



# Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2024/25

Valuation Tribunal for Wales

Carolyn Dawson (CEO)

---

## Table of Contents

Sections	Page
Foreword	3
Compliance Arrangements	4
Compliance Assessment	4
Reporting 2024-2025	5
Proposed Welsh Language Initiatives	6

## Foreword

I am pleased to present my first Welsh Language Standards Compliance Annual Report since assuming the role of Chief Executive for the Valuation Tribunal for Wales (VTW).

This report covers the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 and outlines the Tribunal's current Welsh language capabilities, as well as its future goals in meeting the requirements set out in the Welsh Language Standards (No. 4) Regulations 2016.

The Valuation Tribunal for Wales is an independent judicial body that resolves disputes relating to council tax and non-domestic rates. It operates through two key functions — Judicial and Administrative — and is supported by a Governing Council that oversees the Tribunal's operations and ensures high standards are maintained.

The structure of the Tribunal membership is as follows:

- Tribunal President
- 3 x National Representatives
- 22 x Chairs
- 37 x Lay Members

There are 63 VTW members in total and of those 2 national representatives, 6 Chairs and 11 members are Welsh speakers, which equates to 30% of membership.

The employees of the VTW comprises:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Executive Manager
- 3 x Senior Tribunal Clerks
- 8 x Tribunal Clerks
- Finance Officer
- IT support Officer
- 3 x Administrative Officers

The VTW has a total of 18 staff members, of whom 2 are fluent Welsh speakers and 5 are Welsh learners. This means that 38% of the VTW workforce have some Welsh language ability.

VTW remains committed to delivering its services in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards and to further strengthening its ability to do so in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Dawg', is positioned above the printed name of the Chief Executive Officer.

Chief Executive Officer  
Valuation Tribunal for Wales

## Compliance Arrangements

This Annual Report has been prepared on behalf of the Valuation Tribunal for Wales and formally approved by its Governing Council.

It will be published on the Tribunal's website, and a copy has been submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

## Compliance Assessment

### Service Delivery Standards

The Valuation Tribunal for Wales (VTW) is committed to meeting its obligations under the Welsh Language Standards (No. 4) Regulations 2016. To ensure full compliance with the service delivery standards, the Tribunal has implemented a range of measures, including:

- Issuing clear guidance to staff on how to respond to correspondence, answer telephone calls, and handle email communications in accordance with language preferences.
- Operating a digital phone system that allows callers to select their preferred language at the outset, ensuring immediate access to Welsh-speaking staff without the need for redirection.
- Maintaining a fully bilingual website, accessible in both Welsh and English.
- Publishing all official documentation, including policies and protocols, in both Welsh and English.
- Providing a standardised form to enable Tribunal users to indicate their language preference ahead of attending a hearing.
- Offering an online appeals submission portal that includes a language selection option for users.
- Actively promoting the message that choosing to use Welsh during the appeals process will not result in any delays.
- Creating and sharing digital content that encourages and supports the use of Welsh throughout the appeals process.

## Reporting 2024-2025

### Use of Services

Service Provision:	Welsh	English
Telephone Calls received	91	1973
Incoming post	29	889
Appeals Received	26	2126
Council Tax Valuation Decisions Issued	8	208

The majority of appeals submitted in Welsh during the reporting period were related to Council Tax Valuation (CTV). Of the 41 CTV hearings listed, 18 included appeals made in Welsh.

In total, 208 decisions were issued in English, compared to 8 in Welsh.

All hearings involving Welsh-language appeals were fully equipped to proceed in Welsh, with Welsh-speaking Chairs, Members, and Clerks assigned. As a result, there was no need to engage translation services.

### Website

The VTW's website needs updating and there were a couple of compliance issues raised in a recent monitoring exercise. At the date of writing this report VTW is in the process of correcting the issues identified.

### Policy Making

The Tribunal exercises its functions as set out in the prevailing legislation. The VTW does not have a remit to develop its own policy. It does, however, have the remit to set its own orders and staff policy, and when drafting these it does consider the impact of its operational decision on the delivery of its services in Welsh.

### Training Opportunities

The VTW is currently undertaking a staff survey to develop a Welsh Language Profile firstly for all employees. This initiative will be extended to all VTW Chairs and Members over the coming months to capture a comprehensive picture of Welsh language abilities across the organisation. The information gathered will help to identify training needs and inform the development of tailored training opportunities for all, regardless of their current Welsh abilities.

Over the past year, the VTW held a dedicated Welsh Awareness training day for its members, delivered by Iaith. The event was well attended and received positive feedback from participants, which reflected a strong appetite for continued language development and support. VTW is committed to continuing to raise awareness in this area.

It also developed a suite of video training material in Welsh and English which sits on the members area of its website.

## Proposed Welsh Language Initiatives

### Looking Ahead

The VTW remains committed to meeting its obligations under the Welsh Language Standards and to continually enhancing the quality of its services. In the coming reporting year, the VTW aims to build on its progress through the following planned actions:

	Action
1	Update the VTW website to ensure full and ongoing compliance with Welsh Language Standards.
2	Establish a comprehensive Welsh Language Profile for both staff and Tribunal members.
3	Actively recruit additional Welsh-speaking Tribunal staff and members.
4	Continue delivering Welsh language training for both staff and members, tailored to the varying levels of proficiency.
5	Create and share new video content via social media and the VTW website to encourage the use of Welsh throughout the Tribunal process.
6	Develop targeted media content for social media and the VTW website to support the recruitment of Welsh-speaking members.
7	Collaborate with the Valuation Office Agency to develop a joint training programme for staff across both organisations to help build confidence in handling Welsh Language Appeals without the necessity of translation services.
8	Actively promote the VTW as an organisation that promotes and encourages the use of Welsh by attending events such as the Eisteddfod and The Royal Welsh Show.
9	Continue to develop a positive working relationship with the Welsh Commissioners' compliance officers to maintain open and transparent communication.

It is hoped that these actions will reflect the VTW's ongoing commitment to supporting the Welsh language, whilst ensuring an inclusive and accessible service for all its users.