

WELSH GOVERNMENT INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Title of proposal:	Integrated Impact Assessment for the Annual Returns (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2026 and the Regulated Services (Registration) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2026
Official(s) completing the Integrated Impact Assessment (name(s) and name of team):	Stefanie Rhine, Alison Machon Regulation & Inspection Policy Branch Enabling People Division
Department:	Health and Social Services Group
Head of Division/SRO (name):	Alistair Davey
Cabinet Secretary/Minister responsible:	Minister for Children and Social Care
Start Date:	1 April 2025

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SECTION 1. WHAT ACTION IS THE WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSIDERING AND WHY?

Issue

The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (“the 2016 Act”) provides the statutory framework for the regulation and inspection of social care services and the regulation of the social care workforce in Wales. To help achieve this, the 2016 Act provides the Welsh Ministers with a range of regulation-making and other subordinate legislation powers.

The Health and Social Care (Wales) Act 2025 (“the 2025 Act”) received Royal Assent on 24 March 2025. It includes provision intended to make miscellaneous amendments to the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 and the 2016 Act, to ensure this legislation can operate fully and effectively. This Integrated Impact Assessment relates to proposed changes to the regulation of social care services to:

- require service providers to publish their annual return on their website **within 91 days** of the end of the financial year (by 30 June);
- enable the offence of failure to publish an annual return within the required time limit to be **dealt with by a penalty notice**, and to specify the sum of the penalty; and
- **specify information that must be included** in a provider’s application to cancel their registration, and the form of the application.

Action proposed

Following Royal Assent changes to secondary legislation were identified to enable implementation of changes to the regulation of social care services. These changes are being taken forward via the Annual Returns (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2026 and the Regulated Services (Registration) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2026). Collectively, these statutory instruments make amendments to the Regulated Services (Annual Returns) (Wales) Regulations 2017; the Regulated Services (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2019; and the Regulated Services (Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2017 to support implementation of the 2025 Act.

The Annual Returns (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2026 prescribe a time limit within which a service provider must publish their annual return on their website. They prescribe that the failure to publish an annual return within the prescribed time limit is an offence which may be dealt with via a penalty notice and prescribe the sum payable. The Regulated Services (Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2026 prescribe the information required when a service provider applies to cancel their registration and the form of the application. They are referred to as “the Amendment Regulations” in this Integrated Impact Assessment.

How the five ways of working in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 are applied the proposed action, throughout the policy and delivery cycle

Long term

The Welsh Government's intention is for the regulatory framework for social care services to operate fully and effectively. This aligns with the aim of ensuring the regulatory regime for social care is fit for purpose and outcomes based. The specific legislative changes proposed to the timing of the publication of annual returns by service providers will enhance transparency and consistency as well as improving accessibility and public confidence. The option of a penalty notice is proportionate enforcement mechanism for deterring non-compliance without costly proceedings. The specific legislative changes proposed to require clear, standardised information when a provider applies to cancel their registration and the form of the application will ensure the regulator, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), has the information necessary to carry out its regulatory duties effectively during the closure period. The Welsh Ministers (in practice CIW) will have assurance as to the ongoing care, safety and well-being of individuals using or living at the service(s).

These measures promote consistent standards, minimise risks to vulnerable people, and align with Programme for Government priorities, including transparency, equality, and sustainability through digital processes.

The Amendment Regulations apply the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 principles as they are proportionate, aligned with wider policy goals, and responsive to stakeholder needs. The Welsh Government will monitor and review their impact collaboratively. The proposal also reflects long-term trends such as digitalisation and demand for transparency. Requiring annual returns online on a provider's website improves accessibility and public confidence, while detailed cancellation information supports continuity of care.

Collaboration

The development of the amendments involved collaboration with CIW, supported by a 12-week public consultation.

Costs and Savings

The requirement to publish the annual return within a specified time period is not anticipated to have a cost implication as costs for website publication are generally negligible. Penalties apply only for non-compliance and act as a deterrent. The requirement for specified information when cancelling a provider's registration will only slightly increase administrative work for providers. The amendments are not expected to affect competition. Costs for CIW will be absorbed within existing budgets, with potential savings from reduced administration, more efficient enforcement, and improved oversight.

Involvement

People affected by the proposals have been involved through a public consultation on the proposals which ran from 16 July to 8 October 2025, which sought views on the practicality and impact of the proposed changes. Responses were received from 20 individuals and organisations. A summary of the consultation including Welsh Government responses can be found here: [Proposed changes to the regulation of social care services | GOV.WALES](#)

Mechanism

As legislation is being brought forward, a Regulatory Impact Assessment is in development. This Integrated Impact Assessment will provide supporting evidence for that assessment.

SECTION 2. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON SOCIAL WELL-BEING?

2.1 People and Communities

The Amendment Regulations are not expected to have any positive or negative impact on people or communities. The changes are technical in nature and do not alter the way services are delivered or accessed. As such, the extent of impact is none, and there is no anticipated effect on individuals, groups, or communities.

Although some people may use registered services for health or social reasons, the amendments do not change the availability, quality, or delivery of those services. People living in, working in, or linked to places will not experience any difference because of these changes. Similarly, people receiving services from registered providers will continue to have the same level of support without disruption.

There is also no impact on workers, either generally or within a specific sector, and the goal of promoting fair work as outlined in section 4 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 remains unaffected. The amendments do not introduce new requirements or obligations that would influence employment practices, working conditions, or community well-being.

2.2 Children's Rights

The Amendment Regulations are not expected to impact on Children's Rights. We do not consider a full Children's Rights Impact Assessment necessary. The Amendment Regulations are technical in nature and aim to reinforce the provisions in the 2025 Act. No new or existing impacts have been identified or modified.

2.3 Equality

Please see Annex A for the Equality Impact Assessment.

The Amendment Regulations will positively impact equality by promoting the provisions under the 2025 Act. These include access to published information in a timely and consistent way. The requirement for specified information in an application to cancel a provider's registration

will provide assurance as to the ongoing care, safety and well-being of individuals using or living at the service(s) and ensure they are not disadvantaged.

2.4 Rural Proofing

The proposal is not anticipated to have any effect on rural proofing.

2.5 Health

The Amendment Regulations will have no impact on health determinants. There is no anticipated positive or negative effect, and the extent of impact is none across all areas considered. This includes lifestyles, social and community influences on health, mental wellbeing, living and environmental conditions affecting health, economic conditions affecting health, access and quality of services, and macroeconomic, environmental and sustainability factors.

There is no anticipated differential health impact on any particular groups. The Amendment Regulations will not affect age-related groups, income-related groups, groups who experience discrimination or social disadvantage, or geographical groups. Although some individuals may use registered services for health-related reasons, the proposal is not expected to have any impact on the delivery of those services to them. No positive or negative impact is expected for any of these categories.

We do not consider a full health impact assessment necessary.

2.6 Privacy

The Amendment Regulations amend existing regulations under the 2016 Act to specify a timescale in which providers must publish annual returns on their website ie by 30 June and introduce a penalty for non-compliance. These changes do not alter how CIW collects or stores data.

The proposed changes require specified information to be included in an application to cancel registration. These changes replicate current practice and do not alter how CIW collects or stores data. CIW remains compliant with GDPR as outlined in its [Privacy Policy](#).

We have determined that a full Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required.

SECTION 3. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON CULTURAL WELL-BEING AND THE WELSH LANGUAGE?

3.1 Cultural Well-being

The proposal is not anticipated to have any effect on cultural well-being.

3.2 Welsh Language

The Amendment Regulations are not expected to have any effect on the Welsh language. They do not alter existing requirements or introduce new obligations that would impact the use of Welsh in service delivery. Therefore, the overall assessment is that the extent of impact is none.

Care providers are already required to comply with Welsh Language Standards and to provide the Active Offer, ensuring people can access services in Welsh without having to request it. These obligations remain unchanged by the amendments, and providers will continue to deliver services in line with these standards. As such, the proposal does not affect the promotion or use of the Welsh language within regulated services.

The full mandatory impact assessment is available in Annex B.

SECTION 4. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON ECONOMIC WELL-BEING?

Supporting growth in the Welsh economy, and through this tackling poverty, is at the heart of the Welsh Government's Programme for Government.

4.1 Business, the general public and individuals

The Amendment Regulations are not expected to impact businesses or the public more than minimally. The changes are technical and do not introduce new requirements or processes significantly affecting operations, costs, or service delivery.

4.2 Public Sector including local government and other public bodies

The Amendment Regulations are not expected to have any impact, either positive or negative on the public sector. Based on the best available evidence, there are no anticipated monetary or non-monetary costs or benefits in the short or long term for compliant providers.

4.3 Third Sector

Although some registered providers are in the third sector, the Amendment Regulations are expected to have minimal impact on their services or activities. They will not affect people receiving support, community facilities, funding arrangements, or introduce new responsibilities.

4.4 Justice Impact

The proposal does not require new primary legislation. The Amendment Regulations amend the Regulated Services (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2019 to add a penalty for failing to publish the Annual Return on a provider's website within the prescribed timeframe. This extends the existing framework to cover this compliance requirement.

The Amendment Regulations introduce a civil penalty rather than a criminal offence, so it does not affect criminal liability. While unlikely to impact the wider justice system, limited administrative appeals may occur, following existing processes. These are not expected to increase litigation or legal aid demand due to the civil nature and low financial threshold.

A Justice System Impact Identification has been completed.

SECTION 5. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING?

Under Section 9 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, the Welsh Ministers are required to prepare, publish and implement a natural resources policy and to take all reasonable steps to implement it and to encourage others to take such steps. The [Natural Resources Policy](#) was published in August 2017.

5.1 Natural Resources

The proposal will have no impact on environmental well-being.

5.2 Biodiversity

The proposal will have no impact on biodiversity.

5.3 Climate Change

The proposal will have no impact on climate change or decarbonisation.

5.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The proposal is not expected to have an impact on agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, tourism, town and country planning or land use; therefore, a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

5.5 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The proposal will not have an impact on the Natura 2000 European protected site network; therefore, a Habitats Regulations Assessment is not required.

5.6 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

The proposal will not have an impact on any of the following areas; therefore, an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required:

- Construction, mining, extraction or waste disposal works on land and at sea (including urban development, highways, ports, energy, agriculture and fish farming).
- The change of use of land.
- Afforestation or deforestation.
- Agricultural improvement on uncultivated or semi-natural areas.
- Restructuring of rural land holdings; or
- Water extraction or land drainage.

SECTION 6. SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY WHAT WILL BE IMPACT ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE?

The socio-economic duty requires relevant public bodies, including Welsh Ministers to have due regard to the need to reduce inequality of outcome that results from socio-economic disadvantage. This duty applies only to decisions which are of a strategic nature. Having considered the Socio-Economic Duty guidance, the proposal is not considered a decision of a strategic nature and in this context the Socio-Economic Duty does not apply.

SECTION 7. RECORD OF FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS REQUIRED

Impact Assessment	Yes/No	If yes, you should
Children's rights	No	Complete the Children's Rights Impact Assessment below
Equality	Yes*	Complete the Equality Impact Assessment below
Socio-economic Duty	No	Complete the Socio-economic Duty Assessment below
Rural Proofing	No	Complete the Error! Reference source not found. below

Health	No	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance
Privacy	No	Complete the Error! Reference source not found. below
Welsh Language	Yes	Complete the Welsh Language Impact Assessment below
Economic / RIA	No	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance
Justice	Yes	Complete the Justice System Impact Identification form on the intranet
Biodiversity	Yes*	Complete the Biodiversity Impact Assessment below
Climate Change	No	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance
Strategic Environmental Assessment	No	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance
Habitat Regulations Assessment	No	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance
Environmental Impact Assessment	No	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance

* Mandatory for all proposals in order to meet statutory obligations.

SECTION 8. CONCLUSION

8.1 How have people most likely to be affected by the proposal been involved in developing it?

The proposals were developed through extensive engagement in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Equality Act 2010. A formal consultation invited responses from service providers, representative bodies, and service users, alongside targeted engagement with care providers. Feedback received ensured they are clear, workable, and maintain high standards without unnecessary burden. Evidence from

the consultation shows strong support and confirms the amendments are mainly administrative with no adverse impact on people using a registered care service.

8.2 What are the most significant impacts, positive and negative?

The impact on people, culture, the Welsh language, the economy, and the environment is expected to be minimal. These changes largely formalise existing practice and uphold equality and inclusion, with only a minor risk for those without internet access, mitigated by a requirement in the 2025 Act to make information available on request. Economic and environmental impacts are negligible as costs are minimal, and penalties apply only for non-compliance. Digital publication reduces printing and supports sustainability.

The proposals align with well-being goals and aim to improve accountability modestly without shifting policy direction.

8.3 In light of the impacts identified, how will the proposal:

- **maximise contribution to our well-being objectives and the seven well-being goals; and/or,**
- **avoid, reduce or mitigate any negative impacts?**

The Amendment Regulations have limited impacts but are in line with Welsh Government well-being objectives. Requiring providers to publish annual returns online within a prescribed timeframe promotes transparency and accountability.

Care Inspectorate Wales and Social Care Wales will continue collaborating to streamline data requests and reduce administrative complexity. Monitoring and feedback will help address any unintended effects, and the penalty system will be reviewed to remain proportionate. Risks are minimal and manageable within existing frameworks. Clear guidance, support, and practical steps on equality, Welsh language, and sustainability will ensure the changes deliver benefits for people, communities, and the environment.

8.4 How will the impact of the proposal be monitored and evaluated as it progresses and when it concludes?

The impact of the Amendment Regulations will be monitored in conjunction with the service and workforce regulators.

SECTION 9. DECLARATION

Declaration

I am satisfied that the impact of the proposed action has been adequately assessed and recorded.

Name of Senior Responsible Officer / Deputy Director: Alistair Davey

Department: Enabling People Division

Date: 18 December 2025

FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

A. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on people with protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010.

The Amendment Regulations are technical in nature and have no impact on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. They introduce no new requirements, barriers, or changes to service access, delivery, or quality. Equality duties remain unchanged for registered care providers. No mitigation is needed, and no unintended consequences have been identified.

Record of Impacts by protected characteristic:

Protected characteristic or group	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
Age (think about different age groups)	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to have any impact on individuals receiving support from registered service providers.	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.

Disability (consider the social model of disability ¹ and the way in which your proposal could inadvertently cause, or could be used to proactively remove, the barriers that disable people with different types of impairments)	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to have any impact on individuals receiving support from registered service providers.	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.
Gender Reassignment (the act of transitioning and Transgender people)	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to have any impact on individuals receiving support from registered service providers.	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.
Pregnancy and maternity	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to have any impact on individuals receiving	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.

¹ Welsh Government uses the social model of disability. We understand that disabled people are not disabled by their impairments but by barriers that they encounter in society. Ensuring that your proposal removes barriers, rather than creating them, is the best way to improve equality for disabled people. For more information, go to the intranet and search 'social model'.

		support from registered service providers.	
Race (include different ethnic minorities, Gypsies and Travellers and Migrants, Asylum seekers and Refugees)	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to have any impact on individuals receiving support from registered service providers.	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.
Religion, belief and non-belief	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to have any impact on individuals receiving support from registered service providers.	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.
Sex / Gender	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to have any impact on individuals receiving support from registered service providers.	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.
Sexual orientation (Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual)	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to have any impact on individuals receiving support from registered service providers.	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.
Marriage and civil partnership	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.

	protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	have any impact on individuals receiving support from registered service providers.	
Children and young people up to the age of 18	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to have any impact on individuals receiving support from registered service providers.	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.
Low-income households	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to have any impact on individuals receiving support from registered service providers.	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.

Human Rights and UN Conventions

Do you think that this policy will have a positive or negative impact on people's human rights?

Human Rights	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate negative Impacts?
	The proposal is not expected to have any positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics or on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	The Amendment Regulations are administrative in nature and are not anticipated to have any impact on individuals receiving support from registered service providers.	There are no negative impacts to mitigate.

EU/EEA and Swiss Citizens' Rights

The Amendment Regulations are administrative and technical, with no impact on individuals supported by registered providers, including those protected under Citizens Rights Agreements. They do not alter residency rights, service access, or entitlements under the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement, EEA EFTA Separation Agreement, or Swiss Citizens Rights Agreement.

No new requirements affect residence, professional qualifications, social security, or equal treatment. Protected individuals retain the same rights to work, study, and access healthcare and housing. No barriers or compliance changes are introduced.

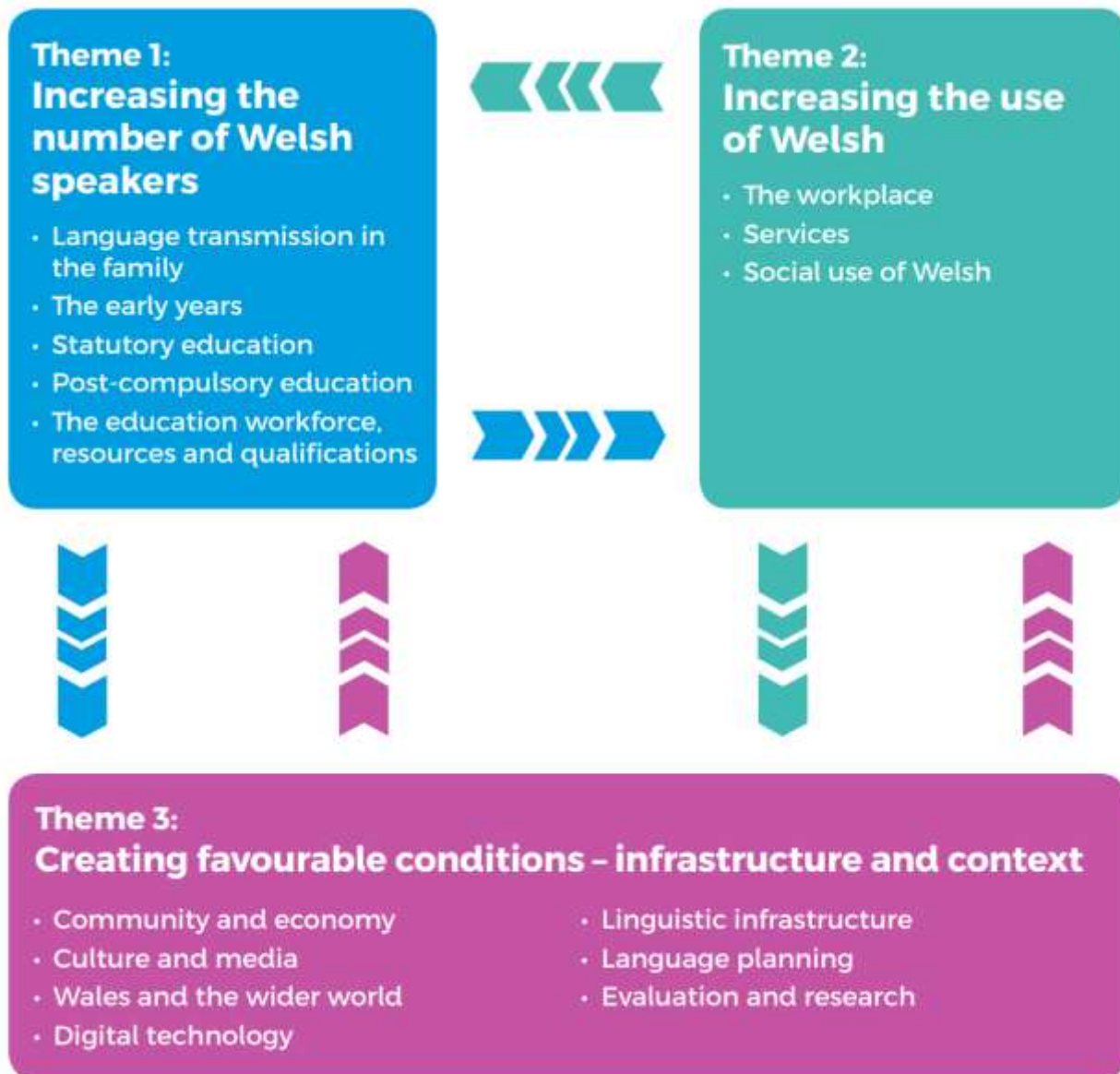
B. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Cymraeg 2050 is our national strategy for increasing the number of Welsh speakers to a million by 2050.

The Welsh Government is fully committed to the new strategy, with the target of a million speakers included in its Programme for Government. A thriving Welsh language is also included in one of the 7 well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

We also have a statutory obligation to fully consider the effects of our work on the Welsh Language. This means that any Welsh Government policy should consider how our policies affect the language and those who speak it.

The [Cymraeg 2050 strategy](#) has three interrelated themes:



1. **Welsh Language Impact Assessment clearance reference: 08/12/2025**
2. **Does the proposal demonstrate a clear link with the Welsh Government's strategy for the Welsh language? – [Cymraeg 2050 A million Welsh speakers](#) and the related Work Programme for 2021-2026? [Cymraeg 2050 work programme 2021-2026](#)**

The proposed amendments do not affect any provisions relating to the Welsh language including the delivery of the active offer.

3. **Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and explain how you will address these impacts in order to improve outcomes for the Welsh language. How will the proposal affect Welsh speakers of all ages (both positive and/or adverse effects)? You should note your responses to the following in your answer to this question, along with any other relevant information:**

The Amendment Regulations are primarily administrative in nature and are not expected to have any direct impact on individuals using registered services, or their staff. They do not introduce new service requirements or alter existing standards of care and therefore will not affect the availability or quality of services provided in Welsh. The changes amend the regulatory framework mainly to ensure better transparency and compliance.

As the Amendment Regulations do not change how Welsh language services are delivered, there will be no impact on Welsh-speaking communities, Welsh medium education, or opportunities for Welsh learners of any age. The sustainability of Welsh-speaking communities will remain unaffected, as the proposal does not influence staffing, language provision, or community engagement. Similarly, there will be no adverse or positive effect on access to health and social care services in Welsh, as these requirements are already embedded within existing regulations.

Current obligations on service providers to meet individuals' language needs and provide and offer information and support in Welsh remain unchanged. Providers will continue to ensure that people know about services available in Welsh in line with their statement of purpose and the Welsh Language Standards, also with More than just words/Mwy na geiriau the WG strategy to strengthen Welsh language services in health and social care. The central aim of the strategy is to embed the Active Offer in services so that Welsh speaking patients and individuals can easily access the care they need in Welsh, without having to ask. As the amendments do not alter these duties, no additional measures are required, and success will be measured by continued compliance with existing language requirements.

C. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Embedding biodiversity

1. How will your proposal integrate biodiversity into decision making?

The Amendment Regulations will not impact biodiversity; therefore, integration of biodiversity is not required.

2. Has your proposal ensured biodiversity is accounted for in business decisions?

The Amendment Regulations do not affect biodiversity, and there is no impact.

3. How does your proposal improve understanding and raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity, encouraging others to act?

The Amendment Regulations will have no impact on biodiversity and will not enhance understanding or awareness of its importance.

Improving our evidence, understanding and monitoring

- 4. Have you used the best available evidence of biodiversity to inform your proposal and this assessment?**

No, the Amendment Regulations will have no impact on biodiversity.

- 5. Have you used up to date knowledge of the key impacts on biodiversity to make evidence-based decisions?**

No, the Amendment Regulations will have no impact on biodiversity.

- 6. Can your proposal contribute to our body of knowledge for biodiversity?**

No, the Amendment Regulations will have no impact on biodiversity.

Governance and support for delivery of biodiversity action

- 7. Can your proposal support biodiversity action in any way?**

No, as the Amendment Regulations p do not affect biodiversity does not impact on biodiversity.

- 8. Can your proposal help to build capacity for biodiversity action?**

No, the Amendment Regulations will have no impact on biodiversity.

- 9. Have you recorded decisions and actions to maintain and enhance biodiversity?**

No, as the Amendment Regulations will have no impact on biodiversity.

If your proposal concerns construction or management of land and/or sea, please also consider Questions 10 – 16: not applicable