



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Legal Services

## Information Pack



Mae Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol Llywodraeth Cymru'n ymrwymedig i gydraddoldeb ar sail rhyw, ac mae'r adran wedi llofnodi addewid "Women in Law" Cymdeithas y Gyfraith.



The Prince's Responsible Business Network

Race at Work Charter signatory



The Welsh Government's Legal Services Department is committed to gender equality, and is a signatory to the Law Society's Women in Law Pledge.

# Contents

Foreword	1
Welsh Government Background	3
Legal Services Department Background	4
Government Lawyer Biographies	6

# Foreword – Helen Lentle

## Director of Legal Services

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 an 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**

# Foreword – Mick Antoniw

## The Counsel General

Thank you for your interest in working for the Legal Services Department of the Welsh Government. Legal Services is critical to the work of the Welsh Government and lies at the heart of most of our governmental priorities supporting Ministers in the delivery of the Programme for Government, the legislative programme and other statutory and regulatory roles. Our culture is for lawyers to work in a closely integrated way with policy colleagues and Ministers to help support the delivery of the Government's agenda.

Public law is our strong focus, and we contribute substantially to the production of the Government's legislative programme. We seek an individual combining a commitment to upholding the rule of law whilst being creative and pragmatic in finding legal mechanisms to achieve the objectives of the Welsh Government. There is considerable variety in our work, frequently involving high profile constitutional and public law issues, the challenges of a busy legislative programme, public law advice in devolved areas, a very busy portfolio of commercial, employment and transactional work, and involvement in the more significant and important litigation workloads involving the Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government emphasises diversity and gender equality - this is reflected in the distribution of ministerial portfolios - and we welcome applications from applicants from all backgrounds and all parts of the UK.

Pob lwc/good luck



**Mick Antoniw**  
**Minister for the Constitution**

# Welsh Government Background

The Welsh Government has an annual budget of around £18 billion and is responsible for most public services in Wales. Elected in May 2021, the First Minister of Wales and their Cabinet lead the Welsh Government and are accountable to Senedd Cymru, the Welsh Parliament.

The UK's transition from the EU at the end of January 2020 had significant implications for Wales and the Welsh Government and our relationship with the UK Government and the other devolved governments continues to evolve now the UK is outside the EU. Along with other public bodies in Wales, all our work is underpinned by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, which sets an internationally recognised framework for policy and delivery focused on our Well-being Goals for Wales, and five ways of working which include involvement, collaboration, prevention and long-termism.

Welsh Ministers are supported by a civil service workforce of around 5,500 staff, approximately half of whom were previously located in Cardiff, with the remainder based in Welsh Government offices across Wales. Nearly all our staff are now working remotely and we expect flexible, 'smart' working to be part of our operating model for the longer term - helping us reduce our environmental impact and allowing us to work within the communities we serve. The Welsh Government has small offices in London, Brussels and an overseas network for trade and investment work.

The Welsh Government is accountable to the people of Wales through the Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament. Everyone who works at the Welsh Government is joined together by the single common purpose of supporting Ministers to build a better Wales. We aim to meet high standards of transparency and openness; and demonstrate honesty, objectivity, integrity and impartiality in everything we do. Creativity, fairness, partnership and professionalism are our core values, guiding us in our decision-making and in our interactions with each other, providing a clear set of expectations to drive the outcomes we want to see. We also aim to create a working environment which is innovative, stimulating, supportive and representative of the people we serve.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are important principles of the Welsh Government. We aim to be an exemplar employer and our vibrant diversity networks are supported by senior champions, including an Equality and Diversity Champion on our management Board. We have set ambitious diversity targets to improve the numbers of staff we employ from under-represented groups (for example, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues and disabled staff at all levels and women at senior levels). We are committed to the social model of disability and to making recruitment and workplace adjustments to ensure equality for our disabled colleagues. Our Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021 - 2026 sets out our intent to be an organisation that fully reflects the diversity of Wales at every level, is anti-racist and anti-discrimination of all types. Our anti-racist Wales Action Plan outlines our commitment to building an anti-racist Wales, which we can all be proud to belong to, and thrive in.

The Welsh Government is a bilingual organisation; legislation is produced in both Welsh and English, which have equal legal status. We follow statutory standards for the Welsh language in public administration. We are committed to our Cymraeg 2050 strategy and achieving our vision of becoming an exemplar bilingual organisation. We believe the Welsh language is an asset and encourage and support all our staff to learn, develop and use their Welsh language skills in the workplace.

# Legal Services Department Background

The Legal Services Department is responsible for the delivery of all legal services to the Welsh Government, including advice on complex matters of public law, the preparation of legislation, the delivery/oversight of commercial legal services and the handling of high-profile litigation. Over 200 lawyers and support staff provide legal advice and services to Ministers across all Welsh Government Cabinet portfolios. The Department also directly supports the Counsel General, the law officer within the Welsh Government. The Counsel General is also Minister for the Constitution within the Welsh Government, and the office is currently held by Mick Antoniw MS. The Counsel General provides legal advice and support to Ministers on the full range of the Welsh Government's responsibilities including legislative competence in respect of Senedd Bills, international obligations and human rights. The Counsel General oversees Welsh Government litigation both civil and criminal. The Counsel General may, from time to time, take on responsibility for certain aspects of legal policy. A principal aspect of the role of the Counsel General is to uphold and maintain the rule of law including ensuring that legislation meets the requirements of good and effective law. The Counsel General also has a role in protecting the integrity and accessibility of the law, including the 'Welsh' statute book.

The Department currently comprises 8 Divisions each headed by a Deputy Director and the Divisions coalesce in collegiate groups that operate together to deliver in specific subject areas and across Ministerial Portfolios. The Divisions currently comprise a total of 25 legal subject teams. The diagram below shows the structure of Welsh Government Legal Services.

## Welsh Government Legal Services Structure

Director of Legal Services

**Climate Change Group**

**Local Government, Education, Health and Wellbeing Group**

**Economic Development and International Trade**

**Division 1**

**Division 2**

**Division 3**

**Division 4**

**Division 5**

**Division 6**

**Divisions 7 and 8**

**Climate Change (1)  
Housing Transport and  
People Safety**

**Climate Change (2)  
and Rural Affairs**

**Local Government,  
Education, Welsh  
Language and the Arts**

**Health and Wellbeing**

**Economy and Finance**

**Director's Office – Counsel  
General, Constitution, Senedd  
Reform, Elections, and  
Litigation**

**Director's Office - Operations and Covid  
Public Inquiry**

Teams:

Housing and Regeneration
Building Safety
Planning
Transport

Teams:

Agriculture
Environment
Food and Fisheries

Teams:

Education, Schools, Culture Transport and Sport
Education Schools and Welsh Language
Education HE/FE
Local Government

Teams:

Social Care, Cafcass, CIW & HIW
Health
Primary Care and Mental Health

Teams:

Commercial and Public Contracts
Economy
Treasury & Procurement
Property (inc. Commercial Property)

Teams:

General Constitution, Human Rights (Competence), Justice and Tribunals
Senedd Reform
Senedd and Local Government Elections
Litigation

Teams:

Division 7 – Operations and Public Inquiry
Human Rights Policy, Prosperous Futures, Social Cohesion and Information Law
Social Partnership, WFG, Ethics and Covid Recovery
Division 8
Covid Public Inquiry Team

# Government Lawyer Biographies

Sioned Edwards

Education (Schools) and Welsh Language Team Lawyer



Prior to joining Welsh Government, I worked as a Solicitor in private practice for over 25 years. I specialised in non-contentious law and had very little experience of public law. I now work in the Education and Welsh Language team. Moving to a completely different field of law was challenging, but I haven't regretted my decision. The work is varied and I have had the opportunity to work on a Bill and various statutory instruments in my first year. Being able to thoroughly address legal queries without the pressure of having to worry about billable hours is a luxury not available in private practice. I enjoy working as part of a team and have been well supported whilst adjusting to my new role.

Ashley Chard

Economic Development and International Trade Team Lawyer



I joined the Welsh Government's Legal Services Department in 2019, after having spent over six years as a real estate lawyer in private practice. Whilst not unhappy in my former role, I became keen for a different challenge, but thought my options outside of real estate would be more limited after having spent a good number of years practicing in that area. However, once a colleague of mine was successful in joining a public law team within the Welsh Government Legal Services Department, I realised that this could be a possibility for me too and I've not looked back since.

I'm currently working in the Economic Development and International Trade Team, and whilst the work is quite different to the real estate world I was used to, my initial fears of how I could cope with the transition to public law were unfounded as many of the skills I'd developed in my former career have proved to be much the same as those needed for my new role. I also found that the transition was greatly helped by the people – everybody is so friendly, they are also exceptionally skilled and knowledgeable and always happy to take the time to help and explain things. This provided me with a great working environment within which to develop my skills and understanding in new areas. On top of that, the work/life balance is excellent and I often find myself involved in a variety of challenging and exciting matters that are high profile. I would not hesitate in recommending Welsh Government's Legal Services Department to anybody who is thinking of joining!



## Lisa Marie Knight

Economic Development and International Trade Team Lawyer



Prior to joining the Welsh Government's Legal Services Department in 2021, I trained and qualified as a commercial solicitor in a private law firm. During that time I was lucky enough to be offered a secondment opportunity, which completely changed my perspective as to what a career in law could offer. I really enjoyed being part of the client's business, getting to know and understand business risks and needs in a way that was unparalleled previously. The desire to feel more closely connected to my legal advice led to me leaving private practice to pursue a commercial role in-house. While I enjoyed my time in-house, I have always been interested in the Welsh devolution settlement and had a niggling curiosity as to what it might be like to work as a government lawyer, having applied previously. Following a friend's recommendation I decided to take the plunge and try again - and I have never looked back.

I am based within the Economic Development and International Trade Team and have worked on interesting, varied and high profile matters, from inputting on advice and briefings to ministers to advising on the recent UK Government's Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act. My initial fears about the change from commercial to public law (an area previously unfamiliar area to me) proved to be unfounded. While I have received support and development opportunities to get to grips with new subject areas, in many respects the core skills of being able to analyse and problem solve, develop good working relationships with clients and appreciate the bigger picture are similar to those required in any legal job. The role offers everything that I previously enjoyed about working in-house and more. I am challenged on a regular basis, have a good work/life balance, and work in a supportive environment with colleagues who are friendly, driven and highly intelligent. However, best of all, I feel like I am part of something bigger, and getting to see the real life impact of my work provides me with immense job satisfaction. If you are even just that little bit curious as to what a career within Legal Services could offer you, I would highly encourage you to apply.

## Madeline Rees

Environment and Energy Team Lawyer



I joined Welsh Government Legal Services about a year ago having worked at a commercial firm and then at a Law Centre, beforehand. Although, I didn't have experience of working in the public sector before joining Welsh Government, I have found that many of the skills developed elsewhere are also useful here. There are lots of opportunities for learning and development, and all the colleagues that I have worked with have been kind and knowledgeable! I have enjoyed the work that I have been involved with so far, including working on some high profile pieces of legislation and contributing to submissions to Ministers. I'm glad that I decided to make the leap and apply for this role and would definitely encourage you to consider doing the same.

**Nataliya Manskova**

**Equalities, communities and Information Team Lawyer**



I joined the Equalities, Communities and Information team in Welsh Government in 2023. I returned to legal practice after three years as a Senior Lecturer at the University of Law where I taught a range of subjects. Prior to that, I was a member of Chambers in Nottingham practicing as a specialist family law barrister. I have always been interested in the intersection between law and politics. Joining Welsh Government has given me the opportunity to develop my interest in public law and human rights. In the short time since I joined, I have been involved in advising on a variety of issues such as implementation of international human rights treaties, judicial review, human rights policy, immigration law, information law and EU law. I am enjoying the challenge of navigating new areas of the law and considering creative solutions to complex legal problems.

**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.

**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 over 4 years. I find the work varied, challenging at times and intellectually demanding. It is an enjoyable working environment and I have the chance to work on interesting, high profile projects including advising on Building Regulations in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower disaster.

**Charlotte Beynon**  
**Elections Team Lawyer**



Prior to joining Welsh Government Legal Services, I had been employed as a childcare lawyer in a local authority for 18 years. I initially joined Welsh Government in January 2022 via a secondment opportunity and quickly realised that I wanted to continue to work in Welsh Government on a permanent basis.

I have worked in the Health and Planning teams, and since being made a permanent member of staff, I am part of the Elections team working on primary legislation, drafting subordinate legislation, and advising ministers. The work is varied, intellectually demanding and engages my interests daily. I am part of a supportive team who are always there to provide help and assistance which has made my transition easier.

The area of law in which I am working is significantly different however the skills that I developed in my previous job helped me transition into my current role a Welsh Government lawyer. The excellent in-house training and support has enabled me to develop my knowledge of constitution and devolution and provided me with the confidence I need to provide an excellent level of service.

There are opportunities for career development which are encouraged through shadowing experiences internally and externally. The wide variety of work within the team as a whole enables you to expand your skills and knowledge of the law.

It is a supportive environment with flexible working hours, generous annual leave allowance and hybrid working arrangements. All of which promotes a healthy work/life balance which has significantly improved time with my family since joining. I have felt welcomed and valued by all members of the legal services team at every level.

I have not regretted the move and hope to spend the rest of my career within Welsh Government. If anyone is thinking about applying, I would encourage them to go for it, embrace the change. Its never too late to start a new chapter.

**Dawn Da Silva**  
**Constitution Team Lawyer**



I joined the Welsh Government at the start of 2021, and it was the best decision I have made. The work is varied, challenging and most importantly rewarding. One day you could be advising on legislative competence, whereas the next you could be drafting secondary legislation or even working on a Bill that will affect people in Wales. Not many lawyers can say that.

Before I joined Welsh Government, I worked for the Government Legal Department for eight years and whilst I was familiar with public law principles and litigation, I was less familiar with the intricacies of the devolution settlement. But here, in Legal Services, you are working with brilliant lawyers who are always willing to share their knowledge, so you too can become an expert. Prior to working in government, I worked in the city as an employment lawyer, and I can honestly say nothing beats public law and the privilege of public service. I would definitely encourage you to apply to the Welsh Government

Richard Jarvis

Treasury and Procurement Team lawyer



I joined Welsh Government having worked as a lawyer for a Local Authority in North Wales for nearly 10 years. Although Local Government legal work naturally has a strong emphasis on public law and public law principles, many of the matters I had conduct of were commercial and technical in nature. What attracted me to Welsh Government was the prospect of retaining and building on the commercial aspects of my practice given that it plays a pivotal part within the workings of a Devolved Government. I am currently a lawyer in the Treasury and Procurement Team.

The work is very interesting and I am enjoying the challenges of working at the heart of a devolved Government. I have found colleagues and management to be extremely engaging and supportive and there is a genuine focus on improving your work/life balance whilst providing learning and development opportunities for you to progress to the next level. I would strongly encourage you to consider a career with Welsh Government today.

Emma Anderson

Education, Schools, Culture, Tourism & Sports Team Lawyer



I joined Welsh Government in 2022 after 20 years working at local authorities in England, mostly in regulatory and enforcement functions. In taking up a new role I hoped to find a position with challenging, varied work that directly benefits people and their communities. These hopes have certainly been realised.

The work I undertake in the Education (Schools), Culture, Sport and Tourism team, which includes drafting subordinate legislation and advisory work relating to education policy and Royal Charter organisations is interesting, intellectually demanding and hugely rewarding. Working with and drafting legislation that applies only in Wales has been an adjustment but made achievable by the comprehensive training I have received.

The teams here are supportive and have been very willing to share their considerable expertise and experience to help me settle in and develop new skills. Although some of the work is very different, there are also opportunities to contribute to projects by applying the knowledge and professional skills I already possessed. I encourage any lawyer, whatever sector they are currently working in to consider developing their career with Welsh Government Legal Services

Helen Kellaway

Housing & Regeneration Team Lawyer



I have been working at the Welsh Government since 2002, providing advice on a wide range of housing and public law matters in the Housing and Regeneration Team. During that time, I have worked on both primary and secondary legislation, including Welsh and UK Government primary legislation and been involved in many exciting legislative changes which, over time, have resulted in a substantial divergence in housing policy from England. The work I have been involved in within Legal Services is extremely interesting, often challenging but very enjoyable.

The work in Legal Services sometimes requires legislation to be made at very short notice, such as during the Covid Pandemic. This work involved close liaison with UK Government lawyers and policy officials to ensure that regulations were in place at the same time across England and Wales to provide a uniform approach.

The work at the Welsh Government is very interesting, varied and often challenging, but there is never a dull moment. There is the ability to achieve a work/life balance under the flexible smart working arrangements. I have thoroughly enjoyed working for the Welsh Government and have worked with some fantastic supportive colleagues across Legal Services and across the wider organisation. I have been able to learn Welsh during my time here, which has proved very enjoyable and extremely useful in my role.

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.