



**Ombwdsmon
Ombudsman**
Cymru • Wales



Open consultation

Our draft Equality Plan 2026-2029

We are seeking your views on our draft Equality Plan, which sets out how we will promote and support equality, diversity and inclusion in our complaints service, systemic improvement work and workplace between 2026 and 2029.

Opened: 24 July 2026

Consultation closing date: 24 September 2026

Contents

About us.....	3
Purpose of the consultation.....	3
Welsh language	5
Invitation to respond	7
Consultation questions	7
How to respond.....	9
Privacy Notice	11

About us

We have three main roles.

- We investigate complaints about public services.
- We consider complaints about councillors breaching the Code of Conduct.
- We drive systemic improvement of public services and standards of conduct in local democracy in Wales.

Purpose of the consultation

Our previous Equality Plan covered the period from 2023 to 2026. We are now reviewing our equality objectives and the actions we intend to take under our Equality Plan between 2026 and 2029.

Our draft Equality Plan has been developed in line with our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. However, it also reflects our deep and unwavering commitment to supporting equality, diversity and inclusion in everything we do.

The proposed Equality Plan is aligned with, and supports the delivery of, our new Strategic Plan 2026-29 and its mission to have a positive impact on people and public services in Wales:

Strategic Aim 1: Deliver justice with positive impact for people of Wales:

The proposed Equality Plan will help us ensure that, whatever their characteristics, people who use our service have equal experience, feel respected and agree that we clearly explained our decisions.

Strategic Aim 2: Influence positive change in public services and high

standards of conduct in local government: The proposed Equality Plan will underpin actions to ensure that lessons from our complaints and own initiative investigations lead to better services for all communities in Wales, including

those that are most vulnerable. We will also continue to explore how we can improve the accessibility of local complaints processes.

Strategic Aim 3: Strengthen access and impact for those who need our

service the most: The proposed Equality Plan sets out how we will work to raise awareness and understanding of our office as well as tackle any barriers that could stop people from engaging with our complaints process, to ensure equal and equitable access. It will support us in promoting more interactions with the service in Welsh.

Strategic Aim 4: Ensure that we are a resilient, agile and accountable

organisation: The proposed Equality Plan will support us in recruiting, retaining and developing a diverse workforce, that is more representative of the communities that we serve. It will also frame our work to promote inclusion within our workplace.

The proposed Equality Plan builds on progress made to date, while recognising that there is more to do. For example, we want to further widen awareness of our service, continue to improve accessibility, promote the use of Welsh, and ensure our workforce better reflects the communities we serve.

Our proposed Equality Objectives are:

Objective 1: Promote our office and services to under-represented communities

We want more people who may need our service to know who we are, what we do, and how we can help. This includes young people, older people, people of diverse nationalities and people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. We also want to promote to Welsh speakers the option to interact with our service in Welsh.

Objective 2: Ensure seamless access to our service

We want our service, website, information resources and complaint routes to be accessible and easy to use for everyone, including people who need additional support or prefer to contact us in ways other than online.

Objective 3: Deliver better outcomes for vulnerable groups through our systemic improvement work

We want to ensure that we can direct our own initiative investigations towards issues that affect vulnerable and under-represented groups. We also want to support better accessibility of local complaints processes.

Objective 4: Continue to improve the diversity of our workforce

We want to attract applicants from a wide range of backgrounds, improve representation where groups are under-represented, and continue to make our recruitment processes inclusive and accessible.

Objective 5: Promote and support diversity and inclusion in our workplace

We want all staff to feel supported, treated fairly and able to thrive. We also want to do more to promote internal use of Welsh.

[Open our full draft Strategic Equality Plan 2026-29 \[522 KB\]](#)

Welsh language

While we have in place a Welsh Language Policy, our Equality Plan includes attention to how we intend to support Welsh speakers and the use of Welsh.

At PSOW, we wholeheartedly support the Welsh language and are committed to supporting Welsh speakers and promoting the use of the Welsh language.

Our national awareness research shows that Welsh speakers are more likely than average member of the Welsh public to know about us, as well as to have confidence in our office.

Our service is fully bilingual and we always emphasise that contacting us in Welsh will not lead to any delay in how quickly we consider a complaint.

Over the recent years we saw an increase in the proportion of our staff with fairly well or fluent Welsh language skills.

Despite this, we still see that very few people use our service in Welsh. During 2025-26, 128 callers to our office chose the option to speak in Welsh. However, in terms of recorded language preferences, service users expressed the preference to communicate with us in Welsh in less than 1% of our complaints in 2025-26.

Our proposed Plan recognises these challenges and includes specific commitments to strengthen the use of our service and resources in Welsh.

[Download our Welsh Language Policy \[PDF 248 KB\]](#)

[Download our Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2024/25 \[1.63 MB\]](#)

Invitation to respond

We warmly welcome all views on our draft Equality Plan. We especially welcome views from:

- people who use, have used, or may need to use our service
- people and communities who may face barriers to accessing complaints processes
- organisations that advise, support or represent people with protected characteristics
- third sector organisations and advocates
- public bodies and people working in complaint handling services
- anyone with an interest in equality, diversity and inclusion in Wales.

Consultation questions

1. Please share your views on each of our proposed Equality Objectives, including the proposed actions and intended impact:
 - Objective 1: Promoting our office and services to target communities
 - Objective 2: Ensuring seamless access to our service
 - Objective 3: Delivering better outcomes for vulnerable groups through systemic improvement work
 - Objective 4: Improving the diversity of our workforce
 - Objective 5: Promoting and supporting diversity and inclusion in our workplace
2. Do our proposed Equality Objectives cover all areas of our work where people may face barriers, or where we could do more to promote equality, diversity and inclusion? If not, what other areas should we consider?
3. Can you suggest any additional ways of measuring whether our actions under the proposed Plan make a difference?

We will continue to work in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards and our service will always be accessible in Welsh and English.

4. What are the effects (whether positive or adverse) the proposed Plan would have on
 - (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
 - (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?
5. How could the scope of the proposed Plan be formulated or revised so that it would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on
 - (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and

(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

6. How could the scope of the proposed Plan be formulated or revised so that it would not have adverse effects, or so that it would have decreased adverse effects, on

(a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and

(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

7. Do you have any other comments you would like to share on our draft Equality Plan?

How to respond

Please share your views with us by **12:00 PM (midday) on 24 September 2026**, in any of the following ways:

- **Complete our online form:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Z52QNQV>
- **Email** your response to communications@ombudsman.wales
- **Call us** on 0300 790 0203 and ask to speak to Communications Team (option 3)
- **Post your response** to:

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

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Privacy Notice

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

Responses to consultations may be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tell us.

Please click here to see our [General Privacy Notice](#) for further details about the information the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the GDPR.

Click here to see our [Consultations Privacy Notice](#), which has more information about how we use your data for consultations.