



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## GUIDANCE

# Policy for registering and running .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales domains

Explains how public sector organisations apply for and use .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales domain names.

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# Contents

[About this document](#)

[Domain structure and management](#)

[Welsh Naming and Approvals Committee and Jisc Services Ltd](#)

[Eligibility](#)

[Conditions of use](#)

[Naming conventions and principles](#)

[Apply to use a domain name](#)

[Appeals](#)

[Sub-domains and sub-folders](#)

[Defensive registration](#)

[Make changes to or cancel a domain name](#)

[Annex A: Organisations requiring a geographic identifier](#)

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# About this document

## Version history

Version	Change	Date
1.0	First version finalised	14 October 2015
1.1	Updated following initial WNAC meeting	17 December 2015
1.2	Clarifications and additional context	10 March 2016
1.3	Added ISBN and alternate text to tables	18 April 2016
1.4	Changed requirements around suffixes (para 5) Removed requirement to leave .gov.uk domain within 3 years of adopting the Wales SLDs (para 4.m) Updated membership table (para 2) Included annex of organisations requiring a geographic identifier (Annex A)	10 January 2017
1.5	Added DMARC requirements in conditions of use	16 October 2017
1.6	Change in membership of the WNAC	08 March 2018

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Version	Change	Date
1.7	Additional text regarding incident management policy	29 April 2020
1.8	Change in membership of the WNAC	18 May 2021
1.9	Change in membership of the WNAC	22 November 2022
1.10	Change in membership of the WNAC	08 June 2023

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## What is this document?

This guidance sets out the governance principles and processes for the .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales domain name spaces.

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## Who is this document for?

- organisations wishing to apply for a .llyw.cymru or a .gov.wales domain name
- organisations responsible for managing services that use a .llyw.cymru or a .gov.wales

Note: Welsh Government (WG) staff should refer instead to the '**WG Domain**

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## name policy for websites and online services’.

Note: You must not use a .llyw.cymru or .gov.wales domain name, for example on promotional material, until it has been approved by the Welsh Naming and Approvals Committee (WNAC). WNAC will not be responsible for any costs incurred by organisations that fail to follow this guidance.

Note: Community and Town Councils should also refer to the [Welsh Government Statutory Guidance Access to Information on Community and Town Councils](#).

## Domain structure and management

The global system of internet domain names exists to make internet services more accessible for ordinary users. The Welsh Government has sponsored the creation of the .cymru and .wales toplevel domains (TLDs).

Within these TLDs, two Second Level Domains (SLDs) have been reserved for use by the public sector: .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales. The SLDs support the Welsh character set and are ‘closed’ domains: their use is restricted to Welsh public sector organisations. They reassure users that the service is run by a publically-accountable organisation that they can identify and contact offline.

The Welsh Government is working to limit the number and variety of its websites and converge them onto llyw.cymru / gov.wales. This will help make it simpler to access its information and services as well as strengthen its online identity. Although to a great extent local government operates separately and is not part of this process the same principles apply, which is reflected in this policy. Therefore to keep the number of domains under control, domain names are allocated to local government organisations, not to local marketing campaigns or initiatives.

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Eligible public sector organisations in Wales are strongly encouraged to adopt domain names on the SLDs, which are managed by the Welsh Government through the Welsh Naming and Approvals Committee (WNAC) and Jisc Services Ltd (JSL).

## Welsh Naming and Approvals Committee and Jisc Services Ltd

The Welsh Naming and Approvals Committee (WNAC) will assess applications against the criteria set out in this guidance and is responsible for:

- approving or rejecting applications for domain names
- approving or rejecting requests for modifications to domain names
- considering appeals against the above decisions

WNAC operates virtually and meets annually to review the guidance and discuss any related matters that arise.

Names	From	Representing
Simon Matthews WNAC Chair	Corporate Digital Team, Welsh Government	Welsh Government
Aeddán Davies	Corporate Digital Team, Welsh Government	Welsh Government
Kathryn Jenkins	Head of Information Security, Welsh Government	Welsh Government
Andrew Simpson	JSL	JSL

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<b>Names</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Paul Owens	Chief Digital Officer for Local Government, WLGA	Local authorities
Jack Rigby	Head of Technology, Centre for Digital Public Services	Arm's length bodies

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Jisc Services Ltd (JSL) administers the .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales SLDs on behalf of the Welsh Government, providing domain name application, appeal, registration, modification and deletion systems. JSL is a not-for-profit organisation that also runs the .gov.uk SLD on behalf of the UK Government.

## Eligibility

In addition to the Welsh Government, only the following types of public sector organisation are eligible to apply for .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales domains:

- Welsh Government agencies and non-ministerial departments
- Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies (executive, advisory and tribunal)
- Welsh Government commissions and inquiries
- Welsh Government wholly-owned subsidiary companies
- Inspectorates
- Independent statutory office holders
- National bodies not otherwise covered
- Unitary authorities
- Community and town councils
- Fire and Rescue Services
- National Park Authorities
- Joint authorities, joint committees and partnership bodies including one or

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more of the above. .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales names are usually only issued to partnerships that have a legal status in their own right and the first option for partnerships should always be to make use of web space belonging to one of the partner bodies.

## Conditions of use

Once approved and made live, domains and sub-domains on .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales must conform to the following conditions of use:

- Services using .llyw.cymru or .gov.wales domain names must comply with current Welsh, UK and European legislation, including Copyright, the Welsh Language Measure, the Data Protection Act, and the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Services using .llyw.cymru or .gov.wales domain names must be resistant to existing and emerging security threats. Organisations should take reasonable and proportionate steps to reassure themselves regarding security. For example a unitary authority may invest in annual IT Health Check testing and a community council may ask for the reassurance of their website host. If a .llyw.cymru or .gov.wales service is found to be compromised, the organisation's own incident management policy must be followed and JSL or the relevant DNS administrator will be instructed to point the domain or sub-domain in question to a safe landing page while the security issues are addressed.
- The domain name must be used specifically and exclusively for the organisation on whose behalf it is registered.
- The domain name must be the organisation's principal domain name for both their website and email. It must not resolve or redirect to the homepage of a

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hosting service, any other agent or any page on a .gov.uk or non-public sector domain. Email only applications will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

- Each eligible organisation should use just one .llyw.cymru and one .gov.wales domain name.
- Where an organisation has contracted out a service to a third party, that service should still be available as part of the organisation's .llyw.cymru and / or .gov.wales domain. This sends a clear message that the organisation is responsible and accountable for this service, even though someone else might be providing it.
- Acquisition of corresponding non-public sector domains (.co.uk, .wales, .org.uk etc) must only be for defensive purposes. However use of .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales reduces the need for any such defensively registered domains and we recommend carefully considering whether they are necessary. Should you choose to defensively register any domains they are not to be directed to any service hosted on a .llyw.cymru or .gov.wales domain, they are to be unresolved.
- Sub-domains must not be advertised or marketed. A sub-folder of the primary domain must be used instead, which may redirect to the sub-domain. For example, the advertised "X.gov.wales/database" domain name will redirect to "database.X.gov.wales".
- It is acceptable, and some organisations may find it preferable, to drop the www for marketing purposes e.g. "Visit X.gov.wales for more information". However, the domain name with www in front (www.X.gov.wales) must work as an address. The form with www should be used as the preferred Unique Resource Identifier and cited as links in official documents.
- WNAC approval is subject to the organisation's status. If this changes after

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approval has been given, then the organisation must inform JSL. In the event that an organisation becomes ineligible, a grace period of up to 90 days may be agreed for transition to a new domain.

- If an organisation is replaced by, or merges into, another organisation, it must inform WNAC of the changeover date. It is expected that the old organisation's domain will be shut down within 6 months of the new organisation assuming its statutory powers and duties.
- WNAC approval means that the applying organisation has exclusive right of use but does not own the domain name outright.
- If an applying organisation already uses a domain name other than llyw.cymru or gov.wales, then within one month of WNAC approval this legacy domain name must be permanently redirected to the new .llyw.cymru and/or .gov.wales domain name. JSL will maintain any .gov.uk domain indefinitely should its retention be justified by persistent traffic flows or branding considerations.
- The named contact on the registration form must be an officer of the organisation applying for the domain. (In the case of town and parish councils this will be the clerk.) To ensure political neutrality, elected members may not be listed as the named contact. You are responsible for notifying Jisc immediately if any of the contact details change.
- It is recommended that managers of individual .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales domain names establish and maintain a generic website team email address, for example, webteam@X.gov.uk or postmaster@X.gov.uk.
- Websites using .llyw.cymru or .gov.wales domain names must use code that complies with **W3C standards**.
- A condition of being granted a .gov.wales or .llyw.cymru sub domain is that

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you setup and maintain DMARC through creating and maintaining the necessary TXT records in your DNS.

In the event that an organisation does not respect these conditions, WNAC will work with the organisation to agree a remedy. Persistent failure to enact the remedy will be considered a breach, for which two penalties are open to WNAC:

- **Suspension:** if a breach is not remedied within 90 days, the DNS for the domain may be switched off. Only once the breach is remedied will the domain be reinstated.
- **Withdrawal:** for a severe or persistent breach the DNS for the domain will be removed. For the DNS to be restored the organisation will be required to make a new application.

## Naming conventions and principles

Domain names should:

- Reflect the legal name or registered trading name of the applying organisation.
- Minimise the risk of confusion with other registered names, organisations, trade names or trademarks.
- Ensure clarity in the geographic remit of the organisation i.e. regional bodies must not imply a national reach. The name may be shortened as long as it provides a clear idea of the location (eg Llansanffraid Glan Conwy may use glanconwy-cc).
- Avoid the risk of inadvertent masquerading.
- Be as short, simple and 'sayable' as possible. Where an organisation name contains frequently used words such as prepositions or conjunctions, these may be stripped out for simplicity (eg Nantyglo and Blaina may use

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nantygloblaina-cc).

Domain names must:

- Contain only standard ASCII alpha numeric characters (a-z) and numerals (0-9), exceptions may be allowed for Welsh characters (eg â and ŷ).
- Contain at least three characters.
- Not conflict with internet protocols such as www, ftp, dns, whois.
- Not include acronyms or abbreviations unless it can be demonstrated that there is a common understanding of what they mean.
- Not contain more than 64 characters.

There is no longer a requirement for domain names to include 'wales' or 'welsh' etc as the geographic remit is explicit in the .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales SLDs.

## Suffixes

Unitary authorities must use the format 'area.gov.wales' e.g. carmarthenshire.gov.wales. City Councils must use their full name, for example cyngordinasbangor.llyw.cymru. Other eligible bodies may choose between using their full name or a suffix but must adopt the same approach in English as in Welsh. National Park Authorities do not need to use a suffix.

Examples:

- barrytowncouncil.gov.wales or barry-tc.gov.wales
- cyngorcymunedllansadwrn.llyw.cymru or llansadwrn-cc.llyw.cymru
- northwalesfireservice.gov.wales or northwales-fire.gov.wales
- eryri.llyw.cymru

Where towns or communities in different areas of Wales share a name the domain name must clarify the organisation's location. The organisations affected

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by this are listed at Annex A. For example:

- argoed-caerphilly-cc.gov.wales
- argoed-flintshire-cc.gov.wales

Where an organisation decides to share a website with other organisations in their area the domain name should reflect the geographic context of the organisations involved. For example, community councils in Penllyn sharing a website would use the “penllyn-communities.gov.wales” domain name.

## Apply to use a domain name

### Choosing an approved domain registrar

JSL maintains support contracts with a wide variety of domain registrars. Only such supported registrars may make .llyw.cymru or .gov.wales domain name applications. If an organisation's current registrar is not supported, JSL will readily enter into a support arrangement to enable such requests. A domain registrar must contact JSL directly to initiate this.

**Details of JSL’s approved registrar scheme and a list of registrars are available on the JSL website.**

### Application process

All organisations must follow this process when applying for a .llyw.cymru or .gov.wales domain:

- organisation's domain registrar submits an application to JSL via the online form

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- JSL passes the application to the WNAC
- WNAC assesses the application and responds to JSL within ten working days
- JSL notifies the domain registrar of the decision
- if approved, and subject to payment, JSL registers the domain name on behalf of the organisation
- if rejected, JSL will provide the organisation with the reasons for the WNAC's decision

This process applies equally to domain name applications, modifications and deletions.

The use of .llyw.cymru and .gov.wales domain names for marketing campaigns and short-term, non-core service offerings is discouraged. WNAC will assess applications on a case-by-case basis.

## Informing WNAC that the service is live

When the service goes live the organisation must inform the WNAC directly by email ([digital@gov.wales](mailto:digital@gov.wales)) confirming:

- the .llyw.cymru and / or .gov.wales URL of the service homepage
- the date that it went live as a public website
- that the service complies with, and will continue to comply with, all conditions of use set out above

## Paying for the service

The **amount due is published on the JSL website**. The initial fee covers the first two years, after which a renewal fee will be payable for each subsequent two-year period.

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Domain registrars, upon joining JSL's Approved ISP Membership Account, agree to accept the responsibility to pay their JSL invoices in a timely manner. If charges are not paid within 60 days of the date of the invoice, then JSL reserves the right to suspend the domain name and, within another 30 days, to withdraw the domain name.

Where the registrar has indicated that it is not willing to accept responsibility for the renewal payment, then within 60 days JSL will suspend the domain name and take reasonable steps to contact the organisation for instructions on a way forward. If this is also unsuccessful, then within another 30 days JSL will withdraw the domain name.

## Renewing the service

JSL will contact the domain name registrar before the end of the two-year period to determine whether the organisation wishes to renew for a further two years. It is assumed that organisations will wish to renew and confirm their renewal promptly. JSL will attempt to obtain confirmation of renewal twice over a 90-day period. In the absence of confirmation, JSL will then withdraw the domain name.

## Appeals

An organisation has the right to appeal a WNAC rejection but must do so within 10 working days of receiving the decision. Failure to obtain WNAC approval prior to printing stationery or publicity material is not grounds for an appeal.

The appeals process is as follows:

- organisation provides their domain registrar with new information that addresses the WNAC reasons for the rejection

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- domain registrar passes this information to JSL, who shares it with WNAC
- WNAC assesses the new information and responds to JSL with a decision within ten working days
- JSL notifies the domain registrar of the decision
- if approved, and subject to payment, JSL registers the domain name on behalf of the organisation
- if rejected, WNAC will not hear a second appeal

## Sub-domains and sub-folders

The use of fourth- and fifth-level domains (sub-domains) is strongly discouraged and must not be used merely to host alternative content or to divide a site by content area.

Sub-domains are only to be used:

- for corporate intranet sites carrying only internal traffic
- for corporate extranet sites accessed by password and aimed at specific stakeholder audiences, typically used for an exchange of private data
- for development or test systems that are not publicly addressable
- where a web service or component requires pointing to a third-party solution that cannot be locally integrated e.g. database solution

## Defensive registration

Organisations should consider acquiring related commercial domains such as .com, .wales, and .org.uk in order to minimise the risk of user confusion via:

- typosquatting (deliberate misspellings of a domain name)

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- cybersquatting (bad faith registration of comparable domain names)
- cybersmearing (creation of web site creation to convey deceptive, false or disparaging information)

Defensively registered domains are not to be directed to any service including any .llyw.cymru or .gov.wales domain, they are to be unresolved.

Organisations do not need to defensively register other .llyw.cymru or .gov.wales domain names as their use is wholly controlled by WNAC.

## Make changes to or cancel a domain name

To make changes to a domain name an organisation must ask its domain registrar to **contact JSL via the relevant forms on its website**. In addition, organisations must fax or email a headed letter with a signature authorising the changes to JSL on 0300 300 2213 or email [naming-admin@ja.net](mailto:naming-admin@ja.net).

To cancel a domain name, an organisation must ask its domain registrar to email JSL at [namingadmin@ja.net](mailto:namingadmin@ja.net). In addition, organisations must fax or email a letter authorising the cancellation to JSL on 0300 300 2213 or email [naming-admin@ja.net](mailto:naming-admin@ja.net).

## Annex A: Organisations requiring a geographic identifier

Argoed Community Council – Caerphilly  
Argoed Community Council – Flintshire

Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council – Powys

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Llanbadarn Fawr Community Council – Ceredigion

Cyngor Cymdeithas Llanfair – Gwynedd

Llanfair Community Council – Vale of Glamorgan

Llanfynydd Community Council – Carmarthenshire

Llanfynydd Community Council – Flintshire

Llangwm Community Council – Monmouthshire

Llangwm Community Council – Pembrokeshire

Llangwm Community Council – Conwy

Llangynog Community Council – Carmarthenshire

Llangynog Community Council – Powys

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