

Appendix 2: Updates from organisations funded via a top-slice of the Revenue Support Grant

The following information has been provided by the organisations below to update members on how the top-slice of the Revenue Support Grant they receive, provided via the WLGA, is spent in support of their aims. It also highlights how their work benefits and supports the work of local councils and communities across Wales.

Data Cymru - [Home - Data Cymru](#)

Background

Data Cymru was established in 2001 as an independent, not-for-profit company, wholly owned by local government in Wales. Our remit is to work with and for local government in Wales – helping local councils use data more effectively to facilitate and support service improvement. Our vision puts data at the heart of local government.

The company currently employs 23 people with an annual turnover of around £1.5M. Our funding comes from 3 main sources:

- RSG Top Slice (£480,000 in 2023-24 for operating costs plus core activities)
- WG Improvement Grant via the WLGA (around £100,000 in 2023-24)
- ‘Commercial Income’ from fee paid work (around £900,000 in 2023-24).

Top Slice funding

Our ‘top slice’ funding contributes to the running costs of the organisation and funds a range of core activities in support of local councils including:

- “Infobase Cymru” – a central repository of curated data (relevant to local government) from a range of data suppliers. We, uniquely, provide this data with fully bilingual meta-data;
- Developing and delivering a national residents survey for local councils. This new and innovative approach will reduce duplication, save money and allow comparison across Wales;
- Developing and maintaining several topic specific data dashboards where officers and members can understand the latest data and gain insights in key areas e.g. Poverty, Cost of Living, Inflation, Council spend (RO), Ward profiles etc.
- Procuring commercial data for use by local councils as part of a collaborative arrangement;
- Providing a range of ‘free’ data related training offerings for local government officers and members;
- Hosting monthly ‘inform and inspire’ webinars designed to share effective and/or innovative practice in the use of data; and
- Establishing and hosting several relevant networks and communities of practice; and
- Representing local government in a number of national fora.

Our core work is complimented with work commissioned under the WLGA Improvement Grant, largely around performance support and improvement. Our commercial work is often delivered for local councils, where we aim to deliver 'once for Wales', often realising significant savings for local government. As an example, our work on Dewis Cymru delivers an estimated saving of over £1M annually when compared to locally procured and delivered approaches.

A copy of the annual report is available from WLGA officers on request.

LGA Support to WLGA - [Home | Local Government Association](#)

This short note outlines the main workforce support currently provided to the WLGA on an annual basis.

Collective bargaining

The LGA provide the employer secretariat for 13 collective bargaining units, the majority of which cover Wales. The main areas for collective bargaining: local government (including chief executives, chief officers and craft workers as well as 'green book' staff) and fire (firefighters and fire leaders) include:

- Pay negotiations
- Terms and conditions negotiations
- Joint secretaries' engagement (between LGA officers on behalf of employers and trade union officers on behalf of employees)
- Advice on and oversight of collective agreements and procedure e.g. chief executive disciplinary and grievances
- Engagement with relevant central government departments in relation to potential and existing legislation that affects the collective bargaining unit e.g. the Home Office's response to the 'State of Fire' reports
- Responding to press and other enquiries relating to the work of the National Employers
- Providing briefing material and meetings with elected members and officers as required

Employment law

The LGA's Workforce Team provide employment law support and advice to the WLGA and member authorities. This work often centres on the collective agreements stemming from collective bargaining but also relates to ongoing changes to legislation and case law. The Team respond to individual queries, engage directly with member authorities and put on events open to WLGA and its members.

HR/OD support

The WLGA and its members can also access Workforce Team support at reduced or no cost depending on what is required. This reflects the provisions of the DLUHC funded support provided to English local authorities. This support may cover issues such as: job evaluation and equal pay, organisational design, recruitment and EDI guidance, chief executive performance management, and bespoke support with

particular council issues.

Welsh local authorities are also involved in LGA workforce surveys and have access to the data on the same basis as local authorities in England.

Cost

The cost of workforce support to the WLGA is currently £200,000, an amount that has been static for five years. Due to capacity and financial pressures, this will be subject to review ahead of 2025/26. Over the last five years, the funding we have received from DLUHC for analogous support to English councils has increased by over 19%.

National Adoption Service & Foster Wales – [National Adoption Service - Home adoptcymru.com](https://adoptcymru.com) and [Fostering in Wales | Foster Wales \(gov.wales\)](https://fosteringinwales.gov.wales)

Introduction

This report provides an overview of how the 2023/24 top slice of the Revenue Support Grant supports the work of the National Adoption Service (NAS) and Foster Wales (FW).

The budgets for both NAS and FW are supplemented by funding from the Welsh Government in the form of grants. In 2024/25, Welsh Government funding accounts for 86.2% of the overall national budget for NAS and 87.2% of the national budget for Foster Wales, albeit that the grants are time limited.

A substantial proportion of the overall national funding is passported on to local authorities and, in the case of NAS third sector adoption agencies, to deliver services as set out in agreed business cases and plans. For NAS, 91% (circa £2.72m), will be made available to local authorities and VAAs in 2024/25. For Foster Wales, 71%, (circa £2.1m), will be made available to local authorities in 2024/25.

In line with previous decisions by the relevant WLGA committee, the top slices for both NAS and FW have been reduced for 2024/25.

Overview

The 2023/24 top slice allocation of £538,200 for NAS was fully spent. To maximise the grant income in 2023/24, Foster Wales allocated some of the costs that would have ordinarily been met by the top-slice of £504,444 to the grant. The balance in the top slice was allocated to the reserve; this was a 'one off' occurrence that will not exist in future years and will be used to deal with any financial turbulence that

may be experienced.

The top slice contributes to the staff and office-related costs of the shared (NAS and FW) Central Team. Led by the Director, Suzanne Griffiths, and based in Cardiff County Hall, the team provides service leadership, co-ordination, improvement activity, strategic planning to support and enable pan Wales service delivery. For NAS, this is delivered within the statutory framework for adoption in Wales.

The newly formed National Joint Committee for NAS and FW, chaired by Cllr Jane Tremlett and with all twenty-two councils represented, has oversight of the arrangements and delivery, including setting the budget and agreeing the annual plan. For NAS, the Governance Board provides an additional level of support and scrutiny.

The costs allocated to the top-slice in 2023/24 were used to support:

- Hosting Costs – the support costs of the host authority, Cardiff Council.
- Design, translation and publication of Annual Reports & other publications.
- Service User Engagement work.
- Performance Management System and reporting; for NAS this is commissioned from Data Cymru, but it is carried out by the central team for Foster Wales.
- Governance arrangements and a contract for specialist legal advice
- Leadership and engagement work - with Welsh Ministers, Welsh Government, relevant sector specific organisations & other UK government departments.
- Development Work
- For NAS only – the Independent Co-Chair of the NAS Governance Board – a legal requirement.

There are other costs for NAS which historically fell to the top slice that are currently being met from grant aid e.g. national marketing and PR.

Progress against plans and strategic priorities are reported and published annually. Links to the most recent reports are below.

NAS: Cymraeg: [National Adoption Service - Cyhoeddiadau \(adoptcymru.com\)](https://adoptcymru.com)
English: [National Adoption Service - Publications \(adoptcymru.com\)](https://adoptcymru.com)

Foster Wales: Cymraeg: [amdanom ni - maethu cymru \(llyw.cymru\)](https://llyw.cymru)
English: [about us - foster wales \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales)

Eistedfod Genedlaethol Cymru – The National Eisteddfod of Wales - [Croeso | Eisteddfod](#)

We are very aware of the extremely challenging financial context for public services and local government in particular during the current climate. This awareness runs through everything we do, particularly during the community project in the run-up to the Eisteddfod and within the legacy we aim to deliver in each area following the

event.

We actively recruit up to 250 volunteers to work with us throughout the project, most at micro-local level, and provide them with an opportunity to become part of our local democratic process, where everyone's opinions are sought and everyone's voice is heard, as we create the competitions and the programme itself.

During recent years, we have also worked with local organisations on a legacy project to encourage our volunteers to join other charities and voluntary organisations following the festival. Our aim is to increase the number of Welsh speakers and learners available to ensure that local organisations are able to provide services in Welsh, often for the first time, as a direct result of the Eisteddfod's visit.

Our community project provides a boost to the local economy for up to two years prior to the festival itself, with hundreds of events and activities held in villages, towns and at regional level across the catchment area. Showcasing the local area is vitally important to us. We believe that every National Eisteddfod should celebrate the area, and our programmes should reflect the interests, culture and history of the area. This is the area's opportunity to shine on the national stage, to welcome over 170,000 visitors to the county and to benefit from an economic boost of around £17.5million during the week alone.

Local government is the major partner in each Eisteddfod project at every level, and in recent years, we have actively included an authority representative on our executive committee, as well as serving on the National Eisteddfod Council. The representative then becomes the natural link between the local committees and the authority at an operational level, whilst our Executive Committee Chair and Chief Executive remain the main links with elected representatives.

The Eisteddfod could not function without the financial support of the WLGA. It is this funding from local authorities that allows us to remain as a peripatetic festival. We believe that every authority in Wales has the right to host the National Eisteddfod, and our locations over the past 15 years has included parts of Wales which could not have hosted the festival without the vitally important top-sliced funding provided by the organisations.

These areas include Blaenau Gwent, the Vale of Glamorgan, Monmouthshire, and this year's festival held in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The partnership between the Eisteddfod, WLGA and the local authorities allows authorities to aim high and gives them the confidence to invite a Welsh language festival to their county or region, thus supporting the aims of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 policy, to reach a million Welsh speakers and to double the daily use of Cymraeg by 2050.

Royal Welsh Agricultural Show - [Royal Welsh Agricultural Society \(rwas.wales\)](http://rwas.wales)

The Royal Welsh Agricultural Society has played a leading role in the development of agriculture and the rural economy in Wales for over a century since its formation in 1904. Today our work includes providing support for business, social welfare and education in rural communities, and the staging of our ever-popular society events; the Smallholding and Countryside Festival, the Royal Welsh Show and the Winter Fair.

As a registered charity, the Society has a Board of Trustees who oversee the work of the organisation, supported by a team of dedicated staff based at the showground in Llanelwedd, Powys.

The society's charitable objectives are:

- to promote sustainable agriculture, horticulture, forestry, conservation and the environment and in particular in Wales;
- to encourage and promote agricultural science, research and education in particular in relation to food, farming and the countryside;
- to promote the improvement of livestock, the welfare of animals and the prevention and eradication of diseases in animals useful to man;
- to hold demonstrations of modern agricultural methods, technology and processes;
- to hold shows for the exhibition of livestock, poultry, farm and horticultural produce and forestry, and for the demonstration of agricultural methods, machinery and modern technology and hold events of an ancillary nature;
- to promote and advance for the benefit and education of the public the conservation protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment; and
- to promote rural arts, culture and heritage.

Funding from our members, our charitable activities, local and central government is essential for us to deliver on the objectives set out above. We deliver on these objectives by staging three major events annually, alongside a number of awards, bursaries and scholarships.

Our flagship event is the Royal Welsh Show. Almost a quarter of a million people visit the Royal Welsh Show annually and it is considered to be the largest agricultural show of its kind in Europe. The economic impact of the event is in excess of £40 million and there is approximately £10 million visitor spend during the event itself.

The show also provides considerable outreach to the urban population. The audience for the Royal Welsh Show extends far beyond the agricultural sector itself and attracts a wide spectrum of visitors from both urban and rural communities. Over two-thirds of those who visit the Royal Welsh Show do not work in agriculture.

The four days provide an opportunity for the many organisations involved in setting the future policy context of our industry. They meet, debate and better understand the complex food supply chain, which is the major employer in Wales.

There is no better platform for this discussion and debate than our events.

The new and innovative Food Village at last year's show was a success and proved particularly popular with parents of younger children. We anticipate a similar reaction for our refreshed Horticultural Village in the forthcoming show.

We are also proud that the Royal Welsh Show is one of Wales's leading national events in celebrating our unique culture and language. According to census data, 43% of workers in the agricultural industry speak Welsh, a percentage well above the average within the general population of 19%. Therefore, there is a strong connection between the future of agriculture and the future of the language. Events such as the Royal Welsh Show are fundamentally important to promoting the industry and bridging the divide between urban and rural communities.

Education and investing in our future generations have become a real focus of late. Last year, more than three thousand school children of primary and secondary school age from all over Wales, together with their teachers, attended our Winter Fair free of charge. There were presentations related to the soil, plants and animals, the food we eat and our environment. The youngsters' evident energy and reaction made us realise we had delivered something worthwhile and enduring.

Another important element of our charitable objects is to provide development opportunities for individuals from our sector. The introduction of the RWAS Rural Leadership Programme, now in its third year, has really taken off and three members of the inaugural cohort opened last year's show.

We are also continuing to invest in our facilities on the showground, with the ambition to cement its identity as the centre of excellence of agriculture in Wales.

The Society is extremely grateful for the top-sliced funding from the Revenue Support Grant distributed by the WLGA. This is essential in underpinning all the work mentioned above.

A copy of our most recent report and accounts is available from WLGA officers on request, together with our annual Journal which captures all the Society's work and charitable activities in far greater detail.

Urdd Eisteddfod – A stage for All – Annual Report

Welsh Local Authorities' financial contribution means that over 100,000 children and young people have arts opportunities through the Welsh language, consistently across Wales. A high number of these are first steps into the creative world, and increase confidence, performance and creation skills, and pride in culture and the Welsh language.

Without the Local Authorities' investment into the activities of the Urdd Eisteddfod, holding would constant arts events in all regions are impossible. The financial contribution goes towards supporting the creative future of Welsh youth, contributing

towards the costs of freelance artists, hiring placements within our communities, and contributing to administrative staff for the maintenance of the Events.

Welsh Language Arts Events in the Community

Strengthening the Welsh language arts within our communities:

Children's benefit - Support for the Urdd Eisteddfod means a high number of children can participate in the arts within their community, in urban and rural areas, with over 100,000 competing across Wales.

Community Benefit - Over 200 District, Region and National Eisteddfodau are held in the Urdd's name through the period of October – May annually. Overall at these events, over 1,500 local artists participate and are critiqued and network at the Eisteddfodau, which strengthens the network and economic value of the creative industry within the Local Authority.

With over 2,000 stewards volunteering at the Eisteddfodau across Wales, the Urdd gives people of all ages the opportunity to come together to contribute positively to their community. In addition, a high percentage of those volunteers are young people with work experience at the Eisteddfod.

Eisteddfodau across all regions. The Urdd encourages a host creative industry by creating a career pathway for young performers and artists to stay within their communities.

Economic Value to the Local Authority- According to the Urdd's latest economic assessment in 2023, the Guild's local, regional and national Eisteddfodau generate economic value of £16.0m in Wales. The Urdd National Eisteddfod is a touring festival that visits each Local Authority in turn, and generates £8.5m in the local area. In addition, Urdd National Eisteddfod visitors spend £5.8 million on goods and services from organisations based in the area that host the festival.

Platform for Welsh Youth

The Urdd Eisteddfod gives a platform to children's and young people's talents:

Urdd for All and Free Entry – 22.4% of Urdd competitors come from low-income backgrounds, who would face barriers to participating in arts events in Welsh without the Urdd Eisteddfod.

To ensure that the Urdd remains for everyone, the Urdd has funded free tickets for families and low-income individuals to attend all the Eisteddfodau in a circle and region within their communities, to enjoy the performances and creative work of Welsh children and young people. With Welsh Government support, the Urdd also offers low-income tickets to the National festival, to ensure that those facing financial barriers are immersed in the Welsh language arts.

Urdd Eisteddfod in Media - At the Urdd National Eisteddfod, the competition and pitch can be enjoyed from home, with S4C and BBC Radio Cymru broadcasting over 80 hours during the week by reaching over 500,000 people on television and social media. The whole cast of competition and the field is also featured by national papers and magazines such as BBC Cymru Fyw, Wales Online and Nation.Cymru,

giving well-deserved and national attention to the talents of Wales' youth from all local authorities.

Urdd Eisteddfod Supports Education, and Learning Welsh

Participation in the Urdd Eisteddfod assists schools to achieve the aim of Charter laith, and to increase interest in the Welsh language. The activities of the Urdd Eisteddfod also support Wales' new curriculum.

Taking part in the Urdd Eisteddfod invigorates the Welsh language within the schools, and encourages children to get on with learning Welsh. The Urdd is an important partner for the Welsh Government in aiming for Welsh 2050, and a key partner for all Local Authorities in reaching strategy goals for the linguistics of the county. 15% of the Urdd's competitors are Welsh learners, or completely new to the language. The Urdd Eisteddfod sees a 10% annual increase in Welsh learners taking part in the festival.

In 2023, for example, the new Yr.6 and Junior Learner Choir competition was introduced with 6 choirs competing. This year in 2024, 24 choirs of learners competed and gained first experiences in the Welsh language.

Here are some **statistics** for children, young people and adults across Wales who have been involved with the Urdd Eisteddfod in 2024:

- 89% agree that participation in the Urdd Eisteddfod increases an individual's confidence
- 90% agree that participating in the Urdd Eisteddfod increases pride in culture and the Welsh language
- 86% agree that taking part in the Urdd Eisteddfod is a good way to learn the Welsh language
- 87% agree that the Urdd Eisteddfod is a great day for the family and enjoy.