



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Legal Services

Information Pack





Mae'rddogfen yma hefydar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Contents

Foreword	2
Government Lawyer Biographies	3
Legal Services Department and its Values	10

Foreword

Thank you for your interest in the posts of Welsh Government Lawyer.

This is an opportunity to make a substantial contribution to delivering high quality legal advice and support at the heart of government and devolution in Wales.

The Legal Services Department is the largest public sector legal department in Wales and is responsible for the delivery of all legal services to the Welsh Government. It is an exciting time to be involved in taking forward the new devolution settlement, with new and enhanced powers. The appointment of additional lawyers will further strengthen the ability of the Legal Services Department to support the Welsh Government at this critical time.

As a government lawyer you will be part of the Civil Service and the Government Legal Service. Your experience will give you a unique understanding of the devolution settlement in Wales. It offers lawyers a unique opportunity to work within a dynamic environment that places them at the heart of devolved government, projects of national significance and profile, at the cutting edge of major constitutional developments, including the significant challenges raised by withdrawal from the European Union, and at the forefront of the policy and law making process.

You will provide legal advice in a fast paced, public law environment where often the issues are high profile and significant in terms of the developing UK constitution. You will work in a team situation, gaining experience of working with lawyers, policy clients and Welsh Ministers to shape policy in Wales.

This is an exciting time to be joining the Welsh Government and to be able to play an important part in the delivery of the Welsh Government's programme for government. We look forward to receiving your application.



Helen Lentle
Director of Legal Services

Government Lawyer Biographies

Chris Humphreys
Local Government & Finance Team Lawyer



"If you're not already working in Government, you have nothing to fear in applying to join us. The work here is varied and challenging but, at its heart, just like any other legal work. I came from a University teaching background and was quickly able to get to grips with the type of public law work involved and the skills needed to meet the daily challenges. Each day brings something unique and you feel like you're making a difference."

Louise Davies
Transport Team Lawyer



"Having trained and practised in a corporate/commercial law firm, I had very little experience of public law prior to joining the Welsh Government's Legal Services Department. Following qualification, I worked at Eversheds Sutherland for 5 years dealing with Planning, Environmental and Compulsory Purchase matters so the move to the public sector was quite a change for me. I currently work in the Legal Services Transport Team and have been involved in some very interesting, varied work. The work is challenging and often takes you outside your comfort zone (particularly having been a "specialist" previously) but as you're not working against a fee estimate or watching your billing figures you have the luxury of more time to consider the problem fully – which is something I'd never experienced previously. The Welsh Government has given me a different perspective of the legal world and provided me with the work/life balance that I was looking for. I most certainly haven't regretted the decision to move!"

Sarah Tyler
Social Care Team Lawyer



"I joined the Welsh Government Legal Services Department last year having previously worked in private practice for over 10 years. I was a member of a Chambers in Swansea practising as a self-employed Barrister. I mainly practised in the area of Family Law and spent the majority of my time at Court, representing and advising lay clients. I now work in the Social Care Legal Team. Although the work is significantly different to my previous role, there has been the opportunity to develop skills in new areas and there is a wide variety of work within the team. It was a significant change of career, yet the skills and knowledge I built up in private practice gave me a good footing to undertake a lot of the work I have been doing here."

Alison Henders-Green
Planning Team Lawyer



"Prior to joining the Welsh Government I worked in private practice for over 20 years, specialising in Commercial Litigation. I have been working for the Welsh Government Legal Services Planning Team for just over 4 years. I find the work varied, challenging at times and intellectually demanding. It is an enjoyable working environment and I have had the chance to work on interesting, high profile projects including advising on Building Regulations in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower disaster."

Heidi Mason
Social Care Team Lawyer



"I joined the Welsh Government's Legal Services Department in June 2020, having previously been employed as a childcare solicitor in a local authority for the best part of 20 years. I am part of the Social Care Team in Legal Services, and have already been given the opportunity to advise on a wide range of diverse and interesting matters. The work is both unique and challenging and has enabled me to quickly build upon my previous experience. I am excited at the opportunity to develop my knowledge and skills further.

Legal Services and Welsh Government offer flexible working arrangements which has meant that I have been able to achieve a good work/life balance - working part-time whilst also reaping the benefits of a challenging and rewarding role. I am a fluent Welsh speaker and have made links with other Welsh speakers in Legal Services.

I have also been able to communicate with clients through the medium of Welsh which has been a positive experience for me as there was little opportunity for me to do this in my previous role.

Despite starting my career with Welsh Government in the midst of the coronavirus lockdown, I have been made to feel extremely welcome and have been well supported by members of my team and right across the department. I have not looked back!!"

Nick Howard
Constitution Team Lawyer



"I joined Welsh Government in 2014 after working as a Senior Lecturer at the College of Law, and University of South Wales. I'd specialised in Constitutional and Administrative Law but wanted to do it rather than just talk about it! Since joining, I've been able to work on things that just wouldn't come across your desk elsewhere - like the Miller case on Article 50 TFEU, which was the first time the entire Supreme Court bench had sat; various National Assembly Bills; a major constitutional Bill going through the UK Parliament (the Wales Act 2017); and judicial review cases. I love what I do - it's challenging, varied and there is room to be creative as you're working at the margins of a developing constitutional settlement. It's also a great place to work with flexible hours, a good annual leave allowance and social activities like Wednesday night 5-a-side."

Tim Jones

Environment and Energy Team Leader



"I moved to Welsh Government Legal Services in 2014 from GLD (TSol as then was), where I'd spent time advising several different Whitehall Departments. Quality of life and cost of living on this side of Offa's Dyke were factors in our decision to leave London, but my wife (another Government lawyer!) and I were principally drawn to the opportunity of working in a more compact organisation. Working previously for the State Government of Victoria (Australia), I had particularly liked the greater sense of proximity to the strategic operation of Government as a whole and opportunities for working across-Government offered by an organisation of this size.

Those hopes have absolutely been borne out by my experience since joining - first as Team Leader for the lawyers advising the Counsel General directly on a huge range of matters, and latterly as Team Leader of Energy and Environment. With a portfolio of responsibilities in the team equivalent to roughly half of DEFRA plus bits of BEIS, all our lawyers carry substantial individual responsibility, but (I hope!) find the breadth and variety of exposure which this provides stimulating and satisfying. I certainly enjoy working with such bright and kind colleagues."

Charlotte Cheetham

Commercial and Public Contracts Team Lawyer



"Before joining the Commercial and Public Contracts Team in the Welsh Government's Legal Services Department, I spent over 5 years working at Blake Morgan - initially as a trainee solicitor and later qualifying into the firm's Commercial team. In private practice I had a large number of public sector clients and regularly advised them on contract and procurement matters. I started to become curious about what it would be like to work in-house so when a vacancy arose at the Welsh Government as a commercial and procurement lawyer, I decided to explore it further. I really enjoyed working in private practice, but I've never regretted the move to the Welsh Government.

I've been part of Legal Services for three years now and I've had the opportunity to be involved in some very interesting work during this time. Some of my work is similar to the type of work I did in private practice but a lot of it is brand new such as working on legislation and contributing to submissions to Ministers. It's been nice to have a new challenge and I've had plenty of support and encouragement to develop new skills. There are lots of opportunities for learning and development.

My colleagues are also fantastic and hugely supportive. I returned to work in January following maternity leave. Legal Services has been very flexible and didn't hesitate in allowing me to adjust my days and hours to balance work with my new family commitments. My colleagues work a variety of working patterns and I feel confident that I will be supported to achieve the work/life balance I want too."

Jacquelyn Rees

Commercial Property Team Lawyer



Prior to joining the Welsh Government, I worked in a number of public sector roles, specialising in Commercial Property.

The work is varied and continues to engage my interest. One moment you could be working on the acquisition of a factory in Mid Wales and the next, attending an auction for the sale of surplus properties.

The work is challenging at times and provides the opportunity to develop new skills and work with different teams, both in Legal Services and the wider Welsh Government. I have worked with Legal colleagues on changes to Compulsory Purchase legislation and with the Economy and Creative Industries team on work relating to the filming sector. During the Coronavirus initial lockdown period, our team was engaged with legal work relating to the setting up of the Bay Studios as a field hospital, lettings of units for the storage of PPE and moving a standalone facility from the Royal Glamorgan Hospital to one of the units we owned nearby.

Welsh Government offers flexible working arrangements and the Property Team I work in is friendly and supportive and you are encouraged to expand your skills and knowledge.

Peter Eyre

Commercial Property Team Lawyer



I joined the Welsh Government in 2006, when the former Welsh Development Agency was merged with the then named National Assembly for Wales. Previously, I had worked within the property teams of 2 Local Authorities. I initially joined as an Assistant Commercial Property Lawyer and was a Certified Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives. With the support of the Welsh Government, I was able to study and qualify as a solicitor. This enabled me to apply for and successfully gain promotion as a Commercial Property Lawyer in 2010.

The work that we undertake as a team is very varied. Our internal clients include Economic Infrastructure, , Transport, Regeneration, Housing, Cadw and Health. We are involved in the various legal agreements that are required as part of site assembly for commercial and residential developments. We draft and advise on grant funding agreements in respect of the construction or redevelopment of buildings. We assist our clients with the estate management of the various land and buildings that form part of the Welsh Government portfolio, and which are let on a short or long-term basis, either by way of a lease or a Farm Business Tenancy or Grazing Licence. We also provide advice to Ministers and colleagues within other legal teams, where there is a property element involved.

We are a busy team, and the work certainly keeps us on our toes, but it does allow you to obtain a good work/life balance.



Before joining the Commercial and Public Contracts team in Welsh Government Legal Services, I had been working since qualification as a banking and finance lawyer in private practice in London and then at Eversheds Sutherland in Cardiff. I know that working as a lawyer for Welsh Government wouldn't even occur to many people working in the commercial/finance/corporate spheres in private practice as there may be a perception that the in-house legal work in Welsh Government revolves around public law but think again! Whilst there is of course a sizeable multi-disciplinary public law team, what many people don't realise is that there are also dedicated in-house commercial teams which cover a vast set of specialist areas such as commercial contracts, finance arrangements, IT/IP, commercial property and many more. If you are looking for a change from private practice or other in-house commercial role, I would recommend that you give a role in Welsh Government Legal Services some serious consideration.

The work is very interesting and varied, and I have been involved in some fascinating projects since joining the team – many of these have been similar to my work in private practice, but it has been interesting to learn about specific areas and issues which are relevant to Welsh Government and which may impact on the commercial arrangements it enters into. I am still learning new things each day and have been fortunate to work on several high profile matters; whilst these may have, on occasion, been challenging (be it because of the urgency or complexity of the work), it has been rewarding to see the results of our work coming into effect as various deals and projects complete across Wales. The support I receive from my colleagues is excellent, and it is such a friendly place to work – despite starting my role during the pandemic and therefore never having had the opportunity to work in an office with my team, I have been made to feel incredibly welcome from day one.

My work/life balance has also improved significantly since I joined the team – I have been able say farewell to timesheets, billing targets, and the (sometimes) long hours, whilst saying “hello” to more predictable working hours and a much healthier work/life balance. I completely enjoy the role, and only wished I had looked into this sort of opportunity years ago! I would encourage anyone else who may be interested in applying for this opportunity to give it some serious consideration and go for it.

Legal Services Department and its Values

Over 100 lawyers and support staff provide legal advice and legislative drafting services to Ministers across all Welsh Government Cabinet portfolios.

Government Lawyers report to and support the posts of the Senior Government Lawyers and Deputy Directors of Legal Services.

As a Government Lawyer, you will be part of a large team responsible for the delivery of all legal services to the Welsh Government.

The services provided by the department include advice on complex matters of public and commercial law, the drafting of instructions to the Office of Legal Services (Welsh Government's equivalent of Parliamentary Counsel's Office), the drafting of primary legislation, the preparation of all Welsh Government subordinate legislation, the handling of high-profile litigation and the drafting of a wide variety of commercial agreements.

The Legal Services Department's Management Board provides strategic leadership and is collectively responsible for delivering the department's organisational strategy. It plays a key role in ensuring that the department is equipped to provide a professional, efficient and high-quality service in accordance with the department's values of being connected, enabling and committed, and in accordance with the department's vision of "professionalism, impartiality, excellence".