



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Innovating Democracy Advisory Group

Towards a Thriving Welsh Democracy

Progress Report

March 2026

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Chair's Foreword

Over the past year, members of the Innovating Democracy Advisory Group (IDAG) have worked with energy, focus and commitment to examine how our democracy in Wales can be supported to thrive at a moment of real challenge and opportunity. Across every discussion, and from every contributor, one message has been consistent: Wales needs to invest in strengthening its democracy – by making sure that everyone understands and feels a part of our democratic system, by placing people at the centre of decision-making, and by equipping political and public institutions to work in genuine partnership with the people that they serve.

The work of the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales underscored the scale and urgency of this challenge. Evidence presented to the Commission showed clearly that people want to know more, and value being involved when they feel that their contributions matter. This report builds on that foundation. It reflects not only what we have heard, but also what we believe Wales needs to do now to renew and protect its democratic system for the years ahead.

Across civic society in Wales, important work is already happening, and there is broad support for the direction set out in this report. Our ambition is for a democracy in Wales where people understand how the system works, feel able and welcome to participate, and have meaningful opportunities to contribute to democratic politics between elections. Achieving this is a long term agenda. It requires strong and strategic leadership, a commitment to removing the structural barriers to democratic participation, cultural and structural changes across government and the wider public sector, and support for a wider democratic ecosystem within civic society. It also requires working in partnership, to co-develop solutions with those impacted by any decisions we take.

Our report sets out what we believe can be done now, alongside areas where further work is needed. While this report is written for Welsh Government, in line with IDAG's remit as an advisory group established by the Deputy First Minister, it acknowledges that delivering democratic change requires coordinated action across Wales' wider democratic system. The responsibility for action is shared across the Senedd, local government, public bodies, civil society and beyond.

This is a moment for ambition and leadership. Whoever forms the next Government will inherit both the challenge and the opportunity to renew Wales's democratic life. Our work demonstrates that there is real appetite among people, practitioners and institutions to do things differently. The task now is to turn that appetite into action and progress.

I am grateful to the members of the Group, to those who contributed evidence, and to the secretariat, for their invaluable support. Their commitment, insight and generosity have shaped this report and strengthened its recommendations. I hope it will serve as a constructive and forward-looking contribution to Wales's democratic future.

As this work moves into its next phase, the Group hopes to continue contributing to the shared effort of strengthening Welsh democracy, and encourages those with responsibility for Wales’s democratic system to take forward this agenda with urgency and determination.



Dr Anwen Elias

Chair

Innovating Democracy Advisory Group

Executive Summary

This report sets out the Innovating Democracy Advisory Group’s ambition for a **thriving Welsh democracy**. This means a Wales where everyone understands their democratic rights and how the system works, regularly shapes decisions at all levels, feels represented and listened to, and is better off as a result. Delivering on this ambition is core to improving people’s lives, rebuilding trust in government, and ensuring a better future for the people of Wales.

Two fundamental questions have guided IDAG’s work:

1. *How can everyone in Wales feel part of, and able to contribute to, the democratic system?*
2. *How can we create a permanent and genuine partnership between people and the democratic institutions and elected representatives that serve them?*

To answer these questions, IDAG has focused on two priority areas. **Democratic education and information** – ensuring people have the knowledge, skills and information to understand how democracy works and to participate confidently from school age throughout life. And **public involvement between elections** – giving people a meaningful role in shaping decisions that affect their lives.

Based on emerging findings from our work so far, we call for the following:

- **A clear, shared vision for a thriving Welsh democracy** – explaining what we’re aiming for and why it’s needed, linking democratic education and information, public involvement in decision-making, and electoral participation as the foundations of our democratic system.
- **Strong leadership across institutions** – including clearer ministerial responsibility for Welsh democracy within Welsh Government, and committed leadership from Senedd Cymru, local authorities, and civil society.
- **A long-term, whole-system strategy** – integrating democratic education and information, public involvement and elections, coordinated across national, local and community levels.
- **Supportive institutional culture and capacity** – strengthening skills and mindsets in government, the Senedd, local authorities and public bodies so that involving people in decisions becomes the norm.
- **Consistent and high quality democratic education for young people in schools and colleges** – improved Curriculum for Wales guidance, stronger teacher training, and equitable access to high-quality resources and opportunities to practise democracy.
- **Lifelong access to information about how democracy in Wales works** – sustainable community focused initiatives and democratic information platforms that everyone can access and understand.

Additionally, the report advises that any move to develop a formal **statement of constitutional and governance principles for Wales should wait until the need and purpose of such a statement are clearly defined**. Finally, **it calls on the Welsh Government to ensure that the work started by IDAG continues beyond Spring 2026**, to support progress and maintain momentum for democratic change in Wales.

1. Introduction

As we approach the Senedd elections in May 2026, it is an opportune moment to take stock of our democracy in Wales. Wales has already put in place important building blocks for an engaged and responsive democratic system. Reforms to how the Senedd is elected are underpinned by significant effort in recent years to increase electoral engagement across Welsh society. In between elections, there has been a long-standing commitment to working in partnership with people and communities to discuss the issues that matter to them and develop solutions to the challenges they face. This distinctively Welsh approach to public service design and delivery has been enshrined in legislation through the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015).

And yet, challenges remain. Most people who can vote in Senedd and local elections, choose not to.¹ More remains to be done to improve the wellbeing of the people of Wales,² and many people in Wales feel that the democratic system is not making their lives better.³ Trust in devolved government and politicians is low, and many feel that they have little or no influence over decisions that affect their lives.⁴ Loss of faith in democratic politics risks fuelling alienation and polarisation within and across our communities.

This report sets out an ambition for a thriving Welsh democracy which can tackle the policy challenges we face, deliver better outcomes for people and communities, and re-build trust in democratic institutions.

What would a thriving democracy in Wales look like?

It is a democracy where everyone knows their democratic rights, who represents them, and how the system works. Where people are given regular opportunities to be meaningfully involved in shaping the decisions that impact their lives, at all levels of government and within their communities. Where people feel represented, listened to, and have trust in the people and processes that make their democracy work. And where people feel that their lives are better as a result.

This ambition for democracy in Wales aims to complement representative democracy, by enhancing the opportunities for people across Wales to work in partnership with elected representatives and institutions. Democracy is strengthened when people, communities and politicians work together, and when power is genuinely shared so that collective public judgement can be brought to bear on the key policy issues that need to be addressed. The challenge in doing so is two-fold: to secure the buy-in from political leaders and senior officials to drive forward the changes we need for Welsh democracy to thrive, and to remove the structural barriers that make it harder for those furthest from power to take part in our democratic system.

1 Senedd Research (2021), *Election 2021: How many people voted?* www.research.senedd.wales/research-articles/election-2021-how-many-people-voted/

2 Welsh Government (2022), *Wellbeing of Wales: national indicators* www.gov.wales/wellbeing-wales-national-indicators

3 Carnegie UK (2025), *Life in the UK: Wales 2025* www.carnegieuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Carnegie-UK-Life-in-the-UK-Wales-2025.pdf; Welsh Government (2024), *Gathering public views: options* www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-01/gathering-public-views-options.pdf

4 Carnegie UK (2025), *Life in the UK: Wales 2025* www.carnegieuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Carnegie-UK-Life-in-the-UK-Wales-2025.pdf; Welsh Government (2022), *Wellbeing of Wales: national indicators* www.gov.wales/wellbeing-wales-national-indicators

In our work so far, the Innovating Democracy Advisory Group (IDAG) has prioritised two questions which we consider foundational for a thriving Welsh democracy:

1. *How can everyone in Wales feel part of, able to contribute through, and have a say in, the democratic system?*
2. *How can we create a permanent and genuine partnership between people in Wales, and the democratic institutions and elected representatives that serve them?*

In answering these questions, we have focused on two inter-linked areas of inquiry:

Democratic education and information, by which we mean the foundational knowledge, skills and experiences that people need to participate with confidence in the democratic system. To take part in democracy, people must understand how the system works. They must be given access to clear and impartial information and meaningful opportunities to practice democratic skills and influence decisions — throughout their lives, not only at election time.

Involving the public in decision-making between elections, by which we mean enabling people impacted by a decision to work together to understand the issues at stake and explore possible solutions. There is growing international evidence that involving the public meaningfully in decision-making between elections can unlock different policy ideas, help to navigate divisive issues, and build legitimacy for and more effective implementation of policy proposals. Involvement must go beyond informing people and engaging in consultation; whilst these have a place, they are rarely sufficient and hugely overused. Involving the public in decision-making will also look different for different decisions and communities: it encompasses institutions supporting communities to take their own actions, and collaborating with those communities to shape policies and strategies.

In exploring these areas of inquiry, we have sought to work collaboratively to identify opportunities and constraints for change, to learn from international experiences, and to begin building an evidence-base for possible solutions and next steps. Our findings so far point towards a clear direction of travel if we are to realise our ambition for a thriving Welsh democracy that improves the lives of the people of Wales and re-builds trust in our democratic institutions.

Wales needs:

- **A clear vision for a thriving Welsh democracy.**
We need a shared understanding of what we're trying to achieve, and a compelling narrative for why this matters. A holistic vision that commits to democratic education and information, public involvement in decision-making between elections, and electoral participation as the foundations for a thriving democracy in Wales.
- **Strong political and administrative leadership across our democratic system to deliver the democratic vision for Wales.**
This includes clearer ministerial responsibility for Welsh democracy within Welsh Government, and committed leadership from partners in Senedd Cymru, local authorities and civic society to deliver our ambition for a democracy that makes life better for the people of Wales.
- **A long-term and whole-system strategy for our democracy.**
Delivering a thriving Welsh democracy requires a long-term strategic framework that integrates democratic education and public involvement alongside electoral participation, and that coordinates action across national, local and community scales.

- **Supporting institutional cultures and conditions for mainstreaming public involvement in decision-making.**

This includes strengthening capacity and capability within Welsh Government, Senedd Cymru and partner organisations, to involve people in decision-making as a standard way of working. It also requires co-developing proposals to shift mindsets, structures and practices with politicians, officials and civil society at national and local scales.

- **All young people in schools and colleges should be provided with a democratic education that gives them the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to participate in the democratic system.**

Delivering this ambition requires collaborative work across the education system to explore how best to provide clearer guidance within the Curriculum for Wales, strengthen teacher training and leadership, improve cross-sector coordination, and provide equitable access to experiential learning, good practice and high quality resources.

- **Information about how democracy in Wales works should be easily available to every person in Wales throughout their lives.**

Collaborative work with relevant partners is needed to map and evaluate existing activity, co-develop sustainably funded and community focused solutions, and review how existing democratic information platforms support public understanding.

In parallel, IDAG has also begun work to take forward Recommendation 2 of the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales, exploring how citizens might be engaged in developing a statement of constitutional and governance principles. We conclude that:

There needs to be clarity about the need for, and purpose of, a statement of constitutional and governance principles for Wales before any consideration is given to whether and how citizens may be involved in developing such a statement.

A thriving Welsh democracy requires a collaborative effort from all of our political parties, national and local political institutions, civil society and communities. This is a long-term agenda for democratic change – not as a ‘nice to have’, but as a core means by which democratic institutions can better deliver value and improve people’s lives.

IDAG has started the work of mapping out a pathway to a thriving Welsh democracy, and the findings from our work so far indicate next steps that can move us towards this goal. We also see value in IDAG (or a similar expert body) as a means of providing continued expertise and advice in support of this work:

We call on the Welsh Government to ensure that the work started by IDAG continues beyond spring 2026, to support progress towards a thriving Welsh democracy.

2. Foundations for a thriving democracy in Wales

To inform its work, IDAG has drawn on evidence and insight from a broad range of organisations, practitioners and experts. This has included those working directly with young people and schools, providers of democratic education, participation specialists, and representatives from public bodies with responsibilities for democratic engagement. IDAG has also heard from academics, journalists, and experts in public participation who offered wider perspectives on the broader factors shaping democratic education, information, and public involvement in Wales. Collectively, this diverse input has helped IDAG build a richer understanding of the current landscape, the barriers and opportunities for moving forward with democratic change, and possible solutions for achieving a thriving Welsh democracy.

2.1 A vision of the Welsh democracy we aspire to

What we're calling for

A clear vision is needed of the thriving Welsh democracy that we aspire to, that gives priority to democratic education and information, public involvement in decision-making between elections, and participating in elections.

This vision must articulate a clear sense of why all these dimensions matter for our democracy, and set out the case for what the vision is intended to achieve. The case for a thriving democracy should be made on the grounds that an educated, informed, involved and engaged public is critical for improving policy ideas and outcomes and for re-building trust in democratic institutions.

Alongside this vision, a shared narrative is needed to make the case for why a thriving democracy matters – articulated through a coherent storyline that links an overarching democratic ambition to the policy-making aims of our democratic institutions.

We have begun to set out such a vision in the Introduction to this report. We call on the Welsh Government to lead the further development of this vision in collaboration with key political, public and community stakeholders to ensure buy-in across Welsh society. This work should focus on:

- testing and refining this vision, and identifying the key principles and values underpinning a thriving Welsh democracy
- developing and communicating a compelling narrative to drive forward an ambitious democratic reform agenda in Wales.

A shared, compelling vision for a thriving Welsh democracy must be the starting point for the strong leadership, new strategic approach, shift in culture and conditions, and strengthened democratic education and information, that we call for below.

Why this is needed

The evidence that we've heard from case studies elsewhere in the UK and internationally is consistent: initiatives to embed public involvement in decision-making tend to endure when democratic institutions share an overarching democratic purpose – a clear sense of why involvement matters and what it is intended to achieve.⁵ Our vision for Wales is even more ambitious – it also foresees everyone having the knowledge, skills and confidence to take part in our democracy when they want to.

A clear and compelling vision involves long-term orientation and provides a sense of purpose across political and administrative actors. It also underpins the development of narratives that define democratic education and information, and public involvement, as legitimate and valued aspects of governance – alongside electoral participation.

In this sense, narratives can be understood as the stories that circulate within organisations, and that shape everyone's sense of what the organisation is about. We have heard that a compelling narrative shapes understandings of what is possible⁶; a narrative of what Welsh democracy is aiming to achieve can help clarify what we want to move towards.

Summary of key findings

There are different and separate visions in Wales for elections, involving the public in decision-making between elections, and for supporting children and young people to be engaged citizens in our democratic system. To date, these have not been consistently articulated or brought together as part of an overarching vision for a thriving Welsh democracy.

The Welsh Government's democratic reform and renewal agenda to date has mostly focused on increasing electoral participation, including changes to create a more proportional electoral system, and work to ensure marginalised groups are better supported to take part. This work has been framed by a vision for elections in Wales and underpinned by a clear set of principles that have guided the approach to electoral reform.⁷ There is growing international evidence, however, that meaningful and sustained involvement of the public in decision-making between elections is also essential for transforming public services so that they deliver what people need to live better lives. We have also heard from democratic engagement experts that people need to have a foundational understanding of how democracy works, and to be supported to feel that they can and are welcome to participate in democratic politics.

The Curriculum for Wales provides a clear vision for the kind of learners it aspires to, including (as we return to below), learners who are *ethical and informed citizens*.⁸ What's needed now is the consistent and focused implementation of this ambition, as well as a clearer understanding of the role of democratic education as the foundation of a thriving Welsh democracy, within a wider programme of democratic change.

5 Welsh Government (2026), *Evidence Review: Mainstreaming participatory and deliberative democracy in Wales*. Commissioned by the Welsh Government and authored by the Democratic Society www.gov.wales/evidence-review-mainstreaming-participatory-and-deliberative-democracy-in-wales

6 New Citizen Project, *Council Culture* www.newcitizenproject.com/council-culture

7 Welsh Government (2021), *Written Statement: Framework for electoral reform* www.gov.wales/written-statement-framework-electoral-reform

8 Welsh Government, *Introduction to Curriculum for Wales guidance* www.hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/introduction-to-curriculum-for-wales-guidance/

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) sets out ambitious ways of working to transform the collective wellbeing of the people of Wales, and already commits public sector organisations to involving people in decisions that affect their lives.⁹ This creates a framework for working *with* (rather than doing *to*) people to shape policies that impact on them and the communities they live in. We heard evidence of how the Act has generated a lot of goodwill, and led to some examples of good practice in some places and organisations. What we need now is a sense that we are collectively on a mission to achieve the meaningful involvement of citizens in shaping a better future for Wales.

One difficulty in articulating such a mission is the language we use to describe what we’re aspiring to. The term ‘involvement’ is used in the Act¹⁰, but expectations for what involvement should look like are not set out explicitly. In practice, this means that approaches such as providing information and (especially) consultation are often used by default; whilst there is a place for these, they do not give the public a meaningful say in and influence over decision-making. Involvement, and other terms – such as participation, co-production, deliberation, collaboration, and dialogue – are also used differently in different contexts (in Wales, as well as across the UK and internationally), to convey a range of ways of involving the public in decision-making between elections. We need clarity and consistency of terminology to better convey how we want to involve people in shaping a better future for the people of Wales.

One approach is to focus on the values and principles that define ‘involvement’ – to establish a clear framework of expectations for the public and for decision-makers. This is the approach taken by leading international organisations in this space, and key organisations here in Wales. Building on this work offers a way forward to defining the principles and values underpinning the vision for a thriving Welsh democracy we call for above – based on a permanent and genuine partnership between people in Wales, and the democratic institutions and elected representatives that serve them.

2.2 Stronger leadership to deliver a thriving Welsh democracy

What we’re calling for

Stronger political and administrative leadership is needed across our democratic system to prioritise and achieve a thriving Welsh democracy.

We call for Welsh Government to:

Establish clear ministerial responsibility for Welsh democracy, to provide ownership of delivering a thriving democracy in Wales. This must recognise that a holistic and multi-level approach is needed that encompasses democratic education and information, public involvement in decision-making between elections, and electoral participation.

This leadership will provide strategic direction for achieving the vision we call for above, and drive forward a shift in the culture and conditions within Welsh Government to embed a different approach to decision-making.

9 Welsh Government, *Well-being of future generations (sub topic)* www.gov.wales/well-being-future-generations

10 Welsh Government (2015), *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: the essentials* www.gov.wales/well-being-future-generations-act-essentials-html

Senedd Cymru should consider:

A commitment from the Presiding Officer of the Seventh Senedd to explore innovative ways of involving citizens in the Senedd's work, including deliberative forums.

Providing clarity on how Senedd committees will deliver robust scrutiny of the Welsh Government's commitment to, and action on, achieving a thriving Welsh democracy.

Further collaborative work is needed in the following areas, to ensure co-ordinated leadership across our democratic system:

- Work with local authorities should aim to understand how best to ensure strong leadership that is aligned with the overarching vision for a thriving Welsh democracy.
- There would be value in exploring with Wales's independent Commissioners how they can provide more co-ordinated oversight of and challenge to the Welsh Government's commitment to delivering a thriving Welsh democracy.
- A priority for future work is to understand the barriers, enablers and potential solutions that would allow civil society to lead innovative approaches to democratic education, information, and public involvement in decision-making.

Why this is needed

Evidence from international case studies shows that clear and sustained political commitment is essential for ensuring that initiatives to inform and involve the public in decision-making are durable and influential.¹¹ Where political commitment is weak or absent, such initiatives routinely struggle or collapse.

A thriving Welsh democracy is not the responsibility of one level of government, or a single organisation. It is a collective challenge that requires co-ordinated, long term and strategic leadership across our democratic system.

Leadership on democratic education and information, as well as public involvement in decision-making, is needed across the democratic system. It must come from political leaders and senior officials in Welsh and local government and within Senedd Cymru, from Wales's independent Commissioners, and from public organisations that have a role in delivering services that directly impact on people's lives.

Civil society and broader civic ecosystems also play an important leadership role in driving forward democratic change. A thriving democracy needs sustained civic engagement between elections. Communities and grass-roots organisations need to be empowered to innovate in how they inform and involve communities since they are often better placed than government to connect with people who currently feel that they don't understand, belong to, or have a voice in, our democratic system.

Summary of key findings

At present, ownership of and responsibility for Welsh democracy is fragmented across political institutions and organisations, and has mostly focused on electoral participation.

¹¹ Welsh Government (2026), *Evidence Review: Mainstreaming participatory and deliberative democracy in Wales*. Commissioned by the Welsh Government and authored by the Democratic Society
www.gov.wales/evidence-review-mainstreaming-participatory-and-deliberative-democracy-in-wales

As we note above, the Welsh Government has driven forward ambitious agendas on electoral participation and curriculum reform. It has also developed a distinctive Welsh approach to public service design and delivery which includes commitments to involvement of, and co-production with, people affected by policy decisions. However, these agendas have largely been developed by different parts of government; this has made it harder to maximise the interlinkages between them as part of an overarching agenda of democratic change.

Senedd Cymru delivers democratic education activities focused on providing young people with an understanding of how Welsh democracy functions and opportunities to visit the Senedd itself. Steps have also been taken to involve the public in new ways in the work of the Senedd’s committees, and young people through the Youth Parliament. They have not yet, however, made consistent use of innovative deliberative methods which have been shown in other places to have a positive impact on policy-making and participants’ attitudes towards democracy (see section 2.4 below). We heard from international experts that high-level political leadership is critical in driving forward institutional commitment to such democratic innovations within parliaments.

The Future Generations Commissioner has recently called for stronger leadership from Welsh Government so that involving people in decision-making between elections becomes commonplace in Wales.¹² However, the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner alone will not have the capacity, resources and expertise to advance this agenda to the degree needed.

Local authorities are key partners in tackling Wales’s democratic challenge given their proximity to people and the places where they live. They have a statutory duty to ensure that the needs and aspirations of communities are at the heart of local decision-making (see section 2.4 below).¹³ While our engagement with local leaders and officials has been limited, we have heard from some of the significant challenges of engaging with the public in a local context of limited resources, competing policy agendas, low trust in democratic politics, and increasing polarisation.

We have also heard from several grassroots initiatives that are leading in the delivery of innovative, inclusive, creative and engaging education and involvement projects that make a significant positive impact on the people and communities they engage with. The challenge is how to empower such initiatives, and the organisations that deliver them, to continue to innovate, and thus drive forward change from the bottom-up.

2.3 A strategy for Welsh democracy

What we’re calling for

Wales needs a long-term and whole-system strategy that integrates democratic education and public involvement alongside electoral participation, and that co-ordinates action across national, local and community scales.

12 Future Generations Commissioner for Wales (2025), *Citizens Involvement Statement* www.futuregenerations.wales/cym/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-08-01-Citizens-Involvement-Statement-FINAL_Eng.docx

13 Welsh Government (2023), *Statutory and non statutory guidance on democracy within principal councils: public participation; strategies and petition* www.gov.wales/statutory-and-non-statutory-guidance-democracy-within-principal-councils-public-participation-html

We call on the Welsh Government to:

Develop a long-term National Strategy for Welsh Democracy, to provide a clear framework for achieving a democracy where everyone can understand, participate in and contribute to creating a better future for our country.

Anchored in a clear vision of the thriving Welsh democracy that we want to achieve, the strategy should outline an integrated and multi-level approach that can drive forward reform and innovation at national, local and community scales.

The strategy should include explicit commitments to:

- exploring and removing the structural barriers to understanding, feeling a part of, and participating in the democratic system
- institutionalising and embedding specific methods for involving the public in decision-making between elections, so that they become mainstreamed as standard ways of working within Welsh Government
- enhancing the capacities of civil society through appropriate levels of dedicated funding for activities that promote democracy (e.g. through building democratic knowledge and skills, and involve communities in decision-making on local issues).

The strategy should be sufficiently funded, aligned with ministerial and institutional structures, set out action plans for priority areas, and be accompanied with appropriate indicators that allow progress to be measured and can inform future policy and funding priorities.

Include specific expectations on public involvement in decision-making in all other Welsh Government strategies or action plans, unless clearly not appropriate.

Senedd Cymru should consider:

Committing to mainstreaming and funding deliberative engagement methods within the work of the Senedd as part of its Senedd Commission Strategy for the Seventh Senedd, supported by clear justification and a defined purpose for their use within parliamentary activity.

Further work is required to:

- better understand the effectiveness of Local Authorities' public participation strategies
- develop proposals with Welsh Government ministers and local authority leaders to align strategic frameworks for democratic education and information, public involvement and electoral participation across different levels of government, in ways that improve clarity for the public and reduce confusion across the democratic landscape
- review the Welsh Government's newly published indicators of democratic health in Wales¹⁴, to evaluate their appropriateness for measuring progress towards a thriving Welsh democracy.

Why this is needed

Internationally, several approaches have been tried to integrate the public’s involvement more fully into decision-making between elections.¹⁵ These include introducing new or enhanced rights and requirements for public involvement; developing frameworks, minimum standards and guidance; institutionalising specific methods of public involvement; and creating dedicated budgets and resources to support public involvement.

It is clear that there is no single pathway to mainstreaming public involvement in decision-making between elections. Different approaches need to be combined, adapted and sequenced in ways that respond to specific national and local political, administrative and civic contexts.

Delivering the vision for a thriving Welsh democracy requires a long-term and holistic strategy that learns from experiences elsewhere and applies this insight to the distinct Welsh context. Central to this is developing an integrated approach that brings together the different dimensions of democratic education and information, public involvement and electoral participation into a coherent overarching strategy.

Summary of key findings

Formalising expectations for democratic education and public involvement in legislation, strategies and action plans can be an effective way of promoting these practices, directing resources and funding towards them, and, in the case of legal frameworks, shielding them from shifting political priorities. There are already different legislative and strategic frameworks for involving the public in decision making at national and local scales in Wales.¹⁶ As we note above, the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) already places a statutory requirement on public bodies to involve the public in decisions that impact on their lives, whilst co-production is one of the main principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Local authorities are also required to have participation strategies that demonstrate how communities are placed at the heart of local decision-making, alongside a range of other statutory arrangements that support participation, transparency and public scrutiny. Whilst there is currently no Welsh strategy for democratic education, there is an opportunity to strengthen coherence and bring greater alignment across the different dimensions of Wales’s democracy and the national, local and community scales at which they operate.

We did not have time to explore the effectiveness of existing legal and strategic frameworks systematically and from different public body and local authority perspectives. We did however hear some concerns about whether these frameworks are consistently creating meaningful opportunities for people to be involved in decision-making. This highlights a clear challenge, and an important opportunity, to better understand how to support more effective implementation of existing frameworks, as well as to explore whether more integrated frameworks could help strengthen the foundations of a thriving Welsh democracy.

¹⁵ Welsh Government (2026), *Evidence Review: Mainstreaming participatory and deliberative democracy in Wales*. Commissioned by the Welsh Government and authored by the Democratic Society
www.gov.wales/evidence-review-mainstreaming-participatory-and-deliberative-democracy-in-wales

¹⁶ Welsh Government (2026), *Evidence Review: Mainstreaming participatory and deliberative democracy in Wales*. Commissioned by the Welsh Government and authored by the Democratic Society
www.gov.wales/evidence-review-mainstreaming-participatory-and-deliberative-democracy-in-wales

There is limited funding available to support projects delivering either democratic education and information, or opportunities for citizens to be involved with decision-making. We heard that there are limited resources allocated to Public Service Boards to deliver different ways of working set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015), and this is one (but not the only) factor constraining the Act's implementation. Within the Welsh Government's electoral reform framework, the Democratic Engagement Grant (DEG) has provided an important source of support for organisations delivering democratic engagement activity since 2023, enabling work that may not otherwise have taken place. The approach recognises that democratic engagement is often best delivered by trusted intermediaries and those with expertise and existing relationships. Challenges remain, however, in terms of the amount of funding available, the criteria for accessing it, and the sustainability and scalability of projects. It can also be difficult to evidence the longer term impact of democratic engagement activity, particularly where organisations lack the resources or frameworks to assess outcomes in a consistent way.

Within Senedd Cymru, and in preparation for the Seventh Senedd, the Senedd Commission is reviewing its strategies. With this in mind, we gathered evidence from regional parliaments across Europe that have mainstreamed deliberative engagement methods as a permanent feature of the parliament's work. Citizens' assemblies and panels, made up of randomly selected participants, are provided with balanced information on an issue, take time to discuss the issue, and formulate policy recommendations that are considered by elected representatives. We heard that such a deliberative approach has a positive impact on the range and quality of policy proposals, increases participants' trust in and engagement with democratic politics, and can foster cross-party collaboration within political institutions. Critical to success, however, is that permanent deliberative structures are fully embedded into the processes of formal decision-making. Where this alignment is in place, participants' insights can directly shape decision-making; this, in turn, gives participants confidence that they've had a meaningful say in political debate and can help to strengthen their trust in democratic institutions.

Aside from data relating to turnout at elections, there is limited data on and methods by which to measure the state of democracy in Wales. We heard evidence of some good practice in this respect. For example, the Senedd systematically gathers evidence on the impact of its engagement work on participants, allowing for a data-driven approach to its public engagement strategy. However, we also heard that undertaking systematic evaluation of the impact of democratic education and citizen involvement projects is often challenging, and that clearer evaluation frameworks and guidance is needed. At a Wales-wide scale, the Welsh Government has recently published indicators for measuring democratic health in Wales, and further work is needed to evaluate their appropriateness for evaluating progress towards a thriving Welsh democracy as we understand it in this report.

2.4 Creating the institutional culture and conditions for Welsh democracy to thrive

What we're calling for

Achieving a thriving Welsh democracy needs a clear vision, strong leadership and long-term strategic frameworks, but these must also be underpinned by institutional cultures and supporting conditions so that innovations to our Welsh democracy can be fully embedded and mainstreamed. We say more about the conditions needed for better democratic education and information in sections 2.5 and 2.6 that follow. Here, we focus on what's needed to develop capabilities for involving the public in decision-making in Wales.

We call on Welsh Government to:

Consider establishing a central Public Involvement Unit to strengthen and co-ordinate its approach to public involvement in decision-making.

Such a central unit would enable general standards and expectations to be set, raise awareness of different participatory, deliberative and co-production approaches, ensure methodological quality and consistency, develop appropriate measures for evaluating impact, and support institutional learning.

Further work is required to:

- learn from other cases where such a core unit has been established
- understand how such a unit could best be designed within Welsh Government, including mapping existing internal capacity, and engaging the key political and civil service stakeholders who would shape and deliver it. This engagement will be essential to ensuring any model is evidence-informed, feasible and aligned with organisational needs.

In addition, Senedd Cymru should consider:

Building capacity and political buy-in for deliberative public involvement methods, by undertaking peer-learning opportunities and pilot projects that allow politicians and officials to experience deliberative engagement for themselves. A key part of this work would be to understand the impact of such methods (so that appropriate measures can be developed to evaluate and iterate projects).

A priority for future work is to undertake collaborative and participatory work to co-develop specific proposals for developing organisational capacity and professional capabilities to mainstream public involvement activities. This is needed with elected representatives and officials from within Welsh Government and Senedd Cymru, as well as from local authorities. Proposals for change must be shaped and be owned by those who work within, and therefore best know and understand, the democratic institutions that we want to change. Areas to explore include (but are not limited to) onboarding and continuous learning programmes, as well as procurement processes.

Further work is also needed to understand how to enhance capacity and capability within civil society to innovate in the provision of opportunities for public involvement in decision-making within communities. This could include exploring Centres of Excellence with a wider remit beyond Welsh Government, to act as a hub for supporting the development of a stronger civic ecosystem for public involvement.

Why this is needed

We have heard repeatedly, from practitioners and experts in the UK and internationally, that with the right conditions, people want to feel part of, and able to contribute, to the democratic system. The challenge everywhere is how to put these conditions in place, so that we can realise the ambition of a permanent and genuine partnership between people and the democratic institutions and electoral representatives that serve them.

Doing so requires deliberate and long-term work to shift mindsets, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours to make involving the public in decision-making the default mode of operation within political organisations and across society more broadly. This involves putting in place the support, policies, procedures, incentives, and infrastructure to drive forward organisational change. In this way, public involvement

in decision-making becomes embedded in and valued as a part of the broader policy-making system, rather than being a standalone intervention.¹⁷

Achieving and sustaining a thriving Welsh democracy requires both organisational capacity (such as staff time, budgetary flexibility, and institutional space to embed different ways of working into everyday workflows) and professional capabilities (such as the skills to design public involvement initiatives, ensure inclusion, and translate public input into policy). This is required across levels of government and civil society, as part of a systemic approach to supporting Welsh democracy to thrive.

Summary of key findings

As we note above, the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) and other legislation have established an expectation that people should be at the heart of decisions about public service delivery in Wales. However, despite the progress that has been made, the evidence that we've heard so far indicates that the involvement of citizens in decision-making has not yet been consistently mainstreamed.

This has been a consistent theme from those working in and with national and local government, and from community organisations and practitioners. Where organisations or teams seek to innovate, ambition is often constrained by practical barriers – including cautious risk cultures, existing processes and procedures, and lack of high-level support from political leaders and officials. This can be frustrating, and it can be difficult to see how to change ingrained mindsets and practices. What is missing is the structural reform, strategic investment, and mindset shifts needed to meaningfully embed involvement as a way of working.

We heard from international experts that different initiatives to mainstreaming public involvement in decision-making have been tried in different places. There is no single pathway to mainstreaming public involvement in decision-making; a combination of approaches are required that are typically adapted, combined and co-ordinated in ways that are appropriate to the political and administrative context.¹⁸ This can be achieved by co-designing and testing day-to-day practices with those working within the organisations themselves, so that solutions are informed and owned by those that best understand the contexts where a shift in culture and conditions is needed.

Measuring the impact of such approaches on institutional cultures is important but can be challenging. There is a need to develop measures for benchmarking internal organisational capabilities and capacities, so that the impact of any initiatives can be evaluated. There is evidence that some approaches, like centres of excellence within governments, have been effective in building capacity and providing support across government departments (and more broadly across society, depending on their status and scope). Part of the remit of such centres can be to raise awareness and deepen understanding of the wide range of participatory, deliberative and co-production methodologies that exist for involving the public in decision-making (including their strengths and weaknesses, and when they're most appropriate to use). They can also add value when they support policy-makers to gain direct experience of using different approaches – in other words, to practice public involvement for themselves.

17 Welsh Government (2026), *Evidence Review: Mainstreaming participatory and deliberative democracy in Wales*. Commissioned by the Welsh Government and authored by the Democratic Society
www.gov.wales/evidence-review-mainstreaming-participatory-and-deliberative-democracy-in-wales

18 Welsh Government (2026), *Evidence Review: Mainstreaming participatory and deliberative democracy in Wales*. Commissioned by the Welsh Government and authored by the Democratic Society
www.gov.wales/evidence-review-mainstreaming-participatory-and-deliberative-democracy-in-wales

2.5 A democratic education that equips young people to participate in Welsh democracy

What we're calling for

Young people in schools and colleges should be provided with a democratic education that gives them the foundational knowledge, skills and confidence they need to participate in the democratic system.

Delivering this ambition will require bringing together everyone who plays a part in young people's democratic learning to build a shared understanding of what will make the biggest difference in practice. Any proposals that follow will be grounded in evidence, and designed to be realistic, proportionate and achievable for those who will be expected to deliver them.

We propose to do this work with schools, teachers, young people, local authorities, Welsh Government Ministers and officials, and key stakeholders. Based on what we've heard so far, we have identified the following areas that merit further exploration:

- clearer, more detailed guidance to support schools to deliver democratic education consistently within the Curriculum for Wales, with appropriate monitoring and iterative refinement
- stronger leadership within schools and local authorities to support the delivery of democratic education in a strategic and sustainable way
- training and support for teachers to deliver democratic education with confidence
- a clear and accessible bank of high-quality resources for all learners across the curriculum journey, that can be adapted to be locally relevant and which are not limited to elections
- more equitable access to high-quality democratic education – including experiential learning opportunities – regardless of geography or circumstance
- better coordination between organisations active in democratic education so that their offers complement one another, and reduce unhelpful duplication in both their content and efforts to reach schools
- mapping and sharing of good practice in the delivery of learning experiences that allow young people to practice democracy for themselves.

Why this is needed

Everyone should leave school feeling part of, and able to contribute to, democracy in Wales. If we expect young people to participate in our democracy, we must demonstrate that their participation is genuinely valued — by ensuring every learner in Wales has access to consistent, high-quality democratic education, wherever they live.

Young people in Wales can now vote in Wales from the age of 16¹⁹, and it's critical that they have the knowledge, skills and confidence to take up this opportunity. This requires democratic education to be provided in age-appropriate ways throughout formal education, including the chance to practice democracy through experiential learning opportunities.

To achieve this, we call for a democratic education that provides all children and young people with:

- a core knowledge of how democracy in Wales and the UK works
- learning experiences that connect young people with decision makers and political institutions
- opportunities to practise democracy for themselves, by being able to shape decisions that affect them.

Democratic education should be delivered in accessible, engaging and creative ways, by a range of people and organisations including teachers, charities and political institutions. The necessary funding, training and support must be in place to make this possible.

Summary of key findings

Organisations told us that, while there are instances of good practice, there is also significant variation in the quality and consistency of democratic education opportunities available to young people in schools and colleges across Wales. As a result, many young people are leaving formal education without the knowledge and skills that they need to take part in democracy in Wales, or the confidence that their voice matters and that they can shape decisions that affect their lives.

This variation is mirrored in the confidence and knowledge of some teachers themselves, reflecting the workload pressures they face, sensitivities around political content, and the inconsistency of support available to them. There are also limited resources for experiential learning opportunities; this means that such opportunities are only available to young people in some schools, in some parts of Wales. For example, the costs of transport for children to visit key democratic institutions can be prohibitive for many schools.

The Curriculum for Wales provides a framework for democratic education, through the commitment to developing *ethical, informed citizens* as one of its Four Purposes.²⁰ We heard from different organisations that early, continuous, experiential, and creative approaches to democratic education are critical. There is also evidence of the positive impact of such approaches on young people’s knowledge, skills, democratic engagement and trust in decision makers. Some resources to support the delivery of democratic education already exist, and there are efforts to improve co-ordination between different organisations delivering democratic education activities in schools.

However, significant challenges persist. The Curriculum for Wales would benefit from greater clarity on how democratic education can support young people to become ethical, informed citizens. Existing resources and activities are often focused on and around elections. Teachers’ awareness of, and engagement with, existing resources is uneven; the priority given to democratic education also varies as a result of significant workload pressures, confidence levels and concerns about real or perceived bias.

We also heard that young people’s attitudes towards democratic politics are also often shaped by wider contexts such as lived experiences and misinformation/disinformation on social media.

²⁰ Welsh Government, *Introduction to Curriculum for Wales guidance*
www.hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/introduction-to-curriculum-for-wales-guidance/

From this perspective, democratic information and participation is not just the responsibility of schools and colleges. It needs to go alongside a broader programme of work that supports everyone in Wales to understand, and participate in our democracy; we consider what’s needed in this respect in the next section.

Research to identify and learn from international examples of good practice will be important to ensure that future work to strengthen democratic education in Wales is grounded in evidence and shaped by what works.

2.6 Ensuring everyone can understand and practice democracy throughout their lives

What we’re calling for

Information about how democracy in Wales and the UK works should be available to everyone throughout their lives, so that they can make an informed decision about how and when they want to participate in it.

We have identified the following areas where further work is needed to co-develop concrete recommendations:

- we propose that work is carried out with Welsh and local government officials, relevant partners and targeted communities, to map and evaluate existing projects and activities. This work can also co-develop sustainably funded and community-focused solutions for providing everyone in Wales with democratic education and information throughout their lives
- collaboration with relevant stakeholders is needed to undertake a review of existing democratic digital information platforms to understand whether and how they are used, in order to better understand the role of such platforms in supporting democratic education and information across Welsh society.

Why this is needed

People should be able to understand and feel involved in our democracy all year round, and not just at election times. Understanding how our democracy works is fundamental for a thriving democracy.

Democratic information should be provided through innovative community focused projects and independent sources that can be accessed in-person and online. This information should focus on the fundamentals of how democracy in Wales and the UK works, and be easily available in engaging, accessible, creative and culturally appropriate formats.

We need to create the conditions for democratic information projects, delivered by trusted partners within communities, to be properly funded, sustainable and scalable. As noted in section 2.3, this work needs to be achieved as part of national and local democratic strategies, and supported with appropriate funding and capacity-building opportunities. Doing so is critical for ensuring parity and consistency in the provision of projects across all communities.

Greater involvement of the public in decision-making at national and local scales also provides an opportunity for everyone in Wales to learn about, and have a say in, decisions that affect their lives.

Directly involving people in decision-making between elections is a way of learning about democracy through practicing democracy, at the same time as improving the quality and legitimacy of decisions by drawing on a broader range of perspectives and experiences.

Summary of key findings

Basic information about how democracy in Wales works is not sufficiently available to people once they leave formal education. Opportunities to access relevant resources and experiences are limited, leaving many without the foundational knowledge, skills or confidence to understand and engage with democracy in Wales – or the sense of agency and belonging needed to feel their participation matters. This challenge is compounded by a fragile and under resourced Welsh media landscape, where limited plurality and capacity mean that day-to-day political coverage of democratic politics in Wales is often limited. We heard that most people in Wales rely on UK-based outlets that frequently frame Welsh stories through an English lens, leading to confusion about the scope of devolved powers and the distinct responsibilities of Welsh institutions.

As we note above, the Welsh Government’s Democratic Engagement Grant demonstrates a commitment to addressing these gaps, by funding third sector organisations to deliver targeted democratic engagement initiatives. Evidence from funded organisations highlights the value of sustained, flexible funding, and community-based delivery. We also heard about the important role played by local authority officials in delivering inclusive, accessible and authentic learning and participation opportunities in relation to local democracy.

However, there are also significant barriers to this work. Volunteers often require additional support to develop the confidence and capability to deliver democratic education, particularly in contexts marked by political apathy, polarisation and mis- or disinformation. Assessing impact also remains a significant challenge (as is common across democratic engagement work²¹), with diverse project models and methodologies making evaluation difficult, limiting the ability to draw clear conclusions about effectiveness.²² Evaluation is also often challenging: many organisations lack the resources and capabilities to design and deliver robust impact measurement, making it harder to improve practice or build an evidence base. While steps are being taken to improve this, there is a clear need for more standardised evaluation frameworks and better coordination of data collection and analysis across programmes.

A web-based Wales Elections Information Platform (WEIP) has just been launched that will provide information to voters and support them to participate in Senedd Cymru and local elections. However, there is also strong demand for clearly signposted, impartial and engaging information about how democracy works in Wales all year round, and not just focused on elections and voting. It is also critical to consider the accessibility of such information, especially for those furthest from power, or who are least trusting of elected politicians and democratic institutions.

Research to identify and learn from international examples of good practice will be important to ensure that future work to strengthen democratic education in Wales is grounded in evidence and shaped by what works.

21 Welsh Government (2026), *Evidence Review: Mainstreaming participatory and deliberative democracy in Wales*. Commissioned by the Welsh Government and authored by the Democratic Society

www.gov.wales/evidence-review-mainstreaming-participatory-and-deliberative-democracy-in-wales

22 Welsh Government, *Evaluation of the Democratic Engagement Grant* www.gov.wales/evaluation-democratic-engagement-grant

3. Constitutional and governance principles for Wales

What we're calling for

There needs to be clarity about the need for, and purpose of, a statement of constitutional and governance principles for Wales before any consideration is given to whether and how people may be involved in developing such a statement.

The Welsh Government should also explore the extent of cross-party support for such a project, to ensure a process that is viable and with outcomes that will be taken seriously.

The previous section of this report set out our priorities for Welsh democracy; moving forward with these would provide the framework for thinking about whether, and how, the public could be involved in developing a statement of constitutional and governance principles. The approach to public involvement should align with the core values and principles set out as part of the vision and strategy for Welsh democracy that we call for above. It should also learn from international best practice in terms of when and how to involve citizens in identifying constitutional and governance principles for Wales.

Summary of key findings

We heard different views on the purpose and function of a statement of constitutional and governance principles, and whether or not such a statement is needed. It is also unclear what the status of such a statement would be, and there is a risk of further complicating understandings of Welsh governance with a statement that has no clear legal effect.

We commissioned an evidence review of international experiences of participatory constitution-making to inform our thinking about whether and how citizens could be involved in the drafting of such a statement.²³ The findings suggest that, when done well, participatory constitutional processes can contribute to building trust in democracy. This is contingent, however, on thinking carefully about whether, when and how the public should be involved in such a process. There is a risk that a poorly designed process, without a clear purpose, will erode trust in democratic politics. This is particularly important in the Welsh context where trust in political institutions is already fragile.

The international evidence also points to the need for cross-party support for the process itself, and that its outcomes are taken seriously by elected representatives who formally decide on whether to adopt such a statement. In international cases (like Iceland and Chile) where political buy-in has been absent, participatory constitutional processes have failed.

23 Welsh Government (2026), *Evidence Review: Engaging citizens in drafting a statement of constitutional and governance principles for Wales*. Commissioned by the Welsh Government and authored by Dr Alex Prior
www.gov.wales/evidence-review-engaging-citizens-in-drafting-a-statement-of-constitutional-and-governance-principles-for-wales

4. Conclusion

This report has set out the findings emerging from IDAG’s work over the last year. We have begun to take stock of our Welsh democracy, and to consider what is needed to drive forward our ambition for a thriving democratic system for Wales. We have outlined priorities, mapped next steps, and identified where more work is needed to inform possible solutions.

In our discussions, we have been struck both by the broad support that exists for this agenda, and by the good work that is already taking place. What is needed now, is a step change in both ambition and activity.

A key theme throughout has been the need for participatory approaches – working directly with those invested in and affected by decisions, to co-design solutions. This is critical for ensuring ownership of, and buy-in for, any changes proposed to achieve a thriving Welsh democracy and an important next step for this work.

Two principles anchor our work so far, and our ambition for democracy in Wales. Firstly, strengthening our democracy requires thinking beyond electoral reform and participation. Reforming how electoral democracy works is important, but not sufficient, to tackle the democratic challenges we face, such as low turnout in elections, declining trust in democratic institutions and the feeling that people have no say in decisions that affect them. A thriving Welsh democracy requires us to embrace a more holistic understanding of the democratic system, where people are supported to understand how that system works and feel confident that their voice counts.

Secondly, investing in a thriving Welsh democracy is a fundamental requirement for delivering better outcomes for the people of Wales. Despite the scale and persistence of the policy challenges set out in the Introduction, an opportunity exists for a step change to our approach in Wales. Creating a permanent and genuine partnership between people and the democratic institutions that serve them is core to better policy and improved outcomes.

There will be a challenging agenda facing the next Welsh Government, and a body such as IDAG, or a successor group, would have an important role to play in sustaining progress and momentum towards a thriving Welsh democracy.

This report sets out a clear ambition for Welsh democracy, and a pathway towards achieving it. We call on the next Welsh Government to lead this work, and to bring partners across Wales with it, so that we can collectively build a democratic system that supports people to understand how decisions are made, feel able to shape them, and see better outcomes for themselves and their communities. The task now is to carry this ambition forward and invest in our democracy, so that Wales can build the inclusive, resilient and thriving future we all need and expect.

Annex 1

Terms of reference of the Innovating Democracy Advisory Group

1. Support the development of civic engagement and education strategies by providing insight and knowledge to inform the response to the recommendations of the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales.
2. Provide expert advice to the Welsh Government and partners on enhancing democratic engagement in Wales, building on the foundations provided by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which requires government and local government to take into account the importance of involving people in achieving the well-being goals, in ways that reflects the diversity of the population.
3. Provide expert advice in relation to making greater use of democratic innovations in policy development and delivery at national and local levels (potentially including the development of a statement of constitutional principles).
4. Promote the use of democratic innovation and participation in public life, including through engagement with partners, stakeholders, and the wider public.
5. Provide advice on engagement with people who have lived / community experience of citizen-led engagement to enhance capacity in the sector.

Annex 2

Membership of the Innovating Democracy Advisory Group

The Chair and members have been appointed for a period up until Spring 2026, with a possibility of extension. The group comprises members with relevant knowledge and experience, appointed by the Deputy First Minister.

In spring 2026, the activities and outcomes of the group will be reviewed for an incoming government to consider the options for future governance and the structure of the group.

Members:

- Dr Anwen Elias (Chair)
- Sarah Allan
- Jess Blair
- Mike Corcoran
- Dr. Tomos Dafydd Davies
- Professor Sally Holland
- Yvonne Murphy
- Professor Diana Stirbu
- Leanne Wood

Not currently active:

- Julie Sangani
- Daisy Thomson

Former members:

- Mo Alamgir

Biographies of the members are published on the Welsh Government website:

[Membership: Innovating Democracy Advisory Group | GOV.WALES](#)

Annex 3

Meetings of the Innovating Democracy Advisory Group

2025:

- 1 May
- 19 June
- 3 July
- 4 September
- 23 October
- 20 November
- 18 December

2026:

- 22 January
- 10 February
- 18 February

Annex 4

Evidence providers who presented at Innovating Democracy Advisory Group meetings

- Selma Abdalla, Electoral Services Officer, Cardiff Council
- Hattie Andrews, Director, The Politics Project
- Gillian Baxendine, freelance public participation specialist
- Sandy Clubb, Policy Lead: Involvement, Collaboration and Culture, Office of the Future Generations Commissioner
- Kayleigh Cowdery, Youth Worker, Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales
- Stephen Cushion, Director of Research and Impact, School of Journalism, Media and Culture, Cardiff University
- Yves Dejaeghere, Executive Director of the Federation for Innovation in Democracy (FIDE)
- Irenie Ekkeshis, Co-Founder and Director, New Citizen Project
- Rhys Evans, Head of Corporate Affairs and Public Policy, BBC Cymru Wales
- Ella Griffiths-Downing, Senior Communications Adviser, The Electoral Commission
- Doreen Grove, Head of Open Government, Scottish Government
- Will Hayward, freelance journalist
- Tim Hughes, Democracy and Participation Lead, Open Government Partnership
- Professor Emyr Lewis, former member of the Expert Panel to the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales
- Gareth Lewis, Political Editor, BBC Cymru Wales
- Megan Lewis, Policy and Engagement Officer, Scouts Cymru
- Jonathan Moskovic, Research Lead, European University Institute and democratic innovation advisor
- Yvonne Murphy, CEO and Artistic Director, Omidaze Productions Ltd
- Shanty Neale, Projects Support and Fundraising Officer, Scouts Cymru
- Arild Ohren, Senior Democratic Expert, Democratic Society
- Grant Poiner, Chief Executive Officer, Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales
- Ian Pope, Head of Programmes, The Politics Project
- Dr Alex Prior, Lecturer in Politics with International Relations, London South Bank University
- Alícia Puig, City Specialist, Democratic Society
- Dr Melisa Ross, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Bremen
- Senedd Cymru
- Welsh Government divisions leading on Climate Change, Curriculum, and Elections
- Gareth Williams, former Chair of the Expert Panel to the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales
- Anthony Zacharzewski, President, Democratic Society