



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Action on Disability: The Right to Independent Living

## Framework and Action Plan

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.  
This document is also available in Welsh.

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## Ministerial Foreword



The Welsh Government is committed to disabled people fulfilling their potential and achieving their ambitions and dreams in line with the 'Social Model of Disability'. This requires that we work to remove barriers that get in the way of such ambitions. These certainly include physical obstacles in buildings, towns and countryside, but it also includes hurdles and blockages created by organisations and people's attitudes. Disabled people tell us time and again these are the barriers that most frustrate them and stop them living the lives they want, more than any limitations of their own bodies.

Added to this, the persistence of poverty and exclusion faced by very many disabled people in Wales is unacceptable. The evidence in recent years of the impact of the UK Government's Austerity policies and Welfare Reform is all too clear and widespread. We have heard from disabled people whose lives have been blighted and from independent observers, including UN rapporteurs, of the devastating impact on thousands of individuals, carers and families. Within the limits of our powers, the Welsh Government is determined to make progress and demonstrate leadership in tackling such systemic issues.

The UK's anticipated exit from the European Union has also had an impact. We are working with disabled people's organisations to identify the issues most likely to affect disabled people and to prepare the best possible response in uncertain times. This work will continue, however the situation develops.

Tackling these challenges requires real partnership working. In particular, we know we will only make more progress and achieve better results if we work with disabled people, so that we understand the issues properly and find solutions that work.

This framework sets out how we will go about this. It is the result of a great deal of engagement over nearly two years with disabled people and the organisations that represent them. The work and engagement has been done in workshops up and down Wales by groups of people with expertise and experience of a wide range of impairments, through hundreds of e-mails, letters and phone calls going back and forth, and through conversations in homes, workplaces, schools and communities. The framework has been further strengthened through consultation at the end of 2018. Significant changes have been made, both to the framework itself and to its action plan, as a result of the feedback received.

I want to thank everybody who has helped in this process, and give my particular thanks to the Steering Group who have overseen it, led by the Chief Executive of Disability Wales. I would also like to thank the children and young people who have contributed to the making of the framework. They have helped ensure our approach is the right one for all ages, and fit for the future.

This document replaces the previous 'Framework for Action on Independent Living' which was published by the Welsh Government in 2013. As before, this new

framework sets out how we are fulfilling our obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). It also highlights the role of key legislation including the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Underlying the whole framework is the 'Social Model of Disability', that recognises the need for society to be transformed, removing barriers so that disabled people are able to participate fully. These foundations are explained more fully in Chapter 1.

The framework focuses on key issues identified by disabled people together with the Welsh Government's own priorities. Often these are one and the same, for example the need to support disabled people who are unemployed and want to work to find jobs. The framework focuses on what the Welsh Government can do to move this agenda forward, taking account of devolved and non-devolved powers. Disabled people have told us that local action is crucial, so the framework is designed to strongly encourage Welsh Public Services, employers and organisations at every level to take note of the commitments set out in Chapter 4 and emulate them as far as possible.

The structure of this framework is new, with the main document setting out the principles, legal context and commitments which underpin all our work with and for disabled people. This is accompanied by an Action Plan which highlights the main actions currently being undertaken or led by Welsh Government and is designed to be kept up to date. The framework is available in a variety of accessible versions. Supporting material is also being developed and includes examples of good practice.

Supporting people to live their lives in the way that they choose is the right thing to do. I commend this framework to encourage action led by disabled people across the whole of Wales.



**Jane Hutt AM**  
**Deputy Minister and Chief Whip**

## Introduction

The Welsh Government's Framework for Action on Independent Living, published in 2013, set out actions to promote an inclusive and enabling society. The aim of the framework was to reduce or remove social barriers to equality and inclusion so that disabled people would have access to the same opportunities as everyone else. It identified key priority areas for action:

- advice and information, advocacy;
- personal care and support;
- person centred technology;
- employment;
- housing;
- transport; and
- access to places.

These were recognised as inter-connected: each being part of a jigsaw that needed to be complete to create a truly enabling society.

There have been many developments affecting disabled people in Wales since the previous framework was published, and the Welsh Government remains committed to working with disabled people of all ages, to challenge negative perceptions and remove barriers which prevent them participating fully in society. This new framework reflects some of the key changes and sets out this commitment afresh.

In common with the previous framework, our aim is for a broad approach that supports people with a wide range of impairments, including those who have physical or sensory impairments, learning difficulties or are mental health service users which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. It is not practical to discuss specific impairments in detail in a framework of this kind, but it is essential to be as inclusive as possible of people with hidden as well as visible impairments.

During 2017, we held a series of meetings and engagement events with disabled people, disability organisations, service providers and other stakeholders including many Welsh Government departments to review the original framework and to consider the way forward. We wanted to find out what progress has been made since 2013 and whether the key priorities for action remained the same. An online survey was also published to gather the views of disabled people and organisations across Wales. We have taken into account the views and experiences of disabled young people who took part in engagement events organised by Children in Wales. We are grateful to all those who contributed, in particular the members of the Steering Group which oversaw the whole process.

This framework has four chapters:

- Chapter 1 outlines the statutory and policy context, highlighting relevant provisions of the UN Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Rights of Children and Young Persons; the Social Model of Disability; the Equality Act 2010; the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;

the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014; Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan and Prosperity for All, the national strategy for Wales.

- Chapter 2 outlines progress and developments since the previous Framework for Action on Independent Living was published in 2013, including work now underway to strengthen and advance equality and human rights in Wales, particularly within the context of the UNCRDP (and other UN conventions).
- Chapter 3 summarises the issues raised during engagement in 2017 and in response to consultation at the end of 2018.
- Chapter 4 builds on the previous chapters and summarises the Welsh Government's strategic approach to working with and supporting disabled people. The chapter also sets out a number of commitments which will underpin our policies and action in relation to disability. These include a commitment to ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the framework, including through our Disability Equality Forum and Strategic Equality Plan Board.

The Welsh Government consulted on the draft framework and action plan at the end of 2018. 67 responses were received, many of them on behalf of networks and membership organisations. In addition, over 100 people attended consultation events organised by Disability Wales and Leonard Cheshire. A report on the consultation has been published and is available on the Welsh Government website.

As a result of the feedback received important changes have been made, both to the main framework document and to its accompanying action plan. The main changes include:

- Updating the framework to reflect the Welsh Government's commitment to commence the socio-economic duty in Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010 and to explore options to advance and strengthen equality and human rights in Wales, including whether to embed further UN Conventions in Welsh law.
- Strengthening references to the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and related support for independent living.
- Expanding Chapter 2 to include recent developments to support disabled people, highlighting some key elements of the action plan.
- Revising Chapter 3 to reflect feedback received through the latest consultation as well as the 2017 engagement events.
- Expanding Chapter 4 to show how the commitments set out in that chapter will be combined to represent the Welsh Government's strategic approach.

This framework is supported by a range of other tools and materials, including an action plan which will be kept up to date to reflect changing circumstances and new developments. Similarly, a variety of good practice examples and case studies will be made available and refreshed from time to time. Accessible versions of the framework, a glossary of key terms and FAQs will be provided.

In the previous framework, local service providers and stakeholders were identified as having a key role in contributing to its aims. While the Welsh Government provides national leadership, for example by means of our Strategic Equality Plan, action at a local level is essential to create inclusive and enabling communities and really make a difference for individuals in their day-to-day lives. It is vital that local authorities, local health boards, NHS trusts, the third sector, businesses and other service providers work co-productively with disabled people and representative organisations led by disabled people to identify problems and solutions and make the most of opportunities to improve services.

The importance of this local action and engagement was strongly reaffirmed through consultation and by the framework Steering Group. It is therefore Welsh Government's clear expectation that all Welsh public service providers and many organisations and individuals in the private and third sectors will actively support this framework and its accompanying action plan. In particular, we encourage others to adopt the approach and commitments set out in Chapter 4 of the framework and put them into practice in organisations, services and communities throughout Wales.

## Chapter 1 – Overarching Principles

This chapter outlines the main international treaties, UK and Welsh legislation which underpin our action on disability (further significant legislation is mentioned in Chapter 2). This chapter also highlights Welsh Government’s main strategies and policies including Prosperity for All: the national strategy for Wales and our Strategic Equality Plan. The chapter also includes an explanation of the Social Model of Disability, which is fundamental to our approach to enabling disabled people to live independent lives. The last section of the chapter recognises the crucial importance of continual engagement with disabled people.

### What does Welsh Government mean by “Independent Living”?

Independent living means all disabled people having the same **freedom, dignity, choice and control** as other citizens at home, work, in education and in the community. It does not mean having to live by yourself or do everything for yourself. It means rights to practical assistance and support to participate fully in society on the same basis as others as well as to voice choice and control over how this is provided.

It is about ensuring people of all ages and from all communities are able to maintain independent living, enjoy well-being and access appropriate support when and how they need it.

### United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The actions of the Welsh Government must be compatible with international obligations, as set out in section 82 of the Government of Wales Act 2006, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities<sup>1</sup> (UNCRPD).

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

The UNCRPD is an international treaty which promotes, protects and ensures the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by disabled people. The articles of the Convention cover a wide range of areas including accessibility, independent living, education, health, and work and employment.

With regard to independent living, Article 19 (Living independently and being included in the community) includes reference:

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<sup>1</sup> The Convention is also widely referred to in the UK as the ‘UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People’ (UNCRDP), reflecting the terminology preferred by many disabled people and the organisations which represent them, in line with the Social Model of Disability. The UN has accepted this usage, including at the most recent examination of the UK’s compliance with the Convention in 2017. This Framework accordingly refers throughout to “disabled people” rather than “people with disabilities”.

- To disabled people having an equal right to live in and take part in the community.
- To disabled people having the right to the same choice and control as non-disabled people.
- That government recognises that disabled people should have these rights.

In August 2017 the United Kingdom was examined by the United Nations on its compliance with the Convention. Representatives from the Welsh Government travelled to Geneva for the examination which was led by the UN Committee on the Rights of Disabled People. Over two days the Committee scrutinised the United Kingdom's implementation of the Convention and highlighted several areas of concern where improvement is needed.

The UN Committee published its Concluding Observations following the examination. There were no specific recommendations for the Welsh Government, although there were a number of general recommendations to take forward in Wales.

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=C\\_RPD%2fC%2fGBR%2fCO%2f1&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=C_RPD%2fC%2fGBR%2fCO%2f1&Lang=en)

This framework and its accompanying action plan set out how the Welsh Government will be taking forward the principles of the Convention, taking account of the UN Committee's recommendations where appropriate.

In December 2018 the Welsh Government began a process to explore ways and means to strengthen and advance equality and human rights in Wales in the context of the UK's anticipated departure from the European Union. This will begin with the commencement in Wales of the socio-economic duty in Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010. In developing guidance for this duty in Wales the intention is to adopt a broad rights-based approach, taking account of many aspects of equality and how they interact with each other. Nevertheless, the needs and rights of disabled people will remain at the heart of this process, which was stimulated in part by calls by Disability Wales and other stakeholders to embed the UNCRDP into Welsh law.

## **The Social Model of Disability**

The Social Model of Disability is well-established and enshrined in the UNCRDP. The National Assembly adopted the model in 2002, making Wales one of the first countries in the world to do so. This framework signals a renewed commitment to the model: our aim is to embed the model visibly and effectively across all areas of work, including as an employer, and to encourage Welsh public services and other agencies to do the same.

The Social Model makes an important distinction between 'impairment' and 'disability'. It recognises that people with impairments<sup>2</sup> are disabled by barriers that

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<sup>2</sup> Impairments are functional limitations experienced by a person. They may or may not be lifelong and they may or may not arise from illness or injury. They may affect a person's

commonly exist in society. These barriers include negative attitudes, and physical and organisational barriers, which can prevent disabled people's inclusion and participation in all walks of life.

- According to the Social Model of Disability, impairment is what has historically been referred to as a “disability” or a health condition. For many (but not all) disabled people, their impairment is a significant part of their life and may form part of their personal identity. For some people, their impairment may require considerable management and they may need ongoing medical support. Experience of impairment is personal. Everyone's experience is different. That experience is always valid and always important.
- Disability, by contrast, is the inequality, disadvantage, disempowerment or discrimination which may affect people with impairments as a result of barriers to access and inclusion. For example, a staircase is a barrier to a wheelchair user; providing a lift removes that barrier. Just a few other examples of barriers include the lack of British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation facilities or a loop system, the lack of braille, large print or audio information, the lack of flexible and part time working opportunities, the lack of appropriate social support or lack of understanding of mental health issues or autistic spectrum condition. Disability is therefore something which affects people with impairments but is different from impairment. Disability is something which disables someone with an impairment. Barriers can be removed. If you remove the barrier then you remove the disability.

The UNCRDP states that “disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”<sup>3</sup>. If fully realised, the Social Model would transform society, removing barriers and meaning that disabled people would be able to participate fully in society.

The historic approach to disability in the UK has been based on the Medical Model of Disability (in which a person's impairment is seen to be the thing which disables them). This means adopting the Social Model of Disability requires a fundamental shift in our attitude, culture and how we work. By adopting an approach based on barrier removal – and working with disabled people to identify solutions – we can create better policy and better services for everyone. The Welsh Government is committed to making this cultural shift but acknowledges that work will be required over time to ensure all aspects of our work are brought fully in line with the Social Model of Disability.

### **The Barriers that People Face**

The vast majority of barriers that disabled people face can be broadly categorised in to one of the following areas:

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appearance and / or the way they function or communicate and / or they may cause a range of difficulties including pain and fatigue.

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph (e) of the preamble to the UNCRPD.

<p><b>Attitudinal Barriers</b></p>	<p>The attitudes of individual people can help to create the barriers people face. The decisions you make, the language you use, and your behaviour can either <b>create</b> or <b>remove</b> barriers. Attitudinal barriers can affect all aspects of disabled people’s participation in society.</p> <p>In addition, actions which (even unintentionally) isolate or exclude disabled people can cause significant adverse impact on mental health and personal well-being.</p>
<p><b>Institutional Barriers</b></p>	<p>Policies and procedures can prevent the full participation of disabled people within education, the workplace and the wider community, whether or not that is their intention.</p> <p>Examples of policies which support the full participation of disabled people may include policies on reasonable adjustments and opportunities for part time and flexible education or employment. The lack of such policies, or the failure to implement them, can cause significant barriers to equality.</p>
<p><b>Communication Barriers</b></p>	<p>There are many types of communication barriers – for example, the use of inaccessible language, failure to provide a British Sign Language interpreter or information in alternative formats or placing signage at a level too high for wheelchair users.</p> <p>Communication barriers affect all aspects of disabled people’s lives. For example, if information boards at train stations are not accompanied by audio announcements, people with sight loss may not be aware of platform changes, causing them to miss their train. This compromises their ability to travel, limiting their equality and their ability to arrive on time for education, appointments or employment.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Barriers</b></p>	<p>The more obvious examples of environmental barriers include failure to provide full and appropriate building access to wheelchair users. Examples of less obvious barriers include not thinking about how disabled people would get to a venue for a meeting, designing rooms with minimal contrast making it hard for people who are blind or partially sighted or have Usher syndrome to take full part in any activities in those rooms or being unaware of the need for some disabled people to have reduced light or noise levels.</p>

**United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**

The UNCRC is an international agreement that protects the human rights of children under the age of 18. It was ratified by the UN General Assembly in 1989. In 1991, the United Kingdom formally agreed to ensure every child in the UK has all the rights listed in the convention. The Welsh Government has used the Convention as the basis for policy making for children and young people in Wales since 2004.

There are 54 articles in the Convention. Articles 1-42 set out how children should be treated while Articles 43-45 are about how adults and governments should work together to make sure all children are entitled to their rights.

Article 23 provides that children who have any kind of impairment should have appropriate care and support so that they can lead full and independent lives.

In 2011 Wales became the first country in the UK to incorporate children's rights into domestic law with the introduction of the *Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011*. The Measure embeds the UNCRC and the optional protocols into Welsh law through a requirement being placed on specified bodies to have regard to the Convention when carrying out functions.

The Measure requires the Welsh Ministers to consider children's rights when exercising any of their functions. The Children's Rights Scheme 2014 sets out the arrangements that are in place to comply with this duty and reflects our on-going commitment to children's rights.

<https://documents.hf.wales.gov.uk/id:A7178802/document/versions/published>

## **Equality Act 2010**

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). In summary, this places a duty on public bodies to have due regard in exercising their functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Building on the Act itself, distinctive Welsh Regulations<sup>4</sup> laid a further foundation for taking equality forward in Wales. Under these Regulations, listed bodies must prepare and publish equality objectives every four years. In developing their equality objectives, authorities must involve people who represent the interests of people who share one or more of the protected characteristics and have an interest in the way that the authority carries out its functions.

Taken together, these statutory requirements provide a basis for local scrutiny and challenge, and for public bodies to work co-productively with disabled people to improve local services. It also provides a way of identifying particular needs or patterns of disadvantage and coming up with workable solutions to address them.

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<sup>4</sup> The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

## **Intersectionality**

Intersectionality is a word used to recognise and describe the overlapping nature of different social categories such as gender, race, and class. It is very relevant to this framework because the lives of disabled people are often affected by other personal characteristics and circumstances such as age, ethnicity, income, and sexuality. It is generally unhelpful to define people by any single characteristic, whether that be an impairment or anything else. On the contrary, it is usually very important to take account of all the issues which may affect them.

With this in mind, it is very important that disability action policy is closely linked to other aspects of equality, including other protected characteristics (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) and, perhaps most importantly, issues relating to income and poverty. This could mean targeting resources to those in greatest need and ensuring services take account of the complex ways in which different factors such as disability, race and gender can combine to exacerbate problems or create additional barriers which must be overcome so that individuals can fulfil their potential.

## **Co-production**

The term “co-production”, in the context of public services, means involving stakeholders in the creation of public policies and services. The Co-production Network for Wales uses the following definition:

“Co-production is an asset-based approach to public services that enables people providing, and people receiving services to share power and responsibility, and to work together in equal, reciprocal and caring relationships. It creates opportunities for people to access support when they need it, and to contribute to social change.

Co-production is underpinned by 5 principles:

1. Value all participants, and build on their strengths.
2. Develop networks of mutual support.
3. Do what matters for all the people involved.
4. Build relationships of trust; share power and responsibility.
5. People can be change makers, and organisations enable this.”

Co-production is an important concept for this framework because the Welsh Government recognises that services cannot be improved to fully meet the needs of disabled people unless they are actively involved in the design and delivery of those services.

This approach is also fully in line with the Welsh Government’s commitment to Social Partnership and the principle of “Nothing About Us Without Us”, which recognises that no policy should be decided without the full and active participation of members

of the group affected by the policy, as well as the involvement and collaboration principle of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

### **Duty to Make Reasonable Adjustments**

The Equality Act 2010 also provides that employers and service providers have a duty, by means of making reasonable adjustments, to remove disadvantages faced by disabled people, in order to ensure that disabled people can access jobs, education and services as easily as non-disabled people. This is known as the 'duty to make reasonable adjustments'. This duty applies to the Welsh Government itself as well as public services in Wales.

This duty effectively complements the Social Model of Disability and can cover, for example:

- Ensuring communications and information are accessible to everyone;
- Introducing more flexible organisational practices;
- Removing or reducing physical barriers in the environment; or
- Providing aids or equipment to support an employee to do their job.

What is reasonable can depend on a number of factors, but the aim should be, as far as possible, to remove or reduce any substantial disadvantage faced by a disabled person as compared with a non-disabled person.

### **The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 came into force in April 2016. The Act requires specified public bodies and the Welsh Government to carry out sustainable development. This includes working in accordance with the sustainable development principle (known generally as the five ways of working) which include the need to have regard to the balance between short term and longer term needs, to involve persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, to prevent problems and to take a more collaborative, or joined-up, approach with others – helping to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future.

This is intended to support an integrated approach to public service delivery, and a focus on giving people and communities a voice in how their services are provided.

The Act enshrines the need to deliver sustainability through co-operation, and to develop solutions that will stand the test of time.

The Public Services Boards established under the Act take an integrated and collaborative approach to service provision, with public services working together to assess the well-being of their area and identify shared objectives. Boards are required to consider the state of well-being of people in the area, and persons with a common protected characteristic are one of the categories they are encouraged to consider. Statutory guidance sets out clear expectations that Boards should consider the impact of their work on different people within the community and reminds members of their individual duties under the Equality Act 2010.

## **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014**

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 came into force in April 2016 and provides the statutory framework to deliver the Welsh Government's commitment to transform social services in Wales to improve the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support. The Act sets out a definition of well-being for people who need care and support and enacts the principle that everyone has the right to be heard as an individual to shape the decisions that affect them, and to have control over their day to day lives. The Act also defines local authorities' social services functions and gives effect to a requirement, through its Part 2 code of practice, that local authorities have due regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons when exercising their social services functions in relation to disabled people who need care and support and disabled carers who need support.

## **Prosperity for All: the National Strategy for Wales**

Prosperity for All – the National Strategy published in September 2017 sets out the Welsh Government's key commitments between now and 2021, under four cross-cutting themes:

- Prosperous and Secure - developing an economy that spreads opportunity and prosperity and tackles inequality.
- Healthy and Active - improving health and well-being and working to shift the emphasis from treatment to prevention.
- Ambitious and Learning - encouraging lifelong learning and aspiration.
- United and Connected – building the links to bring people together, facilitate economic growth, and make Wales a more confident nation.

'Prosperity for All' places our commitments in a long-term context, and sets out how they fit with the work of the wider Welsh public service to lay the foundations for achieving our aims.

The single cross-government approach set out in 'Prosperity for All' has been developed in order to better understand how commitments link together, how we can combine them with core services that we deliver; how we can focus our efforts on the things that matter; and how we can work differently with our partners to have a greater impact.

It supports our ongoing aims to promote independent living for disabled people and can offer a more effective solution by tackling issues at both national and local level. One of the key messages highlighted by disabled people and their organisations during our recent review of the framework was that, while the Welsh Government's legislative and policy framework is strong, local implementation and delivery can be inconsistent.

The action plan which accompanies this framework is organised around the four themes of 'Prosperity for All'.

## **Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan**

The Welsh Government published a revised Strategic Equality Plan in 2016 setting out our Equality Objectives for 2016-2020, and the actions we are taking to meet them. [Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives 2016 - 2020](#)

The Equality Objectives were developed following in-depth engagement and consultation with protected groups across Wales. The purpose of the Equality Objectives is to strengthen the Welsh Government's performance of the public sector equality duty and ensure the Welsh Government is making year on year progress in advancing equality and inclusion for all protected groups.

During 2019, the Welsh Government will be consulting on its Strategic Equality Plan for 2020-24. Our intention is that, in common with the previous plan, our approach will take close account of the work of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The Commission's report 'Is Wales Fairer? 2018', provides a comprehensive overview of the issues and evidence relating to equality in Wales. The report is arranged thematically, with six main chapters covering education, work, living standards, health, justice and security, and participation in society. The Welsh Government's new Strategic Equality Plan is likely to adopt a similar approach. It will also set out overarching principles which should govern all our work to promote equality. In addition, there will be a clear focus on how actions support people with protected characteristics, including disabled people.

## **Ongoing Engagement**

This framework has been developed from the outset through direct engagement with disabled people in Wales and the organisations that represent them. Their contributions are reflected in detail, particularly in Chapter 3. These messages have helped us to identify the main barriers to independent living that exist in each of these areas of public service delivery.

The Welsh Government is committed to having meaningful engagement. If we're engaging, we're listening. There are a number of ways we will continue to engage including online, communication channels, formal consultation and community engagement.

Engaging with people is the only way of knowing that services are providing what people need and want and can generate better ideas and more innovative approaches. Wherever possible we will seek to "co-produce" our policies and programmes. That is, we will work with stakeholders including, and most importantly, disabled people to design, deliver and evaluate new initiatives.

## Chapter 2 – What progress has been made?

### i) LEGISLATION

There have been significant developments at a national level since the previous Framework was published in 2013, including the enactment of:

- The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014  
<https://socialcare.wales/hub/sswbact>
- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015  
<https://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act/?lang=en>
- The Housing (Wales) Act 2014  
<http://senedd.assembly.wales/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?lId=8220>  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/7/contents/enacted>
- The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016  
<http://senedd.assembly.wales/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?lId=12055>  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/1/contents/enacted>

All of these Acts contain provisions which support independent living. The ‘Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014’ in particular provides the statutory framework to deliver the Welsh Government’s commitment to transform social services in Wales to improve the well-being of people who need care and support and carers who need support. The Act sets out a definition of well-being for people who need care and support. Everyone, adult or child, has the right to be heard; to shape the decisions that affect them’ and to have control over their day-to-day lives.

The code of practice in relation to Part 2 of the Act provides guidance to local authorities on their duties in this regard. This code of practice requires local authorities, when exercising social services functions in relation to disabled people who need care and support and disabled carers who need support, to have due regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons. The Act also extends the eligibility and accessibility of Direct Payments, which provide an important mechanism by which people can exercise choice, voice and control to decide how to meet their needs for care and support and achieve their personal wellbeing outcomes.

The ‘Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015’ (see also Chapter 1) sets out seven well-being goals - for national government, local government, local health boards and other specified public bodies. It also specifies the ways in which these bodies must work, and work together, to improve the well-being of Wales. This includes the five ‘ways of working’ to guide the Welsh public services in delivering for people (as set out in further detail above).

The ‘Housing (Wales) Act 2014’ included provisions aimed at modernising and improving conditions in the private rented housing sector and for improving the practices of landlords and letting agents. Private landlords are now required to

register, and where they are carrying out lettings or property management work to become licensed, or to appoint licensed agents to carry out such work. As well as being required to be licensed, agents are required to be registered.

It is intended this will improve standards of letting and management practice in the private rented sector.

The 'Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016', which is currently being implemented, will provide a simplified legal framework for renting based on two types of occupation contract, which will replace the majority of existing tenancy arrangements. This will apply to social housing provided by local authorities and housing associations and to rentals from private landlords. Model written statements of contract will be provided. This will make it is easier for disabled and non-disabled people to understand their rights and responsibilities.

In addition, the Act provides a new form of occupation contract for any person who occupies premises in conjunction with the provision of particular support services, including supporting people who require additional assistance to achieve independent living for example because of cognitive or intellectual impairments. Additionally, the Act will extend succession rights to carers, for which current housing legislation makes no provision.

### **Community Benefits**

The Welsh Government's Community Benefits policy encourages the use of "social requirements" in the conditions of contracts, to achieve value for money by delivering the very widest social, economic and environmental benefits in the course of securing the goods, services or works required by the public sector in Wales.

A primary objective of the Community Benefits approach is to create opportunities for employment and training for 'disadvantaged' people, which includes disabled people. The policy also encourages supply chain engagement including with Supported Businesses who employ, train and help disadvantaged people move into mainstream employment.

### **Reserved Contracting**

The 'Public Contracts Regulations 2015' include two reserved contracting provisions specifically designed to help public sector buyers and those bodies who have to comply with these Regulations to address social inclusion goals by increasing employment and training opportunities, providing greater independence for disadvantaged people. Reserving a contract under either provision allows buyers to discriminate in favour of businesses with a social purpose. Only those businesses that meet the relevant criteria are allowed to tender. In particular, regulation 20 (Reserved contracts) is designed to support employment and training opportunities for disabled or disadvantaged people.

<http://prp.gov.wales/docs/prp/toolkit/150226publiccontractsregulations2015.pdf>

## ii) OTHER POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

Alongside these legislative developments there have been numerous Welsh Government and other programmes, policies and projects in recent years which have supported the aims of the previous Framework, including:

- The Better Advice: Better Lives scheme, which helps support and maximise income for families with disabled children, and helps them to access benefits.
- [All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information with Sensory Loss](#). The aim of these Standards is to set out the standards of service delivery that people with sensory loss should expect to be met when they access healthcare in Wales.
- The Design Commission for Wales has produced a guide to on-site analysis for developers and local planning authorities. Undertaking good site analysis should lead to early decisions being made to ensure that any proposed development is accessible to all. [Inclusive Design in the Built Environment](#)
- Carrying out a Systems Review of the aids and adaptations system that supports disabled people and older people to live independently in their own home. The outcome from the review will inform future aids and adaptation policy to streamline and simplify the current process. The final recommendations are expected to be received before the end of 2019.
- Publication of the Welsh Bus Quality Standard aimed at ensuring that the quality of local bus services which passengers can reasonably expect is consistently and universally available throughout Wales, and that local bus operators are encouraged to improve the quality of the services they provide to passengers. The Standard, which is voluntary, includes accessibility requirements. [Voluntary Welsh Bus Quality Standard](#)
- The Communities for Work programme started in June 2015. The programme provides one-to-one tailored support to individuals through a triage system in which advisers, mentors and other relevant partners work together to assist that person into employment. As at May 2019, the programme had engaged with 21,284 people, of whom more than 6,079 had work limiting health conditions and at least 2,464 were disabled people. The programme has supported over 7,680 individuals into employment.
- The Parents, Childcare and Employment (PaCE) programme is funded jointly by Welsh Government and the ESF, working in partnership with DWP. PaCE targets economically inactive parents aged 25 and over, and parents aged 16-24 who are NEET. All parents enrolled onto PaCE will have childcare as their main barrier preventing them accessing education, employment or training opportunities. As at April 2019, the programme had engaged with 3,951 people of whom, more than 494 had work limiting health conditions and at least 243 were disabled people. The programme has supported over 1,530 individuals into employment. [Parents Childcare and Employment](#)

- Communities for Work Plus, commenced in April 2018 and is a £12 million per annum Welsh Government funded programme designed to support the continued delivery of Communities for Work and extend its reach. It provides intensive mentoring and support to both engage participants and address the complex barriers to employment experienced by those furthest from the labour market. It enables employability support to be provided to people either in, or at risk of, poverty who are not eligible for Communities for Work, PaCE or other regional ESF Programmes. As of June 2019, the programme had engaged with 9,953 people and supported 2,988 individuals into employment. End of March 2019 data showed that in the first year of CfW+ Programme delivery, 8% of CfW+ participants declared a disability and 21% of participants declared a work limiting health condition.
- The [Enabling Wales Project](#) was funded by Welsh Government and delivered by Disability Wales, co-productively with the Wales Co-operative Centre and Dewis Centre for Independent Living. The project worked with disabled adults and young people across Wales to raise awareness and understanding of disability equality and rights. In addition, two disabled people's organisations, one in Ceredigion and one in Flintshire, were supported to become Centres for Independent Living, to be run as self-sustaining social enterprises.
- The Children and Young People's National Participation standards which identify seven key topics that all workers should be aware of when working with children and young people in Wales. These are:
  - Information – this must be easy for children and young people to understand and make an informed decision.
  - Choice – children and young people have the right to choose to be involved in and work on things that are important to them.
  - No Discrimination - children and young people are all different and you have the right to be treated fairly.
  - Respect – children and young people have the right to have a say. Their opinions are important and must be respected.
  - Children and young people will get something out of it - they have the right to learn and be the best they can be.
  - Feedback – children and young people have the right to know what difference their involvement has made.
  - Working better – those who make decisions that affect children and young people should put children's rights at the centre of everything they do.

The standards have been ratified by the Welsh Government and are underpinned by the UNCRC and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that puts the involvement of children at the heart of improving their well-being. The full version of the standards are available here: [Children and Young People's National Participation Standards](#)

The standards have been adapted to make them more accessible for disabled children and young people under the name of [‘Having a voice, having a choice’](#).

## Chapter 3 – Issues raised through Engagement and Consultation

While the progress that has been made in recent years has been welcomed, there is clearly much more to do before we are in a position where disabled people have access to the same opportunities as everyone else.

In this chapter we have summarised the main issues which were raised during the series of meetings, engagement events and online survey which took place in 2017, as well as the consultation on the framework and action plan undertaken in late 2018.

The issues listed here and the actions in the next chapter are set out under the four cross-cutting themes in ‘Prosperity for All’, the National Strategy. This will ensure that the actions align with Welsh Government priorities.

### PROSPEROUS AND SECURE

The aim is to drive a Welsh economy which spreads opportunity and tackles inequality, delivering individual and national prosperity. This will enable people to fulfil their ambitions and enhance their well-being through secure and sustainable employment; break down the barriers many face to getting a job; and create the right environment for businesses to grow and thrive.

The Annual Population Survey indicates that during the year ending 31 March 2018, 45.2% of disabled people aged 16 to 64 were in employment, compared to 80.3% of non-disabled people<sup>5</sup> (a link to regularly updated statistics on the economic activity of disabled people is included in Annex 1). The unemployment statistics for some groups are much higher e.g. for people with learning difficulties, reflecting the significant barriers to work that exist for some disabled people.

#### Issues raised during engagement and consultation:

**Employment** – Not all disabled people are able to work in paid employment; however, all should have the opportunity to lead meaningful lives. Disabled people told us that among the main barriers to employment are the negative attitudes of some employers and co-workers. Too often, the expectations of other people are too low, and this limits disabled people’s ability to fulfil their potential. It also means that employers are missing out on the benefits that employing disabled people can bring, in terms of their experience, abilities and skills. It was suggested that there needs to be a change in the tendency to only offer disabled people unpaid voluntary work, with calls for there to be real opportunities for disabled people to do meaningful paid jobs. Welsh Government and public sector employers were cited as having an important role to play in this, plus there was support for the appointment of Disability Champions and the introduction of disability award schemes.

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<sup>5</sup> Stats Wales (2018). Summary of economic activity in Wales by year and disabled status, from April 2013. Accessed 19/09/18. URL: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Disability/summaryofeconomicactivityinwales-by-year-disabledstatus-fromapril2013>

Disabled people also told us how important employment is to them, not only for supporting independent living, but to improve their confidence, health and well-being. The social networks formed through being in work are valued highly and contribute to their well-being.

Applying for jobs can be a challenge and some disabled people report that they need support to navigate inaccessible online job searches and understand information about jobs. Physical barriers to buildings and transport can limit employment opportunities for some. Other barriers include relatively low qualification levels, and a lack of opportunity for skills training and apprenticeships. Some respondents had attended schemes to increase their employability but were disappointed that there remained a lack of employment opportunities for them. Young disabled people want to work and given the opportunity they can coproduce low cost and creative solutions to accessing employment.

There was also a general lack of awareness, both from employers and potential employees, of the support that is available, for example through the Access to Work scheme, which can fund a range of adjustments to support disabled people to get or keep a job. Increased training provision was called for to help rectify this, plus there was a call for young disabled people leaving school or college to be formally signposted to specialist disability employment support available in their local communities.

**Housing** – There is a general lack of accessible housing, especially in the private rented sector which is often used by young disabled people wishing to live independently for the first time. Instead the choices of where to live is based on what vacancies exist within services. We heard of an example of a 21-year old having to move into an older people's housing complex because that was the only accessible accommodation available. More joined up working between planning, housing and social service departments could help to improve situations like this, with it being suggested that disabled people and carers should be directly involved in this.

The lack of suitable housing also limits the ability of disabled people to move around Wales and can also affect well-being and limit educational and employment opportunities. One physically disabled student was unable to move in with his friends as the property was inaccessible. He felt isolated and also had to pay higher rental costs for accessible accommodation.

Together with accessible housing, the need for affordable housing was a common theme, with there being calls for the Welsh Government to influence the Affordable Housing Review, as well as to assist disabled people with accruing a deposit for a home and managing mortgage payments, given rental costs do not compare favourably with the cost of mortgages.

Accessible Housing Registers were called for on several occasions, with it being suggested that information on housing options and benefits needs to be up-to-date and easy to understand/access.

Some people referred to the “bedroom tax” and how it had forced them to either remain living with parents or move into accommodation that was not suitable for their needs.

Private developers often do not take accessibility into account when building new homes even though, with an ageing population, there is a growing demand for accessible properties. The use of both incentives and enforcement were suggested as possible remedies to this. There was also a call for it to be made easier for disabled renters to hold their landlords to account in the face of discrimination.

Where adaptations need to be made to existing homes, it is vital that service providers ensure they are fit for purpose by including the end user in the design and decision making process. We heard of examples where people were not consulted about changes to their home and the adaptations had subsequently caused injury. Necessary adaptations must also be made quickly and so there is a need for bureaucracy to be eliminated.

## **HEALTHY AND ACTIVE**

The aim is to improve health and well-being in Wales, for individuals, families and communities, helping us to achieve our ambition of prosperity for all, taking significant steps to shift our approach from treatment to prevention.

We also want Wales to have a high quality and sustainable social support sector, with preventative and integrated services in the community, supporting people to lead independent lives.

A review of evidence in inequalities in access to healthcare services for disabled people in Wales found evidence of inequality in a number of areas, including life expectancy, health literacy, accessible communications, and mental health services. <https://gov.wales/review-evidence-inequalities-access-health-services-wales>.

The National Survey for Wales 2016-17 included the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS), a scale of self-assessed questions that measures mental wellbeing. Scores range from 14 to 70, with a higher score suggesting stronger mental wellbeing. Individuals who reported a long-standing illness, impairment or infirmity had a significantly lower WEMWBS score (48.5) than those that did not (52.8).<sup>6</sup>

### **Issues raised during engagement and consultation:**

Disabled people felt that they should be able to achieve their potential in all areas of life, supported by an easily accessible health and social care system. Services are not always as accessible as they could be. For example, people with sensory loss require adjustments to the way services are delivered in order to ensure individual privacy, accurate diagnosis and access to the right treatment/care. Communication support is vital, and patients should not have to rely on their support staff, Carers or

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<sup>6</sup> Welsh Government (2017). *National Survey for Wales, 2016-17: Mental Wellbeing*. Cardiff: Welsh Government. URL: <https://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2017/171010-national-survey-2016-17-mental-wellbeing-en.pdf>

family members to act as intermediaries, either when making appointments or during medical consultations. The 10 minute slot for a doctor's appointment is not long enough for young people with learning difficulties to understand what the doctors discuss with them.

It was suggested that new technology, such as a digital online platform, could be very useful in improving service delivery in many aspects of health and social support, although it should not be used as a substitute for personal contact where that was needed, with concerns raised in relation to ensuring disabled people are not left behind should technology become more widely used.

A common theme raised during consultation was for health and social care to be more integrated and streamlined, with calls for interagency working and the pooling of budgets.

Some disabled young people report they are being denied access to sexual health services because they are a disabled person, even though they should have the same right to access this information as any other young person.

Disabled adults, children and young people are more likely to report poor mental health and well-being than their non-disabled counterparts. However, disabled people told us that if they are not in crisis, they are unable to access support. More needs to be done in terms of 'preventative support' that could be put in place prior to a crisis point that requires input from the social care sector/health services.

Activities designed to promote social inclusion (e.g. dance clubs, social evenings) are being cut because of local budget pressures. This was seen as short-sighted as it has a disproportionate impact on disabled people, resulting in negative long term impacts on health and well-being.

Some disabled people need assistance with personal hygiene needs. This can make them vulnerable and it is therefore important that they are given accessible information about appropriate and non-appropriate touch. Changes in staff unsettle disabled people and they are happiest when they are able to build a relationship with their support workers.

Transition to adulthood is a challenge for disabled young people. Young disabled people say they do not know where to go for support when they want to move out of their parents' home. Often parents are carers too and may be reluctant to give up that role meaning the young person is worried about damaging their relationship. Young disabled people need access to groups, advocacy, or workshops to educate and signpost them to the right support. Local information on services must be up-to-date, easy to understand/access and available in a range of formats.

We heard that cuts to social care provision have led to lower allocations for Direct Payments which means disabled adults and young people are becoming increasingly isolated and impact to their well-being compromised. Parents who have been assessed under the Social Services and Well-being Act as carers have reported mental health issues. In some cases, while they have been allocated the support provided for in the Act, services have not been available at the time needed e.g. some say they are having to pre-book 6 weeks in advance for respite care. There

were multiple calls for increased funding for health and social care. In addition it was suggested increased financial assistance should be made available where need is identified such as, for example, providing Lifeline and Falls monitors free of charge to those who are at risk.

There was a call for training for disabled people, including children and young people and their carers on their rights and responsibilities. For example, parents are unclear on whether they can refuse to provide their child's medical needs if they are uncomfortable doing so and whether social workers have a right to look around their home when there are no child protection issues.

As part of the Children in Wales Getting More Involved in Social Care project, young disabled people train professionals and other young disabled people on rights and participation. The rights based project has also developed an app which informs disabled children and young people about their rights and how to exercise them. They can then have voice and control in the assessment and care planning process and achieve outcomes that enable well-being.

## **AMBITIOUS AND LEARNING**

The aim is to instil in everyone a passion to learn throughout their lives, inspiring them with the ambition to be the best they possibly can be. A prosperous Wales needs creative, highly skilled and adaptable people, so our education from the earliest age will be the foundation for a lifetime of learning and achievement.

In 2017, the overall proportion of children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) in Wales who achieved at least five A\*- C GCSEs, including English or Welsh First Language and mathematics, was 20.6%, whereas it was 66.6% for children without ALN<sup>7</sup> (a link to regularly updated statistics on the academic achievement of pupils with ALN is provided in Annex 1).

Reliable, well-integrated information and advice services have an important role to play in educating people on their rights and helping them to make informed choices. This can also contribute to well-being by helping people to help themselves, and can prevent problems from escalating.

### **Issues raised during engagement and consultation:**

**Education** - There is still an assumption by some people, including some education providers and employers, that disabled people cannot or do not want to learn or be employed, and there was a call for educators to encourage and support disabled children to aspire and achieve. Some disabled children and young people report that they are just encouraged to learn life skills in school and college rather than obtain academic qualifications, whereas they want to do a combination of both. There was

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<sup>7</sup> Welsh Government (2018). *Academic achievement by pupil characteristic*. Accessed 19/09/18. URL: <https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-pupil-characteristics/?lang=en>

specific reference to the need for disabled children to receive more inspiring and motivating support to reach for bigger dreams and goals in terms of careers.

It is important that disabled children and their families have the right support in the very early years so they are ready to take advantage of education. For example, children with vision or mobility impairments, need to learn how to move around safely in their environment so that they develop the confidence needed to go to school. There was a call for more to be done to integrate children into mainstream schools at an early stage, with an emphasis on schools providing an inclusive environment so that disabled children are not viewed as being 'other', but rather are fully accepted as part of society.

Friendships are crucial to disabled children's enjoyment of school. Bullying is a significant issue in both mainstream and ALN schools. Some schools do have effective strategies for dealing with bullies but there are still too many cases where nothing really changes even when staff intervene. It was suggested there is a need to update the Respecting Others Anti-bullying Guidance or its intentions to make healthy relationships education a mandatory part of the new schools curriculum.

Changes to the educational system were proposed, with disabled children having access to a range of learning styles, such as tactile, auditory or visual. A flexible, one to one person centred, package that is tailored to the individual needs is required. For instance, an hour long lesson is too long for some disabled children, for whom short bursts of learning can be more effective. Inclusivity league tables for schools and colleges might allow disabled people and their guardians to make an informed choice about where to study or train. A quicker response to move a disabled child to a more vocational programme if it is identified that academia is a barrier for them is essential in order for them to still find a passion and a way of entering the world of work once education is completed.

Physical barriers also still exist in many schools across Wales, and this might lead to disabled children having to attend ALN schools rather than join their friends and siblings in mainstream education.

There are limited progression routes for some young disabled people, to move into further education, volunteering or employment. Young people with learning difficulties told us that work experience is not usually offered to them, and even when it is, there were often no progression opportunities. This means that young disabled people can feel they have little support and very few options after leaving school.

Disabled adults said that further education and adult education classes have been cut, limiting their options for learning as well as social interaction. Friendships are very important to well-being but, as a result of classes closing, opportunities to build and sustain friendships are now more limited.

Some also thought this might lead to fewer disabled people going on to Higher Education because they can take longer to reach the qualification requirements and need FE classes to support that step. Disabled Students Allowance was also cited as being crucial for many disabled people to access Higher Education in an equitable manner.

The issue of funding was raised, with there being calls for money to be made available for schools to purchase tablets, smartphones and computers, plus funding to facilitate community learning was called for.

**Information and advice** services are increasingly available online, and while this makes them more accessible for some, others may need support to access them. Not everyone has computers, or the skills to use them. It was stressed that no disabled person should lose out from technological advances.

Others need accessible formats or help to find answers to specific queries. When people have questions about the information they read online, there should be someone they can go to for an answer but this is not always the case.

The amount of information which is now available online can cause problems for some because it is not always correct or reliable. People need to know which websites can be trusted.

Face-to-face advice services, such as Citizen's Advice, while they can be useful for some, often have waiting lists or only provide generic advice.

## **UNITED AND CONNECTED**

The aim is to build a nation where people take pride in their communities, in the Welsh identity and language, and our place in the world. This is supported by building the vital links that make it easy for people to come together, for the economy to grow, and for Wales to become a confident nation.

### **Issues raised during engagement and consultation:**

The accessibility and availability of public transport was the issue raised most often by disabled people during the engagement process. Disabled people said that not being able to get about in the local community and further afield has an impact on the ability to take up employment, to get to appointments, to access leisure and public services, or simply to meet up with family and friends. Hence, such barriers to using public transport were cited as contributing to loneliness and social isolation. Some disabled children and young people have to rely on parents to take them to and from services and activities as they are unable to use public transport independently. Therefore it was suggested that travel training be offered to all young disabled people to increase their independence.

The lack of room on buses for several disabled people to travel at one time is an issue, as is the spontaneous travel by train if you are a wheelchair user as assistance has to be booked in advance. It was suggested that all staff working on public transport in Wales should undertake disability equality training, with guidance from disabled people and specialist disability organisations on what should be included in the training. There were also calls to launch a public campaign to tackle the discrimination disabled people experience when using public transport, plus it was argued that transport providers should be made accountable for the services they provide and for their responsibilities to disabled people. Co-ordinating and incentivising community transport provision was suggested, such as through low cost

car hire and reduced tax for example, whilst the importance of concessionary travel was cited given the high cost of public/community transport. The availability of better audio and visual information was called for, and there was recognition of the particular problems associated with travelling around rural areas.

Getting around in public places was a problem for many disabled people, who said they had experienced problems with obstacles on pavements, including street furniture, poor surface conditions and obstructive parking.

For some, although entrance to buildings was not usually too much of a problem, they faced barriers when moving around inside. These included steps, lack of clear signage, and lack of lifts. Hospitals were cited by many as difficult to get around and to find the right department, plus there was a call for more accessible toilet and changing places facilities for disabled people to use in all public buildings.

We also heard that there is inadequate access to leisure activities for disabled people, and it is difficult to find accessible places within the community to hold social events. Some disabled people can only access leisure activities with support from personal assistants / support workers. It is important that they receive training to understand their role and are not overprotective. There was also a suggestion to name and review good and bad services/venues maybe like food hygiene scores on the doors.

While it was recognised work had been done to encourage disabled people to vote and to stand for election some said that there are still barriers, including physical access to buildings, lack of communication support, and negative attitudes. In addition, a concern was raised with regards to the lack of funding for support acting as an obstacle to disabled people running for and maintaining public roles, plus there was reference to Wales being the only nation in Great Britain not to have an Access to Elected Office scheme, putting disabled people interested in political participation at a disadvantage compared to their peers elsewhere in the UK.

Young disabled people said that most of the meeting groups that are available to them are for socialising or for specific projects, and there are few platforms for them to become involved in political issues or to learn about their rights. (One exception to this is Vale Youth Speak Up, a group of up to young disabled children and young people aged between 16- 25 from the Vale of Glamorgan. They work to highlight and tackle the issues of discrimination and bullying in order to facilitate young people's involvement in decision making processes. The group has used innovative methods to send the message that disabled people can excel when they are listened to and given the right support).

More generally, people told us that there is a need to link actions in all policy areas to the well-being agenda; disabled people felt that often service providers aimed too low in their delivery of services for disabled people, meeting minimum standards only. It was hoped that the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act would help with this by encouraging public bodies to involve local disabled people in policies and plans from the start, rather than making assumptions about what is required.

## Common Issues

There were some issues that were common across all four themes, such as a lack of accessible information and advice. For example, on housing options, what grants are available, employment and training opportunities, and passenger transport information. It was suggested that this information and advice should be available and easily accessible for people with all impairments.

Inconsistency of local service delivery and the extent to which local service providers promote independent living was a major issue for some. In some areas there seems to be little engagement with disabled people during the development phase of new policies and programmes, meaning that remedial action often needs to be taken at a later stage, wasting time and resources. Indeed, involving both disabled people, plus the Third Sector organisations that represents the interests of disabled people, at all stages of the decision making process was a common request.

There was also frustration that there had not been more support for the development of social enterprises and co-operative organisations to provide care and support and preventative services in ways that involve service recipients in the design and running of services, as provided for in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

References to the Social Model of Disability and UNCRPD were made throughout the engagement and consultation process, plus there were multiple comments regarding the need for the new framework and action plan to include specific indicators, timescales and targets. Furthermore, many people emphasised that in their view for independent living to become a reality it was vital for there to be joined-up working and co-production at all times, involving Welsh Government, disabled people, Third Sector, private sector and the community.

Issues such as social isolation and loneliness were commented on, as were issues such as poverty and benefits, plus the availability of increased funding was called for by many of those we engaged/consulted with.

When we asked disabled people what more could be done to remove barriers to independent living the most common response was that there needs to be an increased awareness of disability equality issues and an improvement in attitudes by service providers and the public.

To quote one respondent:

*“Just be kind and don’t be afraid to talk to us or ask us what support we need. We are happy to help and will give advice if you come and speak to us first. We are opinionated and like to be counted, not just as a disabled person, but as a young person too”.*

## **Chapter 4 – Welsh Government Strategy: Commitments and Methods**

This chapter sets out the strategic approach the Welsh Government intends to take to support disabled people in Wales, recognising that they often continue to face high levels of poverty and discrimination as well as restricted access to education, employment, facilities and services.

The chapter includes a number of key commitments, building on the previous chapters in the framework, which summarise the main ways that the Welsh Government will work with disabled people and other agencies to address a wide range of issues, always seeking to remove whatever barriers may prevent disabled people from fulfilling their potential and achieving their ambitions.

These commitments are reflected in the action plan which accompanies the framework, which sets out in greater detail the ways in which they are being put into effect. The Action Plan will be updated frequently as circumstances change and particular actions are completed, whereas the commitments set out here will remain, to provide the basis for all the work we do with and for disabled people.

Work will continue to embed these commitments more firmly into Welsh legislation and into the Welsh Government's policy making and ways of working.

The chapter also identifies the main methods, systems and tools which the Welsh Government will use to ensure that these commitments are put into practice effectively and to encourage service providers and other organisations in Wales to embed the same principles in their work. We know that local action and sustained leadership and support from service providers in every part of Wales will be crucial to ensuring positive change for disabled people.

### **A. COMMITMENTS**

#### **The Rights of Disabled People**

The Welsh Government will work for continuous improvement in how Wales fulfils its obligations with regard to the UN Conventions on the Rights of Disabled People and the Rights of the Child. This includes working actively to consider how these and other UN conventions might most effectively be embedded in Welsh law.

The Welsh Government is committed to doing everything within our power to ensure that disabled people are offered the same life chances as everybody else. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a legal duty on the Welsh Ministers and specified public bodies to set objectives which maximise their contribution to the achievement of the Well-being goals and to take all reasonable steps, in exercising their functions, to meet those objectives. This Framework for Action on Disability will contribute to this. The Framework and its Action Plan will be embedded in the Welsh Government's wider work to promote equality, including future Strategic Equality Plans.

## **The Social Model of Disability**

The Welsh Government has adopted the Social Model and will work to increase understanding of the Model across Welsh Government and beyond, to ensure that it is reflected as widely as possible in our policies and programmes. The definition of the Social Model set out in Chapter 1 of this Framework will provide the basis for this work, recognising the fundamental shift in approach that this entails.

## **Meaningful Engagement, Involvement and Co-production**

The Welsh Government recognises the value of lived experience and we are committed to achieving meaningful involvement of people with such experiences. Specifically, we will engage directly and frequently with disabled people to identify and discuss the issues which are of greatest concern and importance to them and to enable disabled people to comment and advise on policies, programmes and solutions to problem, as they are developed, implemented and evaluated.

Wherever possible, we will co-produce our policies and programmes with disabled people by fully involving them in the design and delivery of services.

The Welsh Government will also continue to engage with our partners in the public, private and third sectors to ensure that the rights of disabled people are upheld in our policies and programmes.

## **Appropriate Language**

The Welsh Government will use language, terminology and imagery in all communications, publications and media that conveys disabled people's rights and equality as well as its adoption of the Social Model of Disability. It will also provide guidance to support others to do likewise. It will nevertheless respect the choices made by individuals regarding how they wish to refer to or describe themselves.

## **Intersectionality**

As set out in Chapter 1, the Welsh Government recognises that the lives of disabled people are often affected by other personal characteristics and circumstances, such as age, ethnicity, income and sexuality. The ways in which such factors overlap and relate is what is meant by intersectionality.

Nobody should be defined solely by their impairment. Instead, services and support should be designed in ways that take account of people's circumstances as a whole, including other protected characteristics where these are relevant. The Welsh Government will seek to take account to such intersectional issues when developing policies and commissioning services, and will encourage others to do likewise.

## **Accessible Information and Venues**

The Welsh Government will continue to work to address the barriers faced by disabled people when accessing services by ensuring our information is accessible to everyone and that our policies fully take into account accessibility issues.

Consultation documents will be provided in a range of formats e.g. Large Print, Easy Read and BSL video. Engagement activities and events will be held in accessible venues and locations and delivered in a way that is inclusive of people with a range of impairments.

### **Staff training and guidance**

The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring and promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment and expects all of its employees in Wales to uphold the same values. The Welsh Government will set a positive example by providing equality and diversity training and support to staff and will work with partners and other agencies to encourage them to do likewise.

### **Promoting Equality**

Whilst it is important to recognise where policies need to be improved it is also important to celebrate when organisations have got it right. It is important that we continue to consider this type of positive approach in other policy areas to ensure that we can make a real difference. The Welsh Government will work with partners to explore options for a new approach to encourage organisations to improve how they work with and support disabled people, including staff, customers and the general public.

### **Policy Actions and Monitoring**

The Welsh Government policies included in the accompanying Action Plan illustrate how we are responding to the issues faced by disabled people. This Action Plan will be kept up to date to reflect changing circumstances while continuing to reflect the underlying principles and commitments set out in this Framework. Updates on progress will be provided at each meeting of the Welsh Government's Disability Equality Forum and at least annually to the Strategic Equality Plan Board.

## **B. METHODS**

Putting these commitments into effect will require a very wide variety of activity across Welsh Government departments and much more widely. It will need careful planning, strong leadership and sustained effort by many organisations to achieve positive change. While the Action Plan provides more detailed information on many areas of work, there are some common methods and tools which will underpin all of these activities, to ensure that progress is sustained over time.

The main such tools are outlined below. It will be readily apparent that they do not relate solely to disability. Nevertheless, these tools, used properly and in combination, in relation to the issues covered by this framework and the commitments set out above, should help to ensure that the rights of disabled people are respected and barriers to full participation are removed.

## **Impact Assessments**

Appraising impact – both positive and negative – is an essential part of developing policy or building delivery plans with optimum good effects. Successful policies, programmes, investments and legislation tend to be those that have been properly assessed for their impact in the round before they are decided on and implemented. From the earliest stages, they will be developed with a view to maximising social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being – not just immediately, but for the long term. Impact assessment helps us to target scarce resources on actions that will have maximum impact on well-being. A good impact assessment:

- involves listening to citizens and demonstrating clearly that they have been heard;
- enables us to maximise our effectiveness;
- helps us to identify and avoid, remedy or mitigate any negative impacts of our decisions; and,
- tells the story of how and why a decision was made.

The Welsh Government has developed an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) tool, which supports good practice in this area and encourages an inclusive approach. Equality is a key aspect, alongside consideration of other issues such as children's rights, the Welsh language, environmental impacts, justice and privacy.

Effective use of the IIA too will include consideration of the impact of the proposed policy or activity on disabled people (and other protected characteristics) and will also involve engagement with disabled people (and others) from an early stage and throughout the development and delivery phases.

## **Funding and Remit Letters**

Procurement, grants and funding are among the Welsh Government's most important mechanisms for delivering Ministerial priorities and making a difference to the lives of people in Wales.

Similarly, remit letters between the Welsh Government and sponsored bodies such as Sport Wales, the Arts Council of Wales and Natural Resources Wales, provide a crucial foundation for the work of such organisation and help to determine their priorities and annual work plans.

The Welsh Government recognises that, in order to fulfil the principles set out in this framework and deliver against the commitments above, these will need to be reflected in funding decisions across Welsh Government and in remit letters. It will be for Welsh Ministers and funded organisations to determine and agree the details in each case, including how support for disabled people can best be combined with other arrangements to ensure that the work being funded is fully inclusive and reflects the best possible, intersectional approach.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty & Socio-Economic Duty**

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), including the Welsh Regulations 2011 (see Chapter 1), is a crucial legal tool to safeguard equality. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is the statutory regulatory body which monitors the PSED in Wales and advises the Welsh Government on issues relating to the duty. The Welsh Government works closely with the EHRC to ensure that Welsh public bodies are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the PSED and to ensure that reporting, monitoring and enforcement arrangements are adequate and effective.

In common with the other systems and tools in this section, the PSED does not relate solely to disabled people. Nevertheless, it is a very important means whereby the rights and needs of disabled people in Wales are safeguarded.

### **Training and Guidance**

One of the commitments above is that the Welsh Government will set a positive example by providing equality and diversity training and support to staff and will work with partners and other agencies to encourage them to do likewise. This reflects the recognition that training is crucial tool to embed understanding of the principles and aims of this framework within Welsh Government, across the Welsh public sector and more widely.

Similarly, guidance – including formal guidance linked to legislation, informal, advisory documents and other forms of media and publicity materials – has a role to play in widening understanding and raising awareness of issues such as the Social Model of Disability and the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People.

## **CONCLUSION**

Achieving the aims of this framework and fulfilling the commitment in this chapter cannot be achieved by a single linear set of actions with a fixed timeline. Instead it needs the methods and tools outlined above to be used flexibly and creatively across many organisations and for the long term. Some specific actions, such as commencing the socio-economic duty in Wales, will play a key role in moving us forward. Others, such as training on the Social Model, will need sustained effort over many years.

The Action Plan attached to the Framework will continue to provide greater detail on a wide range of specific activity, while forums such as the Disability Equality Forum and Strategic Equality Board will ensure accountability against the Framework as a whole and specific action. Perhaps most importantly of all, continuing engagement with disabled people at all levels will remain the key to ensuring that progress is real and meaningful.

## Annex 1

### Links to Statistics on Disability

The following links provide regularly updated statistics relating to disabled people in Wales.

- Academic achievement by special educational need (SEN):  
<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-pupil-characteristics/?lang=en>
- Economic activity by disability:  
<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Disability/summaryofeconomicactivityinwales-by-year-disabledstatus-fromapril2013>
- Risk of being in relative income poverty by whether there is a disability in the family:  
<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Poverty/>
- Children receiving care and support by disability:  
<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Health-and-Social-Care/Social-Services/Childrens-Services/children-receiving-care-and-support/childrenreceivingcareandsupport-by-localauthority-agegroup>
- Adults victims once or more by longstanding illness or disability:  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/thenatureofviolentcrimeappendixtables>
- Disability hate crimes recorded by the police:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables>
- Local Government candidates and councillors by disability:  
<https://gov.wales/local-government-candidates-survey-2017>
- Is Wales Fairer?  
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/wales-fairer-2018>

## **Action on Disability: The Right to Independent Living**

# **ACTION PLAN**

## Prosperous and Secure

Actions	Welsh Government Department
<p>1. We will:</p> <p>Deliver the Employability Plan for Wales to support working-age people into employment opportunities and to gain and maintain sustainable employment. This includes working with the public, private and third sectors, and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), to understand and minimise the barriers preventing disabled people and others from entering and progressing within sustained employment.</p> <p>(link to Employability Action Plan to be added when finalised)</p>	<p>Employment and Skills</p>
<p>2. We will:</p> <p>Deliver a cross government approach to increasing the number of disabled people in work through tailored support for individuals to overcome barriers to gaining and maintaining sustainable employment. We will take action to change employer attitudes, reduce the stigma and better support employers to recruit and retain disabled people.</p>	<p>Employment and Skills / Prosperous Futures</p>
<p>3. We will:</p> <p>Increase the take-up of Access to Work in Wales. We are working actively with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), and others through our employment support networks to ensure the DWP's Access to Work scheme is promoted and there is a significant increased awareness raising with employers and individuals on how the scheme can help disabled people, those with mental health conditions and work limiting health conditions to remain in, or to move into employment to increase the take-up of the scheme in Wales. However, we recognise that there is more we need to do in partnership with the DWP to promote the scheme. We will continue to seek support from Access to Work for internships, apprenticeships where feasible, to help disabled people into work.</p>	<p>Prosperous Futures</p>

<p>4. We will:</p> <p>Continue to support those furthest from the labour market, who face complex barriers to employment in our most deprived communities, through our Communities for Work and PaCE programmes, and the new Communities for Work Plus programme which was introduced in April 2018. These programmes offer intensive mentoring and support, training and work experience opportunities to enable people to secure sustainable employment.</p>	<p>Prosperous Futures / Childcare, Play &amp; Early Years</p>
<p>5. We will:</p> <p>Utilise Business Wales to promote both self-employment and employment opportunities for disabled people through events, newsletters and social media channels.</p> <p>Work with entrepreneurs and SMEs to develop links with local schools, colleges and universities to encourage youth entrepreneurship through the Big Ideas Wales programme.</p>	<p>Entrepreneurship</p>
<p>6. We will:</p> <p>Deliver against the Inclusive Apprenticeship Disability Action Plan, published in December 2018, which outlines our commitment to remove potential barriers for disabled people accessing the apprenticeship programme. Actions taken to further support the recruitment of disabled apprentices include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to fund the Equality and Diversity champion role to provide the work-based learning (WBL) provider network with a supportive structure to assist them in increasing take-up of apprenticeships by disabled people and other protected groups.</li> <li>• Provide wider careers advice on apprenticeships for disabled people via Careers Wales Apprenticeship Finders.</li> <li>• Raise awareness of apprenticeship provision amongst individuals, parents and carers using real life case studies to ensure that disabled people feel that the Apprenticeship programme is a viable route for them.</li> </ul>	<p>Further Education and Apprenticeships</p>

<p>7. We will:</p> <p>Use the Social Model of Disability to underpin our employment policies and recruitment methods and will share the approach, policies and procedures Welsh Government has put in place to support our disabled employees as part of a wider movement to remove employment barriers for disabled people in Wales.</p>	<p>Human Resources</p>
<p>8. We will:</p> <p>Establish a network of Disability Champions to engage with different employers across Wales to ensure they are able to access the assets, skills and entrepreneurship of disabled people; adopt an inclusive approach in their recruitment processes; and to help employers understand the barriers faced by disabled people. In doing so, we will work with the disability sector, employers and stakeholders to ensure an inclusive approach in the recruitment and employment process.</p>	<p>Equality / Welfare Reform Prosperous Futures</p>
<p>9. We will:</p> <p>Develop a Welsh disability award scheme for employers which might either build on Disability Confident or be a new scheme to encourage employers to aspire to be more supportive of disabled people. We will work with Disability and Voluntary organisations to explore the specific needs of Wales in developing a scheme, maximising existing levers to encourage employers to take action through the Economic Contract.</p>	<p>Equality / Welfare Reform Prosperous Futures</p>
<p>10. We will:</p> <p>Carry out a Review of the Spending and Allocation of Funding for Housing Adaptations that support disabled and older people to live independently in their own home. The outcome from the Review will inform future aids and adaptation policy to streamline and simplify the current process. The final recommendations are expected to be received before the end of 2019. In addition, the Review officials are working with stakeholders to implement recommendations made in the Equality and Human Rights Commissioner and the Auditor General's 2018 review of Housing Adaptations. This includes work on revised data monitoring arrangements and guidance to support greater integration of services.</p>	<p>Housing</p>

<p>11. We will:</p> <p>With support from Tai Pawb, work with the housing sector, disabled people and other stakeholders to co-produce an Accessible Housing Register standard. The standard will facilitate better understanding of the current level of development of registers in Wales by providing a definition, supported by a set of principles against which progress can be assessed and measured on a local and national level. The standard will facilitate further development of accessible housing registers in Wales.</p>	<p>Housing</p>
<p>12. We will:</p> <p>Continue to provide housing related support to help disabled people to live independently in their own home. Welsh Government is currently working on the development of the Housing Support Grant. The design of this grant mechanism will ensure that local authorities can continue to identify needs and commission services to enable disabled people to live independently. The increased flexibility and strategic focus of the new grant are intended to improve the ability of authorities to deliver good outcomes.</p>	<p>Housing</p>
<p>13. We will:</p> <p>Through the Innovative Housing Programme, encourage housing solutions that demonstrate the capacity to offer flexibility through their likely lifespan to adapt to the changing needs of the resident. The Innovative Housing Programme aims to stimulate new thinking in the design and delivery of affordable housing to reflect the overarching aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. In the third year of the programme we have included a specific theme around <a href="#">improving resilience and flexibility of homes</a>.</p>	<p>Housing</p>
<p>14. We will:</p> <p>Work with local authorities to enhance the granularity of the Local Housing Market Assessment process to better capture the range of needs which might otherwise be ignored, in order to increase the development of accessible housing which reflects the needs of local populations. This will include more attention given to the requirements of older and younger age groups, disabled people and other groups.</p>	<p>Housing</p>

<p>15. We will:</p> <p>During the planned review of the current housing quality standards for affordable housing with a focus on space, adaptability and accessibility, take due account of the Lifetime Homes standard to ensure that the new Welsh Government housing quality standard is reflective of current disabled people's needs. We will set a longer term goal by 2025 at the latest to have the same standards for all homes irrespective of tenure.</p>	<p>Housing</p>
<p>16. We will:</p> <p>Provide support for disabled people through the Discretionary Assistance Fund which is open to all people who meet the eligibility criteria and who are suffering an emergency situation or need support to help them to remain in the community. <a href="#">Discretionary Assistance Fund (DAF)</a></p>	<p>Financial Inclusion</p>
<p>17. We will:</p> <p>Ensure our approach to tackling poverty amongst disabled people is informed by a strong evidence base, including for example, ongoing analyses of relevant data sets (such as the National Survey for Wales and Family Resources Survey) as well as analysis of the impacts of welfare reform.</p>	<p>Prosperous Futures</p>
<p>18. We will:</p> <p>Reduce poverty, mitigate the impacts of poverty and improve living conditions for those groups most at risk of living in low income households, including disabled people, through cross government action to tackle inequality and improve outcomes, including through the implementation of our Employability Delivery Plan, and our Child Poverty Review.</p> <p>Further actions to reduce poverty and mitigate the impacts of poverty are set out under Objective 7 of the Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan: <a href="#">Strategic Equality Plan</a>.</p>	<p>Prosperous Futures</p>

<p>19. We will:</p> <p>Consider the actions to be taken following engagement with survivors of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) including disabled people as part of the development of a national survivor engagement framework (2019-2020).</p>	<p>VAWDASV</p>
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## Healthy and Active

Actions	Welsh Government Department
<p>1. We will:</p> <p>Work with NHS organisations in providing feedback on the outcome of our assessment to ensure that the needs of patients with sensory loss are being met. (Through the NHS Delivery Framework, NHS organisations are asked to complete a reporting template to evidence how they are implementing the All Wales Standards for Communication and Information for people with sensory loss, within primary, community and secondary care settings).</p>	Health & Social Services
<p>2. We will:</p> <p>Further integrate the NHS 111 service and the information, advice and assistance service developed under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 to enable a more holistic framework for people to obtain advice and active support to maximise their health and wellbeing and promote greater independence.</p>	Health & Social Services
<p>3. We will:</p> <p>Create an accessible online digital platform for citizens, to give people greater control and enable them to become more active participants in their own health and well-being.</p>	Health & Social Services
<p>4. We will:</p> <p>Develop and implement new outcome focused inspection frameworks for regulated services providing care and support to disabled people including regulated advocacy services. Through the implementation of these new frameworks, we will ensure disabled people, and people with the other protected characteristics have voice and control in their care and support including advocacy matters.</p>	Care Inspectorate Wales

<p>5. We will:</p> <p>Through the <i>Together for Health, Eye Health Care, Delivery Plan for Wales 2013- 2020</i>, work with the Low Vision Service for Wales to ensure effective referrals to social services and the third sector to support vision impaired individuals to establish the outcomes they wish to achieve.</p> <p>As set out in one of the 10 key priorities of the Delivery Plan, we will work with Local Partnership Boards and Local Authorities to monitor and support the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Key to this is the provision of rehabilitation and habilitation services in every authority that prevent loss of independence, loss of mobility, falls, isolation and depression in people with sight loss / impairment.</p> <p><a href="#">Together for Health, Eye Health Care</a></p>	<p>Sensory Health</p>
<p>6. We will:</p> <p>Through the <i>Integrated framework of care and support for people who are D/deaf or living with hearing loss</i>, work with health professionals to ensure this cohort of people have equitable access to services.</p> <p><a href="#">Audiology Framework 2017-2020</a></p>	<p>Sensory Health</p>
<p>7. We will:</p> <p>Through our <i>Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategic Action Plan</i>, support children, young people and adults with autism, and their families and carers, to have their needs understood, achieve their own well-being outcomes and lead fulfilling lives. <a href="#">Autistic Spectrum Disorder Updated Delivery Plan</a></p>	<p>Health and Social Services Autism</p>
<p>8. We will:</p> <p>Improve well-being outcomes for autistic people, the Welsh Government will publish and implement a Code of Practice on the Delivery of Autism Services under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006.</p>	<p>Health and Social Services Autism</p>

<p>9. We will:</p> <p>Work with the NHS to ensure access for all to high quality Technology Enabled Care services (TECs) that can support the self-management of long term chronic conditions and improve patient outcomes through increased independence and well-being.</p>	<p>Health &amp; Social Services Technology &amp; Innovation</p>
<p>10. We will:</p> <p>Through the <i>Together for Mental Health</i> strategy and supporting delivery plan we will take a cross sector partnership approach to improve mental health and well-being across all ages in Wales. Together for Mental Health is the Welsh Government's 10 year cross governmental strategy, published in October 2012, following engagement and consultation with stakeholders, the strategy has been supported by a series of detailed delivery plans.</p>	<p>Mental Health and Vulnerable Groups</p>
<p>11. We will:</p> <p>Deliver the 'Learning Disability Improving Lives' cross-government programme of actions which aim to improve and strengthen how public services in Wales identify and respond effectively to the needs of individuals with a Learning Disability and their families/carers.</p> <p>Ensure implementation of the recommendations takes place at local, regional and national levels within the health, social care, education, employment, skills, transport and housing sectors.</p> <p><a href="#">Learning Disability Improving Lives Programme</a></p>	<p>Programme Management: Nursing Directorate</p> <p>Delivery of actions: Health &amp; Social Services, Economy, Skills &amp; Natural Resources &amp; Education &amp; Public Services</p>
<p>12. We will:</p> <p>Provide financial support to Disability Sport Wales via Sport Wales. The funding enables disabled people to take part in sporting opportunities and includes grassroots and community level through to elite level which sees Wales para-athletes representing Wales and Team GB. This funding enables Disability Sport Wales to:</p>	<p>Sports</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• work in partnership with Local Authorities to provide a Community Programme of grassroots participation through a network of Development Officers;</li><li>• collaborate on the development of para athletes eligible for selection into performance sport at Welsh and GB level; and</li><li>• influence the sector to include disabled people.</li></ul> |  |
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## Ambitious and Learning

Actions	Welsh Government Department
<p>1. We will:</p> <p>As part of the Families First programme, continue to require local authorities to prioritise specialist services for families with disabled children. Local authorities have the flexibility to provide services to children, young people and families affected by any form of impairment. There is not a definition of ‘impairment’ within the Families First guidance and this was deliberate in order to give local authorities the flexibility to provide services to children, young people and families affected by any form of impairment. The exact provision of services is determined by local authorities based on need. Families First funding will not be used to pay for statutory services and checks should be made to ensure there is no duplication of services that should be provided as a statutory duty.</p>	Children & Families
<p>2.</p> <p>As part of Welsh Government’s remit with Play Wales to support local authorities in meeting their Play Sufficiency Duty, Play Wales worked with Alison John and Associates to develop the ‘Creating Accessible Play Spaces Toolkit’. The toolkit, which was published in November 2017, provides guidance on inclusive and accessible play to meet the needs of disabled and non-disabled children.</p> <p><a href="#">Creating Accessible Play Spaces</a></p>	Childcare, Play & Early Years
<p>3. We will:</p> <p>Maintain that Local Authorities have a duty, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure sufficient childcare is available in their area to meet the needs of parents undertaking education, training or employment. Part of this duty includes provision of childcare for children who have Additional Learning Needs or require specialist care. Local Authorities undertook full CSAs in 2017 which were published on their websites. These include action plans showing how gaps in sufficiency are being addressed. Local Authorities produce Progress Reports on an annual basis updating the action plan. The next full CSA will be in 2022.</p>	Childcare, Play & Early Years

<p>4. We will:</p> <p>Deliver our <i>Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation Programme</i>, to ensure children and young people aged 0-25 with additional learning needs are provided for within an inclusive education system, where needs are identified early and addressed quickly, and where all learners are supported to reach their potential.</p> <p><a href="#">Additional Learning Needs Transformation Programme</a></p>	<p>Support for Learners</p>
<p>5. We will:</p> <p>Support young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to access post-16 education, including specialist provision, in order that they can develop the skills and confidence needed to live semi-independent / independent lives.</p>	<p>Support for Learners</p>
<p>6. We will:</p> <p>Support disabled students to access and be successful in Higher Education by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• carrying out a review of the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) policy in Wales to ensure that funding is being targeted effectively, and</li> <li>• undertaking a public consultation on the future of DSA.</li> </ul>	<p>Higher Education Strategy, Policy &amp; Delivery</p>
<p>7. We will:</p> <p>We will tackle disability hate crime, harassment and bullying through our work with the four police forces, Crown Prosecution Service, Victim Support, other partners on the Hate Crime Criminal Justice Board and the Disability Equality Forum. This work seeks to ensure victims of hate crime are encouraged to come forward to seek support and justice, and that cases are handled well and with a high level of victim satisfaction. In addition, our wider Regional Community Cohesion Programme seeks to build greater tolerance and respect in order to prevent hate crime occurring.</p>	<p>Equality</p>

<p>8. We will:</p> <p>Implement the nineteen actions in our <i>Information and Advice Action Plan</i> and ensuring there is equitable access by disabled people to the quality assured advice services they need to resolve problems with debt, welfare benefits, housing, employment and discrimination.</p> <p><a href="#">Information and Advice Action Plan</a></p>	<p>Financial Inclusion</p>
<p>9. We will:</p> <p>Implement the <i>Information and Advice Quality Framework for Wales (IAQF)</i>. Once more advice providers have a Quality Standard that is IAQF accredited, disabled people throughout Wales can be confident they are receiving impartial advice from a provider who meets the essential components of a quality service.</p> <p><a href="#">Information and Advice Quality Framework</a></p>	<p>Financial Inclusion</p>
<p>10 .We will:</p> <p>Work to increase understanding of the Social Model across Welsh Government and beyond, to ensure that it is reflected widely in our policies and programmes. We will do this through a number of measures including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• running awareness courses and workshops to promote the Social Model;</li> <li>• working closely with policy leads across Welsh Government to encourage inclusion of the model in new and existing policies; and</li> <li>• working with our communications team to ensure that good practice; models of the Social Model are publicised on the Welsh Government Internet site.</li> </ul>	<p>Equality</p>

# United and Connected

Actions	Welsh Government Department
<p>1. We will:</p> <p>Improve accessibility to public transport for disabled people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring passenger satisfaction with railway stations.</li> <li>• Ensuring new and refurbished stations are developed in line with Vision for Stations which enshrines the principles of the social model of disability in station design.</li> <li>• Monitor the accessibility of local bus services following introduction of the voluntary bus quality standards with partners as part of the monitoring arrangements in place for payment of the Bus Services Support Grant and other funding.</li> <li>• Working with the Department for Transport, Disabled Peoples’ Transport Advisory Committee and others to develop good practice guidance and training materials that will be made available to bus and coach operators to assist them in the development and delivery of driver disability awareness training.</li> <li>• Working with our Accessible Transport Panel to develop outcome focussed objectives, with specific actions that are designed to improve accessibility and inclusion across the public transport network in Wales.</li> <li>• Monitoring the accessibility of north / south Wales air services provided under contract by the Welsh Ministers to ensure that disabled passengers may continue to travel by air in Wales with confidence under the new four year contract which commenced from February 2019.</li> </ul>	<p>Economic Infrastructure</p>
<p>2. We will:</p> <p>Implement the Digital Inclusion Framework and Delivery Plan and deliver our commitment in Prosperity for All to invest in people’s digital skills, working with older people and disability organisations to support Digital Inclusion activities and help co-ordinate these across Wales.</p>	<p>Digital Inclusion</p>

<p>Learn My Way will support basic digital skills development for anyone at a time/location they wish to use. From 1 July our new programme, Digital Communities Wales: digital confidence, health and well-being, will focus on improving the digital capabilities of citizens and health and social care staff, allowing more people to become more active participants in their own health and wellbeing. It will also continue to engage with any organisation that can help reach digitally excluded people.</p> <p><a href="#">Digital Inclusion Framework</a></p>	
<p>3. We will:</p> <p>Provide support for disabled people through our Access Broadband Cymru Scheme, which is open to all individuals &amp; communities who meet the criteria, to access Superfast Broadband where it is not currently available.</p> <p><a href="#">Access Broadband Cymru</a></p>	ICT Infrastructure
<p>4. We will:</p> <p>Build on the work undertaken in our Diversity in Democracy Programme informed by the evaluation of the programme published on 26 June 2019. Work during the coming months will help shape future initiatives around improving the representation of under-represented groups in local government. This will include considering the barriers faced by disabled people when participating in the democratic process.</p> <p><a href="#">Evaluation - Diversity in Democracy</a></p>	Local Government
<p>5. We are :</p> <p>Committed to introducing a scheme in Wales to provide financial support for disabled people running an election campaign in local government elections which will be taken forward as part of phase 2 of the Diversity in Democracy Project.</p>	Local Government

<p>6. We will:</p> <p>Establish robust public appointments data to effectively monitor the number of disabled people who apply, are shortlisted and eventually recruited/and reappointed to public sector Boards. This will help us to identify and address particular barriers in the recruitment process.</p>	<p>Public Bodies Unit</p>
<p>7. We will:</p> <p>Develop a diversity strategy for public appointments which will touch on many facets of the public appointment process, including arrangements for publicising and undertaking appointments and their accessibility to protected groups, including disabled people. This will be complemented by additional support for board members and near miss candidates through initiatives such as coaching and mentoring.</p>	<p>Public Bodies Unit</p>
<p>8. We will:</p> <p>Support our Equality &amp; Inclusion Grant Funded bodies to deliver a more diverse pool of decision makers in public life and public appointments by identifying and addressing barriers to engagement and participation for disabled people and other under-represented groups.</p>	<p>Public Bodies Unit</p>
<p>9. We will:</p> <p>Work with partners to improve accessibility information for disabled visitors looking for places to stay or visit, and signpost tourism businesses to initiatives which can help improve their provision for disabled visitors.</p>	<p>Tourism</p>
<p>10. We will:</p> <p>Undertake visitor research at the historic sites and monuments in state care in order to consider our future audience, which will enable us to inform future strategies and policies on accessibility for visitors. This will include consulting with people with physical and learning difficulties in order to improve accessibility to all.</p>	<p>CADW</p>

<p>Consider opportunities arising from development work at CADW sites for the sensitive integration of modern access solutions.</p> <p>Develop new guidance document which will explain how to plan and improve access to listed building in Wales for all, using real-life examples.</p>	
<p>11. We will:</p> <p>Take forward recommendations arising from the recent petition for the ‘Scores on the Doors’ accessibility rating campaign’ to explore how this could be developed on a Wales wide basis.</p>	<p>Equality</p>
<p>12. We will:</p> <p>Develop a British Sign Language (BSL) national charter for delivery of services and resources, including education, to D/deaf children and young people and their families. We envisage that such a charter would provide the basis for a range of work being undertaken by the Welsh Government and other bodies, to understand the current provision of support for D/deaf and hearing impaired and the good practice guidance and standards being developed on D/deaf hearing loss to support the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The BSL charter would need to be broad and flexible enough to reflect changing circumstances and future developments.</p>	<p>Education &amp; Public Services</p>
<p>13. We will:</p> <p>Through our (forthcoming) Strategy on Loneliness and Isolation, work with partners to create opportunities for disabled people to connect with their communities and support a community infrastructure that helps to maintain those social connections.</p>	<p>Enabling People</p>

<p>14. We will:</p> <p>Consider policy options to increase the provision of Changing Places Toilets in publically accessible buildings, including potential changes to our grant spending and planning/building regulation requirements.</p>	<p>Building Regulations / Planning</p>
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**Prosperity for All: Well-Being Objectives**

1. Support people and businesses to drive prosperity.
2. Tackle regional inequality and promote fair work.
3. Drive Sustainable growth and combat climate change.
4. Deliver quality health and care services fit for the future.
5. Promote good health and well-being for everyone.
6. Build healthier communities and better environments.
7. Support young people to make the most of their potential.
8. Build ambition and encourage learning for life.
9. Equip everyone with the right skills for a changing world.
10. Build resilient communities, culture and language.
11. Deliver modern and connected infrastructure.
12. Promote and protect Wales' place in the world.