments made during 2024-2025 and 2025-2026.
2. Following year end, the role held by Ben Eaton was re-evaluated, with a revised full-time equivalent salary of £110,000-£115,000 effective from 6 October. The uplift of £5,000 will be paid and backdated to the 6 October 2025 in 2026-27. An accrual has been recognised at 31 March 2026 and is disclosed, showing gross employer costs of £7,000 in Note 9 of the financial statements.
3. 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.
4. Richard Bevan was subsequently appointed substantively to the Corporate Director of Governance and Board Secretary role, on a part time basis on 1 August 2025. The banding for the full year, full time equivalent salary for 2025-2026 was £90,000-£95,000. The reported Pension figure for Richard Bevan includes a small amount relating to deferred 2015 Scheme benefits, which have been linked to the individual's active membership following re-entry to the Scheme. Richard Bevan's interim salary costs are included within 'other staff costs' in the staff costs table on page 115

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 Independent Committee Members

The appointments of the two independent members to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, made in January 2024, ended on the 31 January 2026.

During their term of office, each of the members received remuneration within the band £0 - £5,000 per annum and were not eligible for pension benefits.





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Pension

Llais employees are eligible to access the NHS Pension Scheme, and most staff are members of the 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)

Pension Entitlements of Directors	Total accrued pension as at 31/03/26 (bands of £5,000)	Real increase in pension as at 31/03/26 (bands of £2,500)	Total accrued lump sum as at 31/03/26 £'000	Real increase / (decrease) in lump sum as at 31/03/26 £'000	CETV as at 31/03/26 £'000	CETV as at 31/03/25 £'000	Real increase / (decrease) in CETV as at 31/03/26 £'000
Executive Directors							
Alyson Thomas (Chief Executive)[1]	20-25	-	2.5-5	-	407	349	35
Other Directors							
Joanne Bolton (Strategic Director of Operations and Corporate Services)	0-5	-	0.25	-	42	16	20
Ben Eaton (Executive Director of Planning and Delivery / Deputy Chief Executive)	0-5	-	0-2.5	-	58	35	10
Angela Mutlow (Corporate Director of Operations)	20-25	40-45	0-2.5	0-2.5	406	366	23
Richard Bevan[2] (Corporate Director of Governance / Board Secretary)	0-5	-	2.5-5	-	43	2	34

1. The Chief Executive is an ordinary member of the NHS pension scheme.
2. The reported Pension figure for Richard Bevan includes deferred 2015 Scheme benefits linked to active membership following re-entry to the Scheme.
3. Refer to footer notes on the Single Total Figure of Remuneration table, page 107, regarding commencement and cessation dates for senior managers.

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.

A CETV 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 disclosed relate to the benefits accrued by the individual as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not solely their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The CETV figures and related pension details include the value of any pension transferred from another scheme or arrangement, together with any additional pension benefit accrued by the member through the purchase of additional years at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with the guidance and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries.

The real increase in CETV represents the increase 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 at the beginning and end of the period.



STAFF REPORT

Staff turnover decreased from 14% in 2024–25 to 7.69% in 2025–26. The reduction was primarily due to the Voluntary Early Release Scheme implemented in 2024–25, which contributed to a higher level of employee departures in that year and was not repeated in 2025–26.

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 bar the Chief Executive are employed on NHS Agenda for Change terms and conditions. The Chief Executive is employed on the NHS Executive and Senior pay conditions and terms of service.

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 or 3 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 ratification by Llais' Workforce, Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee.



Staff and associated costs (subject to audit)

	2025/2026			2024/2025
	Perm Staff £'000	Other Staff* £'000	Total Staff costs £'000	Total Staff costs £'000
Salaries	4,273	805	5,078	4,626
Social Security Costs	545	0	545	456
Employer contributions to NHS Pension Scheme	554	0	554	541
Total net salary costs	5,372	805	6,177	5,623
Voluntary Early Release Scheme	0	0	0	396
Apprentice Levy	7	0	7	6
Notional 9.4% Pension Contribution (2024/2025; 9.4%)	361	0	361	353
Total staff costs	5,740	805	6,545	6,378

* 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	2025/2026	2024/2025
Highest Earner's Total Remuneration (£'000)	125 - 130	125 - 130
Percentage change in salary from the previous financial year of the highest earner	3.25%	5%
Percentage change in average salary from prior year	3.51%	9%
25th Percentile Pay (£)	34,939	29,611
25th Percentile Pay Ratio	3.8:1	4.3:1
Median Percentile Pay (£)	43,272	41,768
Median Pay Ratio	3.0:1	3.1:1
75th Percentile Pay (£)	52,030	50,030
75th Percentile Pay ratio	2.5:1	2.5:1

Range of Staff Remuneration	2025/2026 (£'000)	2024/2025 (£'000)
Highest Paid Employee	125-130	125-130
Lowest Paid Employee	25-30	20-25

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The percentage change in average salary compared to the prior year has been influenced primarily by the 3.6% cost of living award for staff and 3.25% for the Chief Executive.

In addition, organisational changes have contributed to the overall movement in pay, including the creation and vacancy of a small number of senior posts during the year, reflecting adjustments to the organisation's structure and priorities.

The pay ratios indicate a slight reduction in the pay gap. This is largely attributable to the cost-of-living award for staff, which was slightly higher than that awarded to the Chief Executive.

The banded remuneration of the highest paid Director (Chief Executive) was £125,000 - £130,000 in 2025-26 (2024-25; £125,000 - £130,000).

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 3.25% was awarded to the Chief Executive in 2025-26 (2024-25; 5%).

The Chief Executive's remuneration is 3 times (2024-25; 3.1) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £43,272 (2024-25; £41,768).

In 2025-26, no employee (2024-25; nil) received remuneration in excess of the role of the Chief Executive. Remuneration ranged from £25,000 - £30,000 to £125,000-£130,000 (2024-25; £20,000 - £25,000 to £125,000 - £130,000).



Staff numbers (subject to audit)

As at the 31 March 2026, Llais employed 115 staff, which includes 11 agency workers, this was a slight increase from the year before in which Llais employed 111 staff, of which there were 4 agency workers.

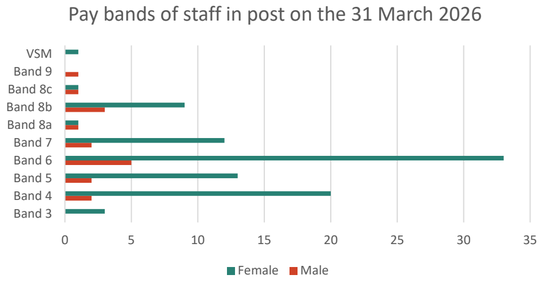
Of the 115 staff, 91 worked full-time hours, and 24 members of staff work part-time hours. (2024-25; 84 full time, 27 part time)

Of the 115 staff employed at year end, there are 95 females and 20 males. This means that for every male member of staff working for Llais, there are 4.75 females. (2024-25; 5.5)

The Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) for the organisation was 109.91 (2024-25; 102.64).

Percentage of males and females in pay bands

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



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Recruitment

Between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, Llais advertised 24 positions externally. During this period, 14 individuals commenced employment with Llais, comprising 3 males and 11 females.

Of the 24 positions advertised:

- 1 advertised role resulted in 2 appointments: 1 permanent post and 1 maternity cover.
- 5 advertised roles concluded with no suitable candidates identified for appointment.
- 5 roles were successfully advertised and offered; however, the appointed candidates did not start their employment until after 31 March 2026.

Gender pay gap (not subject to audit)

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

We produce a separate gender pay gap statement each year which has more detail around what our data is telling us and what action we will take to address any differences we have found.

Our 2024-2025 Gender pay gap report.

Our 2025–2026 report will be published by March 2027, in line with statutory reporting requirements.

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

Sex	Median Hourly Rate (£ per hour)	Average Hourly Rate (£ per hour)
Male	24.57	27.47
Female	24.25	22.50
Difference	0.32	4.97
Pay Gap %	1.30%	18.09%

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 2025, absence levels have continued to exceed the 3.30% level. Over the last 12 months, we have seen an average absence rate of 6.97%, reaching a peak of 11.72% in December 2025. A number of long-term absences contributed to these levels, with 16 cases of long-term sickness absence occurring between the period September 2025 – April 2026 alone.

12 individuals covered by these 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 alterations needed to be able to perform their duties with required comfort and safety considerations.

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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 March 2026 which saw a response rate of 73.1%. Feedback received in the survey will be key to understanding the issues affecting staff and how we can work together to address these across the coming year.

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 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.

21% of our workforce worked non-standard hours (less than 37.5 hours a week or compressed hours) which is a decrease to the previous year's figure of 25%.

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

The organisation incurred consultancy expenditure of £136,000 (2024/25 £88,000) during the year.

Consultancy services were engaged where specialist expertise was required that is not available within the organisation on a permanent or fixed-term basis.

During the year, consultancy support was primarily used to support stakeholder and public engagement activity, alongside other specialist work. This included commissioning external experts to design and deliver engagement services and to produce analytical reports, which have informed the organisation's programmes, outputs and decision-making.



Off-payroll engagements

There was one highly paid off payroll worker engagement as at 31 March 2026 (2024/2025: nil), earning £245 per day or greater.

No. of existing engagements as of 31 March 2026.
Of which number that existed:

Less than 1 year	1
Between 1 and 2 years	0
Between 1 and 2 years	0
Between 1 and 2 years	0
Between 1 and 2 years	0

Llais engaged specialist interim resource through an agency arrangement during the year, where services were provided through an intermediary.

In line with the off payroll working rules applicable to public bodies, the engagement was assessed based on the contractual terms and working arrangements and was determined to be out of scope of IR35.

The related cost is included within other staff costs in note 2.

Compensation for loss of office (subject to audit)

There were no compensation payments made in 2025-2026. (2024-2025; £nil).

Special payments (subject to audit)

The organisation made a special (ex gratia) payment of £5,000 (2024/25: £nil) during the year.
The payment was made in relation to an employment matter and was approved in line with the organisation's delegated authority and relevant guidance.

Exit packages (subject to audit)

The Voluntary Early Release Scheme (VERS), introduced in previous years to support organisational efficiency and role design, concluded on 31 March 2025. No VERS packages or settlement agreements were agreed during the current reporting year.

Leaving Package	2025/2026		2024/2025	
	Voluntary Early Release	Settlement Agreement	Voluntary Early Release	Settlement Agreement
Under £10,000	0	0	0	0
£10,000-£25,000	0	0	3	1
£25,001-£50,000	0	0	4	0
£50,001-£75,000	0	0	3	0
Total	0	0	10	1
Resource Cost	£0	£0	£355,000	£18,000

There were no compulsory redundancies in 2025-2026 or 2024-2025.

Staff learning and development

A total of 12 mandatory e-learning modules were in place for staff, alongside two new courses introduced during the year on anti-racism and the prevention of sexual harassment.

During 2025–26, 93% of staff completed all mandatory training. Completion was below 100%, largely reflecting factors such as periods of long-term absence and the timing of new starters joining the organisation.

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

Course Title	
Social Care – Neurodiversity & Dementia	82
Advocacy 'Big Event' - Advocacy works	2
Advocacy 'Big Event' - Neurodiversity in the workplace	4
Advocacy 'Big Event' - Advocacy and Adult Safeguarding	3
Advocacy 'Big Event' - Wellbeing for Advocates	1
Cyber Security	38
Customer Relationship Management - Listening To People	38
Web survey design - Social research association	1
Employee wellbeing course - CIPD	1
Social media marketing course - CIM	2
British Sign Language	5
ITIL Level 5 Foundation	2
City & Guilds Level 4 NVQ Diploma in Business Administration	1
Azure Fundamentals	2
Advent IM - Data Protection Services	1
Institute of Learning and Management 5	1
Advent IM - Senior Information Risk Owner training for the Public Sector	1

We have provided tailored training to support staff in using new systems, including our Customer Relationship Management system. Alongside this, we delivered a range of subject-specific awareness and development sessions covering areas relevant to our work, such as communication and engagement skills, and developments in the health and social care sector at local, regional and national levels.

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All staff were also invited to request additional learning to support their own development. Over the year, 12 courses were completed, covering topics such as British Sign Language, web survey design and employee wellbeing.

We have also supported a wider range of development opportunities, including coaching, continuing professional development activity, and attendance at relevant events and conferences.

Our volunteers

Volunteers are central to how we connect with people and communities across Wales. Their time, experience and local knowledge help us reach a wider range of voices and better understand what matters most to the communities we serve. Through their continued presence in local areas, volunteers help make sure that people's experiences influence services both now and in the future.

Building on our Volunteering Strategy, we have continued to develop a flexible model that allows people to contribute in ways that work for them. Whether supporting engagement activity, taking part in visits, representing Llais at meetings or contributing to specific projects, volunteers play an important role across many areas of our work.



During 2025-26, 156 volunteers were active across Wales, including 28 new volunteers who joined during the year. Together, they contributed over 1,091 hours of their time and supported 245 engagement activities, significantly supporting our reach into communities.

Volunteer involvement varied across regions, reflecting different local needs and opportunities. For example, volunteers in North Wales and Powys contributed the highest number of hours, while Cardiff and Vale and North Wales saw the greatest level of involvement in public engagement activities. Across all regions, volunteers have played an important role in helping us engage more people and strengthen our presence locally.

We have continued to offer a range of ways for people to get involved. Volunteers may contribute to different roles, including gathering feedback online, meeting people in care settings, supporting community engagement activity, and representing Llais in meetings and forums.

This flexibility allows people to take part in ways that reflect their interests, skills and availability, while supporting our aim of making sure people's voices are heard.

You can find out more about volunteering with Llais here



EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES

We are committed to making sure that equity, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of everything we do. We recognise that people's experiences of health and social care are shaped by many different aspects of their identity, and we are working to better understand and respond to these differences.

Over the past year, we have continued to strengthen how we embed equity, diversity and inclusion across our work. From how we engage with communities and capture people's experiences, to how we design our services, develop our policies and support our staff.

Our approach is guided by our Strategic Equality Plan and our legal duties under the Equality Act and related legislation, with a strong focus on listening to people and using what we hear to help reduce inequalities and improve outcomes.

You can read more about our equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives in our Annual Equality Report 2025-26.



All-Wales project: Listen to us guides

In early 2026, we completed the first phase of our Listen to us project, co-designing a series of guides with representative organisations to support more inclusive and effective engagement with different communities.

These guides focus on working with Deaf and BSL users, LGBTQ+ communities, carers, women with chronic illnesses, people with learning disabilities, and minority ethnic communities. They have been shaped by the lived experiences of those communities and are designed to support both our own teams and partners across health and social care.

We will continue to build on this work during the coming year by working with other organisations to develop similar guides, for use within Llais and to share more widely with other organisations.



The Certificate and report of the Auditor General for Wales to the Senedd

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of Citizen Voice Body for Health and Social Care Wales (known as Llais) for the year ended 31 March 2026 under the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020.

The financial statements comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Taxpayer's and related notes, including the material accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual.

In my opinion, in all material respects, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of Llais's affairs as at 31 March 2026 and of its net expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual.
- have been properly prepared in accordance with Welsh Ministers' directions issued under the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects, the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Senedd and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing in the UK (ISAs (UK)) and Practice Note 10 'Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate.

My staff and I are independent of the body in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinions.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the eparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the body's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.
My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.
The going concern basis of accounting for Llais is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual, which require entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and parts of the remuneration report that are audited and my auditor's report thereon. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the other information in the annual report. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my report, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.
I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion, the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with Welsh Ministers' directions made under the the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020.In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of my audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with Welsh Minsters' directions made under the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020; and
- the information given in the Performance Report and Accountability Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the body and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance Report and Accountability Report.
I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit.
- proper accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my team;
- the financial statements and the audited part of the Remuneration Report are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns;
- information specified by Welsh Ministers regarding remuneration and other transactions is not disclosed;
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual are not made or parts of the Remuneration Report to be audited to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for:

- maintaining proper accounting records;
- the preparation of the financial statements and Annual Report in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view;
- ensuring that the Annual Report and financial statements as a whole are fair, balanced and understandable;
- ensuring the regularity of financial transactions;
- internal controls as the Accounting Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- assessing Llais's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by Llais will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

My procedures included the following:

- Enquiring of management, Llais's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to Llais's policies and procedures concerned with:
- identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
- the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Considering as an audit team how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud. As part of this discussion, I identified potential for fraud in the posting of unusual journals;
- Obtaining an understanding of Llais's framework of authority as well as other legal and regulatory frameworks that Llais operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of Llais; and
- Obtaining an understanding of related party relationships.

In addition to the above, my procedures to respond to identified risks included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations discussed above;
- enquiring of management and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee about actual and potential litigation and claims;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board;
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all audit team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is affected by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the Llais's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my auditor's report.

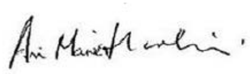
Other auditor's responsibilities

I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Senedd and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.



Ann-Marie Harkin
For and on behalf of the
Auditor General for Wales
21.10.26

1 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff

FINANCE OVERVIEW

LLAIS FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2025/2026

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2026

	Note	2025/2026 £'000	2024/2025 £'000
Operating Expenditure			
Staff costs		6,545	6,378
Other Operating Expenditure	3	1,805	1,627
Depreciation/Amortisation	3	364	368
Loss on disposals of PPE	3	-	6
Provision provided and released	3	(25)	(3)
		8,689	8,376
Other Operating Income			
Grant Income - Tenovus		(45)	0
Finance Activities			
Interest Payable - Right of Use Asset	4	10	10
Interest Payable - Permanent Injury provision	11	3	2
Net Expenditure after interest		8,657	8,388
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year		8,657	8,388

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing operations. There are no unrecognised gains or losses in 2025/26 or 2024/25.
The notes that follow on pages 140 to 160 form part of these accounts

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2026

	Note	31/03/2026 £'000	31/03/2026 £'000	31/03/2025 £'000	31/03/2025 £'000
Non-current assets:					
Right of use assets	4	228		158	
Property, Plant and Equipment	6	33		26	
Intangible assets	7	411		498	
Total non-current assets			672		682
Current Assets:					
Trade and other receivables	8	128		201	
Cash and cash equivalents	10	157		93	
Total current assets			285		294
Total assets			957		976
Current liabilities:					
Trade, other payables and income tax	9	(281)		(669)	
IFRS16 Finance lease within 1 year	4	(53)		(132)	
Provisions	11	(21)		(75)	
Total current liabilities			(355)		(876)
Total assets less current liabilities			602		100
Non-current liabilities					
IFRS16 Finance Lease	4	(142)		(28)	
Provisions	11	(168)		(127)	
Total non-current liabilities			(310)		(155)
Total assets less total liabilities			292		(55)
Taxpayers' equity (SOCTE)			292		(55)
General Reserves			292		(55)

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

J A Thomas

Date: 21.10.26
Alyson Thomas
Chief Executive

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 March 2026

	Note	31/03/2026 £'000	31/03/2025 £'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net expenditure		(8,657)	(8,388)
Adjustments for non-cash transactions	3	339	371
Adjustment for Notional 9.4% Pension Contribution	2	361	353
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	8	73	(46)
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	9	(397)	(62)
Increase/(decrease) in provision	9	9	0
Provision utilised in year	11	(25)	(66)
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(8,297)	(7,838)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase / Enhancement of property, plant and equipment	6	(12)	(26)
Purchase of intangible assets	7	(37)	0
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(49)	(26)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Funding from Welsh Government - Grant in Aid		8,643	8,123
Payments of lease liabilities	4	(246)	(250)
Right of Use Assets; interest	4	10	10
Unwinding of interest on provision	11	3	2
Net financing		8,410	7,885
Net increase/(decrease) in cash equivalents in the period		64	21
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	10	93	72
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	10	157	93

Statement of Changes in Taxpayer's Equity for the year ended 31 March 2026

	General Reserve 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026	General Reserve 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025
	£'000	£'000
Balance as at 1 April	(55)	(143)
Net expenditure	(8,657)	(8,388)
Total recognised income and expense	(8,712)	(8,531)
Funding from Welsh Government	8,643	8,123
Notional Welsh Government Funding (Pension contribution)	361	353
Balance as at 31 March	292	(55)

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2026

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

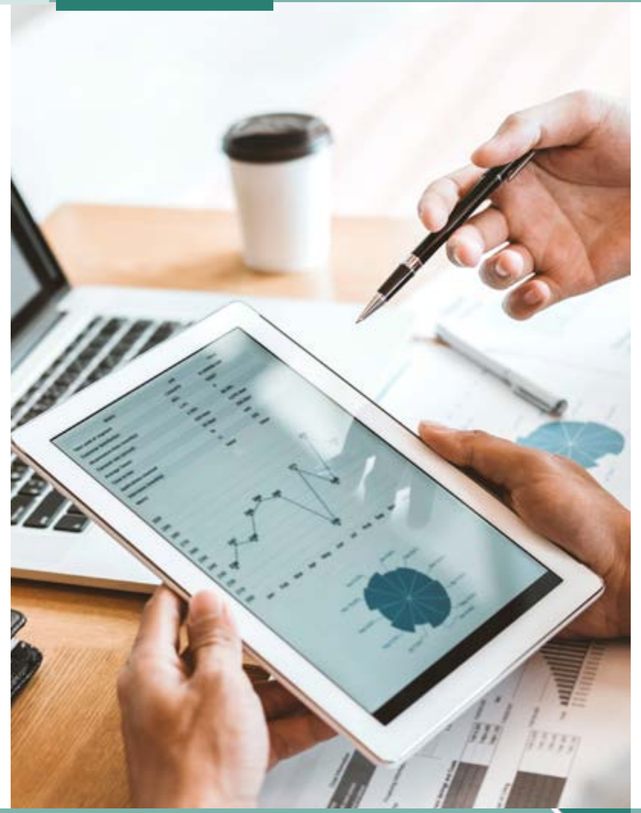
These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government Accounts Direction and the 2025-26 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM).

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 accounts have been prepared on an accrual's basis under the historical cost convention.



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 2025-26 and/or the lack of regulations/legislation necessary to wind up Llais.

Llais' Statement of Financial Position as of 31 March 2026 shows net liabilities of £292,000.

This reflects the inclusion of liabilities falling due in 2026-27 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.

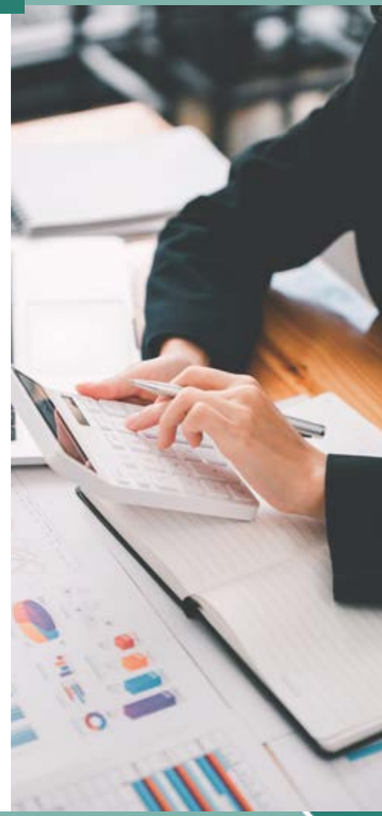
It has accordingly been considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for these financial statements.

1.3 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.

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



1.4 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%.

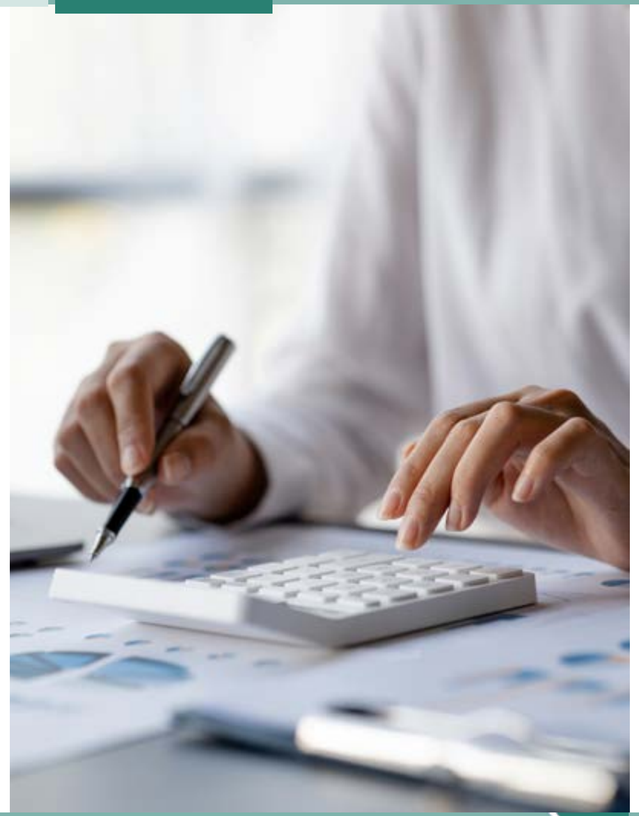
Under a transitional arrangement since 2019/20, Llais continues to pay 14.38% directly, while the additional 9.4% is funded by the Welsh Government and paid to the NHS Business Services Authority. Although Llais budgets for the 14.38%, the notional cost of the additional 9.4% (£361,000) is reflected in its annual accounts.

Further information is provided within the Remuneration Report on page 105.

1.5 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.



1.6 Property, Plant and Equipment

The minimum level for capitalisation for Property, Plant and Equipment is £5,000 exclusive 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:

Asset	Asset Life
Office equipment	5 years
IT related equipment	5 years
Leasehold 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 costs as any revaluation differences are not considered 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.

1.7 Intangible Assets

The minimum level for capitalisation for an intangible asset is £5,000 exclusive 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 five years). Amortisation is calculated from the date that the asset commences its useful life.

1.8 Right of Use Assets

IFRS 16 replaces IAS 17 and requires lease contracts to be assessed to determine whether they convey the right to control the use of an identified asset in exchange for consideration. Where this is the case, a right of use asset and corresponding lease liability are recognised at the commencement date.

- The right of use asset is initially measured at cost, comprising the initial lease liability adjusted for any initial direct costs, lease incentives, prepayments and restoration or dilapidation costs where applicable. It is depreciated on a straight line basis over the shorter of the asset's useful life or the lease term.
- The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of lease payments not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, where not readily determinable, the HM Treasury incremental borrowing rate.
- In line with the exemptions permitted under IFRS 16 and the FReM, Llais has elected not to recognise leases where the lease term is 12 months or less, or where the underlying asset is of low value.



1.9 VAT

Llais is not registered for VAT.

All expenditure is reported inclusive of VAT where applicable, as VAT is irrecoverable.

1.10 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.

1.11 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.

1.12 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.



1.13 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. Movements in the accrual are recognised within staff costs.

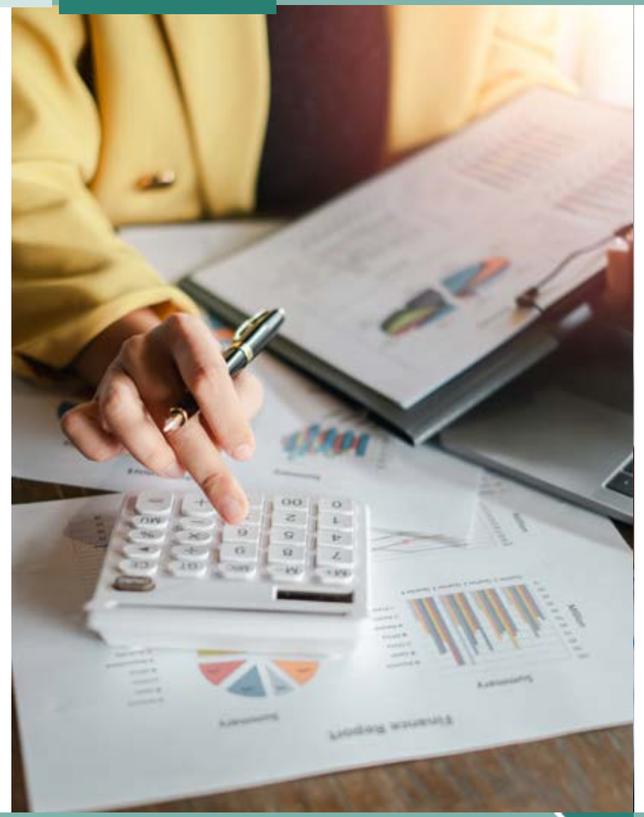
1.14 Provisions

Provisions are recognised where Llais has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation, and a reliable estimate can be made.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the reporting date and, where material, are discounted to present value.

Where provisions relate to leased assets (for example dilapidation obligations), the initial cost is capitalised into the right of use asset in accordance with IFRS 16.

Provisions are charged to expenditure unless capitalised as set out above and are reviewed annually to ensure they remain appropriate and sufficient.



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1.15 Accounting Standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted

IAS 8 requires disclosure of new and revised accounting standards, amendments and interpretations that are in issue but not yet effective.

The Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) continues to evolve, including updates relating to non-investment asset valuations and the accounting for social benefits. The financial impact of these changes on the organisation has not yet been fully assessed.

IFRS19 (Subsidiaries without Public Accountability Disclosures) will be effective from 1 January 2027, the introduction of this standard will not affect Llais' financial statements, as the organisation is not a subsidiary.

IFRS 18 Presentation and Disclosure in Financial Statements will replace IAS 1. The standard is effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2027 in the private sector. The impact on the public sector is still being assessed, and an implementation date has not yet been determined.



2. Staff costs

2.1 Employee costs

	2025/2026			2024/2025
	Permanent staff	Other staff	Total staff costs	Total staff costs
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Salaries	4,273	805	5,078	4,626
Social Security costs	545	0	545	456
Employer contributions to NHS Pension Scheme	554	0	554	541
Total net salary costs	5,372	805	6,177	5,623
Voluntary Early Release Scheme	0	0	0	396
Apprentice Levy	7	0	7	6
Notional Pension Contribution (2024/2025; 9.4%)	361	0	361	353
Total Staff Costs	5,740	805	6,545	6,378

Note: Further information on staff costs is included within the Remuneration & Staff Report

Other staff costs include agency and bank staff and other specialist resource engaged through agencies to meet organisational needs. Where individuals provide services through their own intermediary, these costs are included within staff costs and are considered separately under the off-payroll working rules; the relevant arrangements are disclosed within the off-payroll note where applicable.

3. Other Operating Expenditure

Other operating expenditure consists of:		2025/2026	2024/2025
Operating Expenditure	Note	£'000	£'000
Audit fees – External audit		33	43
Audit fees – Internal audit		19	18
Information technology		351	80
Other accommodation costs		224	250
Other administrative expenses		126	147
Other staff related costs		47	33
Professional fees		43	44
Rentals under operating leases		135	224
Service Level Agreements		160	149
Software Licences		252	309
Specific Programmes		339	240
Learning & Development		22	35
Travel & subsistence		54	55
		1,805	1,627
Non-cash items			
Depreciation on right of use asset	4	235	242
Depreciation of PPE	6	5	2
Loss on disposals of PPE	6	-	6
Amortisation	7	124	124
Provision	11	(25)	(3)
		339	371
Total		2,144	1,998

4. Rights of Use Assets

	Digital	Buildings	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2025	454	138	592
Additions	96	209	305
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2026	550	347	897
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2025	357	77	434
Charged in the year	169	66	235
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2026	526	143	669
Net book value at 31 March 2026	24	204	228
Net book value at 31 March 2025	97	61	158

In accordance with IFRS 16 Leases, as adapted by the HM Treasury Financial Reporting Manual (FReM), Llais recognises right-of-use assets and corresponding lease liabilities for its leased assets. During 2025/2026, Llais entered into two new lease arrangements, with associated movements reflected in right-of-use asset additions in the year. Provisions for dilapidation costs for £34k are capitalised into the right-of-use asset, with movements reflected as additions in Note 4.

Maturity Analysis	2026		2025	
	Digital	Buildings	Total	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Contractual undiscounted cash flows relating to lease liabilities				
Within one year	10	52	62	136
Between one and five years	14	136	150	30
After five years	0	0	0	0
Sum	24	188	212	166
Less future charges allocated to future periods	(1)	(16)	(17)	(6)
Minimum lease payments	23	172	195	160
Included in				
Current trade liabilities	9	44	53	132
Non current trade liabilities	14	128	142	28
	23	172	195	160
Amount recognised in SoCNE				
Depreciation	169	66	235	242
Interest on lease liabilities	2	8	10	10
Amount recognised in Statement of Cashflows (net of irrecoverable VAT)				
Interest expense	2	8	10	10
Repayments of principal on leases	(173)	(73)	(246)	(250)
Total cashflows	(171)	(65)	(236)	(240)

5. Other commitments under leases

	31 March 2026	31 March 2025
	£'000	£'000
Obligations under leases		
Land and buildings	-	-
Expiry within 1 year	11	16
Expiry after 1 year but not more than 5 years	-	11
	11	27

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:

- 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 two short-term licences commencing in March 2025 for office accommodation. One of which is for Welsh Government Buildings in Carmarthen, which has a licence term of 12 months and a lease commitment of £5,500. 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.

Subsequent to the reporting date, notice was received on 30 April 2026 to vacate this property by 5 August 2026; this does not affect the commitments disclosed at 31 March 2026 but will reduce future commitments in 2026/2027.

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

	Leasehold Improvements	Total
	£'000	£'000
Cost or valuation		
At 1 April 2025	26	26
Additions	12	12
Disposals	0	0
At 31 March 2026	38	38
Depreciation and impairment		
At 1 April 2025	0	0
Charged in the year	5	5
Disposals	0	0
At 31 March 2024	5	5
Net book value at 31 March 2026	33	33
Net book value at 31 March 2025	26	26

Llais entered into a lease agreement for premises at Baglan Bay Innovation Centre, Swansea in November 2025. Expenditure was incurred in relation to refurbishment and adaption works to the leased premises in order to make the space suitable for operational use by Llais. In accordance with IFRS 16, these costs have been capitalised where they are directly attributable to preparing the leased asset for its intended use.

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

	Customer Relationship Management System	Website	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2025	622	0	622
Additions	0	37	37
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2026	622	37	659
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2025	124	0	124
Charged in the year	124	0	124
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2026	248	0	248
Net book value at 31 March 2026	374	37	411
Net book value at 31 March 2025	498	0	498

There has been no impairment of any assets and they are shown at cost which is considered to be the 'fair value'. Intangible assets are amortised on a straight line basis over their estimated useful life.

During the year, Llais commissioned the development of a new website to support the organisation's operations and stakeholder engagement. Costs associated with the development of the website have been capitalised where they are directly attributable to preparing the asset for its intended use, in accordance with IAS 38.

8. Trade and other receivables

	31 March 2026	31 March 2025
	£'000	£'000
Current Assets:		
Trade and other receivables	3	0
Prepayments and accrued income	125	201
Total trade and other payables	128	201

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

9. Trade payables and other current liabilities

	31 March 2026	31 March 2025
	£'000	£'000
Current liabilities:		
Trade payables	20	46
Other payables & accruals	154	164
Pay accruals	55	404
Taxation and social security costs	-	22
Accrual for holiday entitlement not yet taken	36	33
Employment benefit liability	7	0
Deferred income	9	0
Total trade and other payables, accruals and deferred income	281	669

Deferred income relates to grant funding received for the delivery of Cancer Complaints Advocacy Service. Income is recognised as eligible costs are incurred. At the reporting date, amounts not yet utilised have been deferred and will be recognised in future periods in line with utilisaton of funds.

The employment benefit liability has arisen due to a post-year-end job evaluation process, calculated using the Agenda for Change pay scales in place at the reporting date.

10. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2025/2026	2024/2025
	£'000	£'000
Balance at 1 April	93	72
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	64	21
Balance at 31 March	157	93
The following balances at 31 March were held at:		
Government banks and cash in hand	157	93
Balance at 31 March	157	93

11. Provision for Liabilities and Charges

	31 March 2026				31 March 2025
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	Permanent Injury	Dilapidations	Settlement	Total	Total
Balance at 1 April	77	125	0	202	268
Provided in year					
Charged to SoCNE	15	0	5	20	12
Capitalised to RoU asset	0	34	0	34	0
Release of unused provisions	0	(45)	0	(45)	(15)
Provision utilised in year	(17)	(8)	0	(25)	(65)
Unwinding of Discount	2	1	0	3	2
Balance at 31 March	77	107	5	189	202
Falling Due:					
Within 1 year	16	0	5	21	75
Between 2 and 5 years	61	107	0	168	127
Later than 5 years	0	0	0	0	0
Total	77	107	5	189	202

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 2025/26, Llais exited two leases and a small liability arose on one lease. The dilapidations provision has been reviewed across the remaining estate and updated to reflect the best estimate of costs at the reporting date.

Amounts relating to leased properties are capitalised into the right-of-use asset and reflected as additions in Note 4.

A provision of £5,000 has been recognised in respect of an employment tribunal claim relating to matters arising prior to the year end. The claim was settled for £5,000 prior to approval of the financial statements.

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 Llais 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 2026 (31 March 2025; £nil).

13. Capital commitments

There was one contracted capital commitments at 31 March 2026, not otherwise include in these financial statements (31 March 2025; £nil) for £11,000 relating to leasehold improvements.

14. Related-party transactions

In 2025/26, Llais received cash funding of £8.643m (2024/2025; £8.123m) from the Welsh Government, against confirmed Grant-in-Aid funding of £8.643m (2024/2025; £8.123m).

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 2025/2026 were:

*notional funding of £0.361m (2024/25; £0.353m) from Welsh Government to cover Notional 9.4% Pension Contribution.

No employees including key management personnel or board members, nor their related party's 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 2025/26 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
Adenipekun, Bamidele	Associate - Practice Solutions Limited
Alyson Thomas	Married to an associate of Practice Solutions Limited
Jason Smith	Associate - Practice Solutions Limited

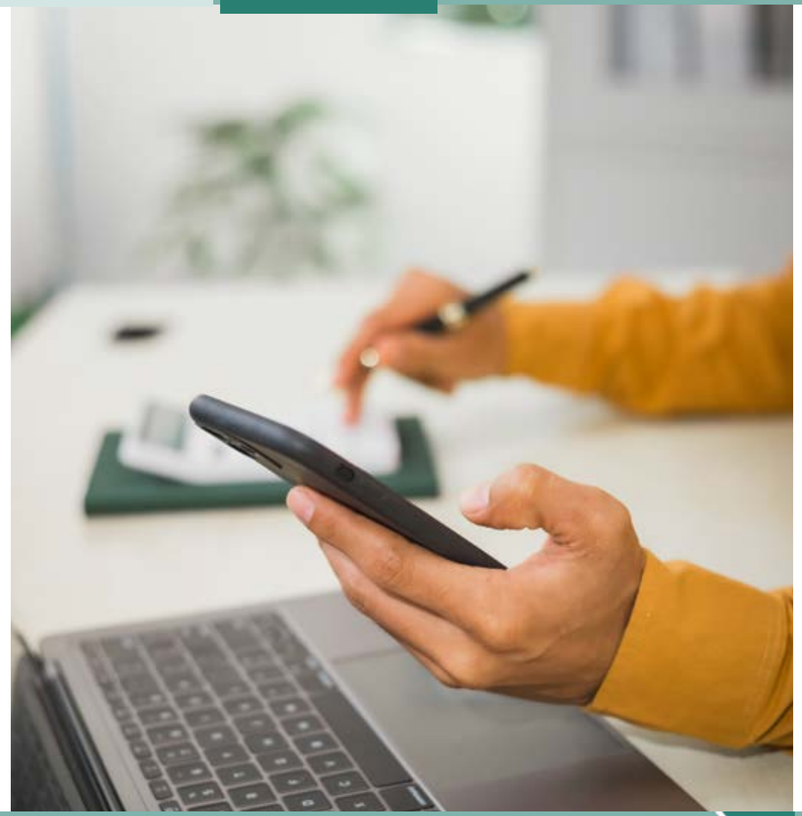
Practice Solutions Limited was paid £6,779 during 2025/26 (2024/2025; £3,240), these costs are included in note 3.

No parties were involved in the commissioning of the work.

15. Events after the reporting period

Subsequent to the reporting date, Llais settled an employment tribunal claim relating to matters arising prior to year end for £5,000 (for which a provision is included in Note 11), and also received notice on 30 April 2026 to vacate a property by 5 August 2026, which does not affect commitments at 31 March 2026 but will reduce future commitments in 2026/27 as disclosed in Note 5.

These financial statements were authorised for issue on xx xxxxxxx 2026 by Alyson Thomas



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Glossary

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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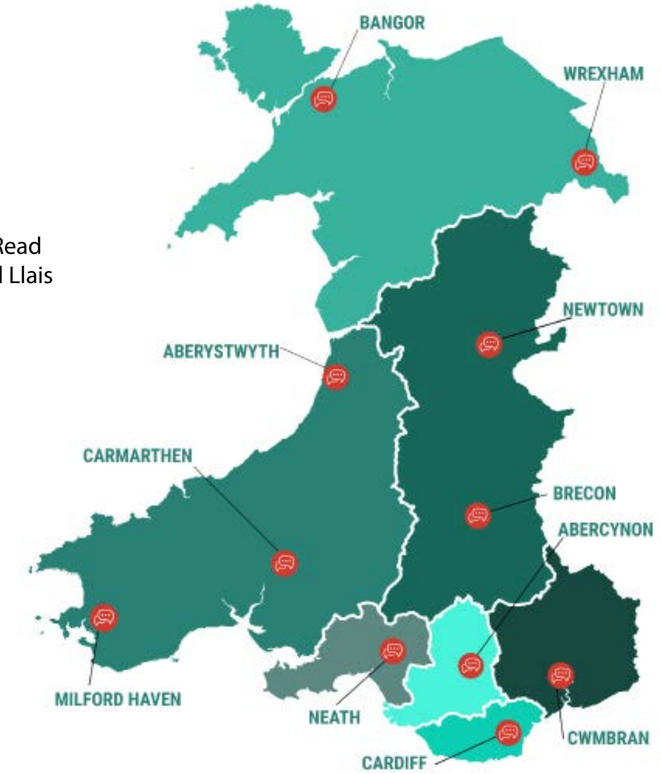
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