

26 March 2026

Dear

ATISN 26754: Pub closures

Thank you for your request which I received on 26 February 2026. You asked for the following information:

I request recorded information for the period 1 January 2022 to present relating to the sustainability of public houses and community venues in Wales. Please provide:

1. Any assessments, briefings, or reports held by Welsh Government regarding pub or hospitality venue closures in Wales.
2. Data held on the number of pubs closing annually, including regional breakdowns where available.
3. Any analysis of causes of closure including energy costs, business rates, licensing costs, or taxation pressures.
4. Details of financial support schemes available to independent pubs and the number of recipients.
5. Any correspondence or internal discussion regarding the impact of cost increases on community venues.

Our response

Our response is in Annex 1.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ.

or email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,

Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely,

Annex 1

1) Any assessments, briefings, or reports held by Welsh Government regarding pub or hospitality venue closures in Wales

and

2) Data held on the number of pubs closing annually, including regional breakdowns where available

DOC 1

Extract from internal briefing, September 2025:

Pub industry

According to the Welsh Beer and Pub Association 'State of the Nation' report (released in January 2025):

- The Welsh beer and pub sector generates over £1.5 billion in Gross Value Added.
- The sector has been badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and recent economic pressures to a greater degree in Wales than across the rest of the UK; net closures of pubs have been higher in Wales than the rest of Great Britain, with 6.5% closing between 2018 and 2023 vs 4.6% in England and 3.9% in Scotland.
- From grain to glass, the Welsh beer and pub sector supports over 25,000 jobs directly and up to 43,000 jobs through the entire supply chain.
- Escalating costs have hit the industry hard. Increased raw material, energy, and labour costs have squeezed profit margins with pubs receiving just 12p on each pint sold after taxes and other expenses.

DOC 2

We hold a digital copy of the Welsh Beer and Pub Association report which is also available on their website: <https://beerandpub.com/wbpa/2025-welsh-state-of-the-nation-report>.

3) Any analysis of causes of closure including energy costs, business rates, licensing costs, or taxation pressures.

DOC 3

Extract from internal briefing on Non-Domestic Rates and pubs, January 2026:

The situation facing pubs and the hospitality industry

1. There are a range of complex challenges affecting pubs and the wider hospitality industry in Wales. Representatives of the Welsh hospitality sector

(which includes pubs, cafés, restaurants, and visitor accommodation) consider it be under severe financial strain. The key challenges include rising employment costs (national insurance and living wage increases) and wider economic and cultural changes (such as current lower levels of domestic tourism, cost-of-living pressures and altered consumer habits). These challenges are not unique to Wales or uniform in their impacts. Non-domestic rates is a financial overhead faced by those hospitality businesses in Wales which do not attract full relief (further analysis of the position for pubs is included below).

2. Sector representatives state that employment and non-domestic rates costs have reached unsustainable levels, threatening the viability of independent operators. They have called for the temporary 40% non-domestic rates relief to be extended beyond 2025-26, or at least parity with the support being provided to shops through the new retail multiplier. We typically see a disproportionate emphasis on non-domestic rates, as a tangible cost related to a devolved policy area.
3. Anecdotally, non-domestic rates is often cited in media reports on the closure of individual pubs, even on occasions where the relevant property attracts full relief (which cannot save a business if it has become unviable). In some cases, non-domestic rates costs will be one of many factors which contributes to financial pressures on businesses, but is not likely to be the sole reason for closures.

4) Details of financial support schemes available to independent pubs and the number of recipients.

Please note, we do not hold data for independent pubs for all of these support schemes. Some data below refers to the pub sector as a whole.

Non Domestic Rates Relief

Independent pubs benefit from non-domestic rates relief. The non-domestic rates data held by the Welsh Government does not identify independent pubs separately from those which are part of larger chain businesses. There are 2,910 pubs in the non-domestic rating list across Wales. Of these, 58% are eligible for Small Business Rates Relief (SBRR) and 32% receive full relief. Any independent pubs which are not eligible for full SBRR have been able to benefit from additional temporary Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief since 2020-21. Full details of all non-domestic rates reliefs available in Wales are available in the public domain on our [Business Wales webpages](#).

Community Facilities Programme

Welsh Government's Community Facilities Programme is open to all community owned and operated facilities including pubs. The programme has supported several community-run pubs in the past such as Tafarn yr Heliwr, Menter y Plu, Menter Tŷ'n Llan, and Menter Tafarn y Dyffryn. Details of grants awarded can be found online: [Community Facilities Programme | GOV.WALES](#)

Year of Croeso Weatherproofing Fund

The Weather Proofing Fund offered small grants to help hospitality and tourism businesses implement weatherproofing measures. This financial year, we have supported over 300 tourism and hospitality businesses with nearly £5 million of funding. Of these, 41 offers totalling £640,000 were given to pubs.

Future Proofing Fund

The Welsh Government's Future Proofing Fund, available in 2024/25, provided discretionary financial support to micro-businesses and SMEs in the retail, hospitality, and leisure sectors. The purpose of the fund was to help businesses invest in measures that would reduce their running costs and strengthen their long term resilience.

The fund supported businesses to make operational changes designed to lower recurring expenses and improve overall sustainability. Eligible investments included renewable energy technologies, improvements to building fabric, and upgrades to systems or machinery that reduce energy consumption.

Under this scheme, 140 recipients in the hospitality sector were awarded grants to a total value of just over £1.2 million.

A total of 15 independent pubs received funding through the Future Proofing Fund.

Perthyn

The Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan (WLCHP) is one of the Welsh Government's Programme for Government commitments. It included a number of interventions with the aim of addressing the effects high concentration of second homes can have on the sustainability of our communities and the Welsh language.

One of the interventions of the WLCHP was the Perthyn Project which provides grant funding to help community groups with early-stage costs associated with setting up a new social enterprise.

Since 2023 we have provided financial support to eight community groups/community led enterprise to explore, purchase or develop their local public house (not all projects have resulted in a purchase):

	Project / community groups
1.	Menter y Plu, Llanystumdwy
2.	Menter Yr Eagles Llanuwchllyn
3.	Menter Tafarn y Dyffryn, Dyffrynn Aeron
4.	Crymych Arms, Crymych
5.	Y Cross, Cas-lai Pembrokeshire
6.	Kings Head Inn, Tanygrisiau
7.	Brondanw Arms (Y Ring), Llanfrothen
8.	The Railway Inn, Llanpumsaint

Transforming Towns

Transforming Towns is a coordinated package of support that delivers the Welsh Government's core regeneration investment in town centres. Towns across Wales can

benefit from a tailored mix of interventions that reflect each town's unique characteristics, local strengths, culture, and heritage, aligned with the ambitions set out in their local Placemaking Plan. The Transforming Towns programme aims to tackle the decline of town centres and falling footfall by creating vibrant hubs through supporting local businesses, cultural hubs and community schemes. This includes support to town centre pubs.

[Transforming Towns: support to improve town centres | GOV.WALES](#)

Covid grants

Businesses in Wales that were impacted by the rapid spread of the Omicron variant were eligible for emergency financial support under the £120 million Welsh Government support package. Under this package, non-essential retail, hospitality, leisure and tourism (NERHLT) businesses that were affected by restrictions and that paid non-domestic rates (NDR) were entitled to payments of up to £6,000, depending on their rateable value. To receive this support, businesses were required to register their details through a quick online process. Registration opened on 13 January 2022 via local authority websites and remained open until 14 February 2022.

NDR-linked grants were paid directly to ratepayers as follows:

- NERHLT businesses receiving Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR) and with a rateable value of £12,000 or less were eligible for a £2,000 payment.
- NERHLT businesses with a rateable value between £12,001 and £51,000 were eligible for a £4,000 payment if they were impacted by the restrictions.
- NERHLT businesses with a rateable value between £51,001 and £500,000 were eligible for a £6,000 payment if they were impacted by the restrictions.

The Welsh Government also extended support to non-essential retail, including travel agents, so that smaller shops were supported and high streets could continue to thrive. Equivalent support was not available to non-essential retail in England. Local authorities began issuing NDR-linked grant payments to registered businesses from 13 January 2022.

In addition, businesses in the hospitality, leisure and attractions sectors—and their supply chains—that were affected by restrictions were able to apply for top-up funding through the Economic Resilience Fund (ERF). Eligible businesses could apply for grants ranging from £2,500 to £25,000, depending on their size and number of employees.

The ERF application window opened during the week commencing 17 January 2022 and remained open for two weeks, with payments issued to businesses within days. Local authorities also administered a discretionary Emergency Business Fund for businesses and sole traders who did not pay rates. This fund provided £1,000 to sole traders, taxi drivers and freelancers, and £2,000 to businesses employing staff in the impacted sectors.

Recipients of the scheme can be found here: [Welsh Government Economic Resilience Funds | Business Wales](#).

5) Any correspondence or internal discussion regarding the impact of cost increases on community venues.

No recorded information held.