

Social research number: 2/2026

Publication date: 6/01/2026

National Survey for Wales 2026-27: Review and testing of participant materials and log-in process

Executive summary

1. Background

As part of the transition to a web-first (CAWI) approach for the National Survey for Wales, Welsh Government commissioned qualitative review and testing of participant recruitment materials ([Appendix A-G](#)). The aim of this research was to ensure that the survey materials and log-in process are clear, engaging, and inclusive, particularly for groups typically underrepresented in web-first surveys.

This report provides a summary of the main findings. A full report is available on request by contacting surveys@gov.wales.

2. Methodology

2.1 Desk review

For the first stage of the research, an expert panel consisting of survey methodologists and other experts reviewed draft participant recruitment materials ([Appendix A](#) and [Appendix D](#): Leaflet desk review). The panel provided feedback on different elements of the materials through a structured group discussion and written comments. The recommendations were used to refine the materials ahead of focus group testing.

2.2 Focus groups

Four focus groups were conducted over two rounds. Two groups were held in person (one in North Wales and one in South Wales), and two were held online. The aim was to explore people's impressions of the materials, clarity of information and instructions, factors influencing participation, and the effectiveness of different messaging approaches. Materials were revised based on participant feedback in the first round, enabling refinements to be tested in the second round.

2.3 Cognitive interviews

Following a desk review, two rounds of cognitive interviews were conducted to test the survey log-in process, from receipt of the invitation letter to logging in to the online survey. The purpose of this testing was to assess understanding and ease of use.

3. Summary of research findings

3.1. Invitation letter

Participants correctly understood that the invitation letter ([Appendix B](#): Invitation letter round 1 and [Appendix C](#): Invitation letter round 2) was inviting them to take part in an online survey about people's views on public services and life in Wales. Tone and presentation were viewed as professional and engaging by most, and the instructions on how to take part were seen as clear. The Welsh Government branding contributed positively to perceptions of legitimacy and trustworthiness, though some said other design elements reminded them of generic promotional material. The general perception was that the letter appeared official and credible, and would encourage them to take part.

3.1.1. Survey information

- The letter was felt to convey the aims of the survey clearly and communicated that responses would contribute to shaping public services.
- Some participants said they would like more detail on the types of questions included, how responses would be used, and what impact previous surveys had.
- The incentive was seen as a motivating factor by some. Views varied regarding the suitability of £15 per participant, relative to the estimated completion time of 30 minutes.
- Clarity was requested over how the voucher would be provided and where it could be used.

3.1.2. Person selection

- The 'most recent birthday' instruction in the first draft of the letter was received poorly. Participants considered it confusing and overly directive. Many said they would ignore the instruction and do the survey themselves, rather than pass the letter on to the person with the most recent birthday.
- The revised instruction in the second draft, inviting any two adults in the household aged 16+ to take part (or one adult in households with only one adult), was seen as clearer and more acceptable. Many said they would complete the survey themselves and pass on the letter to someone else in the household. However, some participants in households with two or more people aged over 16 were unsure whether they could take part if no one else in the household was willing.
- There were also some queries about the suitability of referring to people aged 16 or 17 as 'adults'.

3.1.3. How to take part

- The explanation of the steps to complete the survey was viewed as straightforward.
- The stages were felt to be clearly presented, and the sequence of actions was easy to understand.
- It was suggested that reference to the estimated completion time should be positioned alongside these instructions, along with the information that it is possible to start the survey and come back to it later.

3.1.4. Log-in instructions

- Participants felt the instructions were clear and felt confident in their ability to log in.
- The step-by-step structure and use of bold text were found to be useful.
- Reactions to the QR code were mixed. While some valued its convenience, others expressed concerns regarding security and accessibility for other, less digitally-confident individuals.

3.1.5. Design and layout

- Participants liked the one-page format and felt key information was highlighted effectively.
- Some suggested improving spacing, reconsidering coloured banding, increasing font size for accessibility, and ensuring that accessibility information was more prominent.
- The use of 'The Residents' in the salutation, as opposed to participants' names, felt impersonal to some and risked the letter being mistaken for junk mail.

3.2. Leaflet

Feedback on the leaflet ([Appendix E](#): Leaflet round 1 and [Appendix F](#): Leaflet round 2) was mixed across both rounds of testing. Some viewed it as a helpful supplementary resource that clarified the survey's purpose and addressed questions that remained after reading the invitation letter. Others felt the content duplicated key messages from the letter and did not add value. For some, this raised concerns about unnecessary cost.

3.2.1. Statistics

- The inclusion of statistics was welcomed by those who appreciated examples of past survey findings.
- Many said they would prefer a stronger emphasis on impact, i.e. what had changed as a result of previous survey results.
- The credibility and relevance of the statistics were questioned by some. Some suggested clearer context should be provided (e.g. geographical scope) or that more locally-focused information should be given.

3.2.2. FAQs

- The FAQ-style sections were seen as helpful, particularly those explaining confidentiality and the option to skip questions.
- Some FAQ sections were seen to repeat information already in the letter.
- Participants would have liked further information on how to access translation or interpretation support, and on how survey data would be used in practice.

3.2.3. Design and layout

- Participants found the leaflet very accessible and appreciated the use of icons and colour headings.
- Improvements suggested included simplifying the text, increasing font size for accessibility, and ensuring visual consistency across survey materials.

3.2.4. Language card

The language card ([Appendix G](#): Language card round 1), designed to inform participants on how to access a translated version of the survey, largely received negative feedback in the first round of testing. Most participants overlooked it in the envelope and said it appeared inessential and visually unappealing. The information was also considered unclear. Consequently, key information from the card was instead integrated into the leaflet for the second round of testing.

3.3. General messaging

Four sets of exercises were conducted across the two focus groups to identify ways of framing information about the survey to encourage participation. This showed participants preferred messages that:

- focused on topics that feel relevant to daily life and are within the Welsh Government's remit, particularly NHS services, local services, education, the environment, and housing.
- emphasised local relevance and clearly explained how responses would help improve services in their area.
- said who would act on the results, with 'Welsh Government' or 'local services' preferred because they seemed clearer and more meaningful.

One of the exercises asked participants to identify any remaining concerns they would have about taking part after reading the materials. Their primary remaining concerns were:

- whether taking part would make a difference, reflected in a strong desire for evidence of previous impact.
- data security and how their information would be used.
- the time required to complete the survey.

3.4. Log-in screen

The desk review identified issues with both the length and volume of information on the log-in page ([Appendix H](#): Log-in screen desk review). This meant that there was a risk that key information, such as where to enter the 8-character log-in code, would be overlooked. The absence of an interviewer in an online mode could also increase the risk of satisficing at this screen, i.e. participants might skim the instructions, overlook key details, or fail to enter the log-in code correctly.

Following revisions to the log-in screen ([Appendix I](#): Log-in screen round 1 and [Appendix J](#): Log-in screen round 2), the cognitive interviews showed:

- Participants generally found the page clear and understood how to log in.
- Some overlooked the instructions on who should take part in the survey.
- The ‘any two adults’ instruction caused some confusion, with some participants querying if only one person was still able to take part in households with more than one adult.
- Some identified inconsistencies in terminology (e.g., the use of both ‘log-in code’ and ‘access code’ on the same page).
- Practical issues were noted, such as scrolling on mobile devices to locate the code entry box and small text size.

Appendix A: Invitation letter desk review

**Shape the future of Swansea
& receive your £15 voucher**

WG logo

Sir/Madam
ff_Address1
ff_Address2
ff_Address3
ff_Address4
ff_Address5
ff_Postcode

XX-XX-XXXX

Reference: XXXXXXXXXX

Dear Sir/Madam,

Your address has been chosen for the National Survey for Wales.

This study is your chance to tell us your views on the NHS, council services, your local area and more. Your answers will help shape the future of Wales.

The online survey takes around **30 minutes**. There are no right or wrong answers, and you don't need any special knowledge to take part.

Your answers will be kept confidential and only used for research purposes.



1. Get started

Go to our secure webpage gov.wales/surveywales
and enter this log-in code: **XXXX-XXXX**

Or scan this QR code:



2. Complete the survey online

You must be **at least 16 years old** to take part.

If you live with another person aged 16 or over, then the person with the **most recent birthday** should take part.



3. Receive your £15 voucher

As a thank you for taking part, we will send you a **£15 gift voucher**.

For more information, please read the leaflet or visit gov.wales/surveywales

Thank you for helping us with this important study.

Rebecca Sarasin & Catrin Awoyemi
Joint Chief Social Research Officer

For help or accessible formats
please call 0800 XXX XXX
or visit gov.wales/surveywales

**National Survey
for Wales**

Happy to communicate in Welsh or English
Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NO

Appendix B: Invitation letter round 1

**Shape the future of Swansea
& receive your £15 voucher**



The Residents
112 Ffordd Draw
East Cross
Swansea
SA25 7LX

1 August 2025

Dear Resident,

Your address has been chosen for the National Survey for Wales.

This study is your chance to tell us your views on the NHS, council services, your local area and more. Your answers will help make life better for people in Wales.

The online survey takes around **30 minutes**. There are no right or wrong answers, and you don't need any special knowledge. Your answers will be completely confidential.



1. Identify who takes part

We only need **one person** to complete the survey, and they must be **at least 16 years old**.

If there is more than one person aged 16+ at your address, the person with the **most recent birthday** should complete the survey.



2. Complete the survey online

Go to our secure webpage gov.wales/surveywales and enter this log-in code: **5463 2122**

Or scan this QR code:



3. Receive your £15 gift voucher as a thank you

The voucher can be spent in a range of places, including high street shops, supermarkets, and online.

For more information, please read the enclosed leaflet or visit gov.wales/nationalsurveyinfo

Thank you for helping us with this important study.

Catrin Awoyemi
Chief Social Research Officer

For help or accessible formats
call 0800 121 2211 or visit
gov.wales/nationalsurveyinfo

**National Survey
for Wales**

Happy to communicate in Welsh or English
Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ

Appendix C: Invitation letter round 2

**Shape the future of Swansea
and receive your £15 gift card**



The Residents
112 Ffordd Draw
East Cross
Swansea
SA25 7LX

1 August 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

Your household is one of a small number chosen in the Swansea area to take part in the National Survey for Wales.

This study is about you and your views on council services, the NHS, your local area and more. Your answers will help to improve services in the Swansea area.

The study takes around **30 minutes**. You don't need any special knowledge. Answers are kept confidential and are only used for research purposes.

The study should be completed by **any two adults (aged 16+) in your household**. If there is only one adult in the household, only they should take part.



1. Complete the study

Go to our secure webpage at gov.wales/surveywales or scan the QR code.



Log-in code for adult 1: **tw23 51y2**

Log-in code for adult 2: **tw23 51y3**



2. Receive a £15 gift card as a thank you

Each adult that completes the study will receive a £15 gift card.

The gift card can be spent in a range of places, including high street shops, supermarkets, and online.

For more information, see the enclosed leaflet.

Thank you for helping us with this important study.

Catrin Awoyemi
Chief Social Research Officer

For help to take part or more details
call 0800 121 2211 or visit
gov.wales/nationalsurveyinfo

Happy to communicate in Welsh or English | Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ

Appendix D: Leaflet desk review



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

National Survey for Wales

Thanks to people like you taking part we know...

 **63%** have seen their GP in the past 12 months

 **48%** use childcare for children aged 0-14

 **93%** are satisfied with their accommodation

Source: National Survey for Wales 2022-23
See more results of the National Survey for Wales at gov.wales/nationalsurvey

For help or accessible formats, call **0800 XXX XXXX** or visit gov.wales/surveywales

The National Survey for Wales helps organisations like Welsh Government, local councils and NHS Wales better understand the needs of people in Wales.

Frequently asked questions

Q Why should I take part?
The survey is your chance to share your opinions and experiences on a range of topics, including health, education and your local area. Your answers will help us make Wales a better place to live.
You'll also receive a **£15 voucher** as a thank you for your time.

Q How was my address chosen?
Your address was randomly-selected from Royal Mail's publicly-available list of addresses in Wales.

Q Why is the person with the last birthday selected?
This helps us make sure that people of different ages, from different walks of life, and across Wales take part in the survey.

Q Who carries out the survey?
The National Centre for Research (also known as NatCen) carries out the survey on behalf of Welsh Government.

Q What happens to my answers?
Your answers will be kept confidential and only used for research purposes. More details on how we store and process information can be found at gov.wales/surveywales

Q Can I take part in Welsh or another language?
Yes, you can complete the survey in Welsh or English.
If you would like to take part in another language, call us for free on **0800 XXX XXXX**.

Q What if I have additional needs?
We want everyone to take part in the survey, so please call us on **0800 XXX XXXX** to discuss other ways to take part or visit gov.wales/surveyaccess

Q For all other questions, contact us:
Call us on **0800 XXX XXX** or email nationalsurvey@xxx

Appendix E: Leaflet round 1



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

National Survey for Wales

Help us find out how things are in your area

In the last survey...

 **86%** were satisfied with their last GP visit

 **25%** had caring responsibilities

 **4%** were behind with their rent or mortgage

Source: National Survey for Wales 2022-23
See more results of the National Survey for Wales at gov.wales/nationalsurvey



Help public organisations like Welsh Government, local councils and NHS Wales understand life for people in Wales.

Frequently asked questions

 **Why should I take part?**
The survey is your chance to share your opinions and experiences on a range of topics, including health, education and your local area. Your answers will help us make Wales a better place to live. You'll also receive a £15 voucher as a thank you for taking part.

 **What happens to my answers?**
Your answers will be kept confidential and only used for research purposes. More details on how we store and process information can be found at gov.wales/surveywales

 **How was my address chosen?**
Your address was randomly selected from Royal Mail's publicly-available list of addresses in Wales.

 **Why is the person with the most recent birthday selected?**
Choosing the person with most recent birthday helps us make sure that people of different ages and backgrounds take part in the survey.

 **Can I take part in Welsh or another language?**
You can complete the survey in Welsh or English. If you would like to take part in a different language, call us for free on **0800 221 2222**.

 **What if I have additional needs?**
Please call us on **0800 221 2222** to discuss other ways to take part, or visit gov.wales/surveyaccess

 **Who carries out the survey?**
The National Centre for Research (NatCen) carry out the survey on behalf of Welsh Government.

 **For all other questions:**
Call us on **0800 221 2222** or email nationalsurvey@natcen.ac.uk

Appendix F: Leaflet round 2



National Survey for Wales

Help us find out how things are **in your area**

In the last survey...

 **86%** were satisfied with their last GP visit

 **25%** had caring responsibilities

 **4%** were behind with their rent or mortgage

Source: National Survey for Wales 2022-23

See more results from the survey at gov.wales/nationalsurvey

Help public organisations like NHS Wales, local councils, and Welsh Government understand what matters to people in your area

Frequently asked questions

 **Why should I take part?**
The survey is your chance to share your opinions and experiences on a range of topics, including health, education and your local area. Your answers will help us make your area a better place to live. You'll receive a £15 gift card as a thank you for taking part.

 **What happens to my answers?**
Your answers will be kept confidential and only used for research purposes. More details on how we store and process information can be found at gov.wales/nationalsurveyinfo

 **How was my address chosen?**
Your address was randomly selected from Royal Mail's publicly-available list of addresses in Wales.

 **How many people should take part?**
If you are the only adult (aged 16+) in your household, only you should take part. If there is more than one adult in your household, any two of the adults should take part.

 **What if I am not comfortable or able to answer a question?**
The questions in the survey are voluntary, and you can skip any questions that you don't know or are not comfortable answering.

 **Can I take part in other languages?**
You can complete the survey in Welsh or English. If you would like to take part in another language, someone in your household aged 13+ can translate for you. We can also arrange an interpreter.

 **Who carries out the survey?**
The National Centre for Research (NatCen), on behalf of Welsh Government.

What if I have additional needs, or have other questions?
Please call us on **0800 221 222**, email nationalsurvey@natcen.co.uk or visit gov.wales/nationalsurveyinfo

Appendix G: Language card round 1

Take part in any language

Cymryd rhan mewn unrhyw iaith

Weź udział w języku polskim

شارك في اللغة البولندية

Take part in BSL

Participe em Português

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਭਾਗ ਲਓ

Galw / call

0800 121 2211

E-bost / e-mail

nationalsurvey@natcen.co.uk



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Arolwg Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National Survey
for Wales

Dim ond **30 munud** sy'n ein
helpu i ddeall beth sy'n bwysig
i **chi** a'ch **cymuned**

Just **30 minutes** helps us
understand what matters to
you and **your community**



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Arolwg Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National Survey
for Wales

Appendix H: Log-in screen desk review

ASK ALL

AccessCode

NS 2425

Welcome to the National Survey for Wales.

You must be at least 16 years old to complete the survey. If you live with another person aged 16 or over, the person with the last birthday should complete the survey.

Please enter your 8 digit access code and click 'Start' to begin:

ENTER NUMBER [4] - [4]

If you have any questions or need help, please call us for free on: 0800 ###

We are open:

Monday to Thursday 9am to 8pm

Friday 9am to 6pm

Saturday 10am to 3pm

To complete the survey in Welsh, please select 'Language: Cymraeg' on the top right of your screen.

IF ACCESS CODE BLANK OR WRONG:

[Incorrect code, please try again. Your access code can be found in the letter we sent you.]

If you are still unable to log in, please give us a call for free on 0800 ## or just email us at nationalsurveywales@#.com and our team will be happy to help you.]

Appendix I: Log-in screen round 1

ASK ALL

AccessCode

NS 2425

Welcome to the National Survey for Wales.

We only need one person in your household to take part. They must be at least 16 years old.

If you live with another person aged 16 or over, the person with the most recent birthday should take part.

Please enter your log-in code and click 'Start' to begin:

ENTER NUMBER [4-4]

If you have any questions or need help, please call us for free on: 0800 000 000.

We are open:

Monday to Thursday 9am to 8pm

Friday 9am to 6pm

Saturday 10am to 3pm

To complete the survey in Welsh, please select 'Language: Cymraeg' on the top right of your screen.

IF ACCESS CODE BLANK OR WRONG:

[Incorrect log-in code, please try again. Your log-in code can be found in the letter we sent you.]

Appendix J: Log-in screen round 2

ASK ALL

AccessCode
NS 2425

Welcome to the National Survey for Wales.

You need to be **16 years old or older** to take part in the survey. If you **live alone**, please enter one of the access codes in the letter we sent you and click 'Next' to begin.

If you **live with another person aged 16 or over**, one other person should also take part in the survey. **Only two people per household can take part.** Please enter one of the access codes in the letter we sent you and click 'Next' to begin.

Access code

ENTER NUMBER [4-4]

If you have any questions or need help, please call us for free on: 0800 000 000.

We are open:

Monday to Thursday 9am to 8pm

Friday 9am to 6pm

Saturday 10am to 3pm

IF ACCESS CODE BLANK OR WRONG:

[Incorrect access code, please try again. Your access code can be found in the letter we sent you.]

Report authors: Rebecca Williams & Aditi Das

Full research report: Williams, R., & Das, A. (2025). National Survey for Wales 2026-27: Review and testing of participant materials and log-in process

Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/national-survey-wales-cognitive-testing>

Views expressed in this report are those of the researchers and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government.

For further information please contact:

National Survey for Wales Team

Knowledge and Analytical Services

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

Cardiff

CF10 3NQ

Email: Surveys@gov.wales

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

OCL © Crown Copyright Digital ISBN 978-1-80633-862-7