



# Welsh Language Tribunal Annual Report 2024 – 2025



Tribiwnlys y Gymraeg  
Welsh Language Tribunal

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# Foreword

It is a privilege to have the opportunity to present my first annual report as President of the Welsh Language Tribunal. I was appointed in October 2024, and after a handover period, I formally took up the role in December 2024. I am extremely grateful to my predecessor, Iwan Jenkins, for his kind support during this time and for his significant contribution to the work of the Tribunal during his time in the role.

I am joining the Tribunal at an exciting time in its history. In March 2025, 10 new public bodies were added under the existing Welsh Language Standards Regulations. And new Regulations will set standards for water authorities in Wales, which will be in force from August 2025. As we discussed in our Annual Training event this year, it will be interesting to see what these developments will mean for the work of the Tribunal.

The discussion is ongoing regarding the merger of the Tribunals in Wales, and there will be a need to keep an eye on developments as the work progresses.

There have been, and we are still undergoing, a number of changes in the Tribunal's membership this year. In addition to Iwan's term as President coming to an end, Isata Kanneh and Sara Peacock left at the end of their term as Lay Members. Isata and Sara have contributed greatly to the work of the Tribunal over the years. I want to thank Iwan, Isata and Sara for their excellent service and all their hard work. As a consequence a number of new Lay Members will start this year, and I look forward to meeting them.

The current members and administrative staff have all ensured that the new members have a beneficial induction to the work of the Tribunal, and I am grateful to them all. I look forward to working together and continuing the important work of the Tribunal over the coming year.

**Betsan Criddle CB**

President of the Welsh Language Tribunal

# Section 1 – About us

In this section:

- Background
- The Tribunal's Functions
- The Tribunal's Rules
- Practice Directions
- Members of the Tribunal
- Training
- Contacting the Tribunal
- The Tribunal's Accessibility

## Background

The Welsh Language Tribunal is a statutory tribunal established under section 120 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 ('the Measure'). The Tribunal's function is to decide on appeals against the Welsh Language Commissioner's ('the Commissioner') decisions in relation to Welsh Language Standards.

The Tribunal is one of the seven "Welsh Tribunals" listed in section 59 of the Wales Act 2017. It therefore comes under the leadership of the President of the Welsh Tribunals. The final annual report of Sir Gary Hickinbottom, President of Welsh Tribunals, can be found at [www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-07/president-of-welsh-tribunals-fifth-annual-report-2023-2024.pdf](http://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-07/president-of-welsh-tribunals-fifth-annual-report-2023-2024.pdf).

## The Tribunal's Functions

The Measure enables the Tribunal to hear the following:

1. Appeals against the Commissioner's decisions in terms of imposing Standards on bodies and officers exercising functions or providing public services in Wales.
2. Appeals by a person, against whom a complaint has been made, against determinations by the Commissioner, at the end of an investigation, regarding failure to comply with the requirement of a Standard.
3. Appeals by a complainant against a determination by the Commissioner, at the end of an investigation, that a person, against whom a complaint had been made, had not failed to comply with a Standard.
4. Appeals against enforcement actions taken by the Commissioner.
5. Appeals against evidence notices issued by the Commissioner during an investigation.
6. Reviews of decisions on behalf of the Commissioner not to investigate a complaint (or to discontinue an investigation without reaching a decision).

## The Tribunal's Rules

The Tribunal operates according to its procedural rules – [The Welsh Language Tribunal Rules 2015](#). The purpose of these Rules is to ensure that all cases heard by the Tribunal are treated fairly, consistently and promptly. They ensure that everyone who comes before the Tribunal understands precisely the steps they must take so that the facts of the dispute and the relevant arguments can be presented effectively to the Tribunal. They also ensure that every party to the case understands the arguments of the other parties and can respond to them.

According to section 123 of the Measure, the President has a duty to produce Tribunal Rules on the practices and procedures to be followed in the Tribunal.

The Tribunal's Rules set out the following:

- Common Rules which deal with some basic common principles and define the specialist terms used in the Rules;
- Provisions dealing with selecting the Tribunal Members who will hear individual cases;
- How to commence an application to the Tribunal;
- The practical actions that must be taken to prepare a case for a hearing;
- The powers which the Tribunal will have to manage cases, including the directions the Tribunal will be able to give to parties regarding the actions which they must take before a hearing;
- The process for hearings and formal decisions made by the Tribunal;
- What happens after a decision has been reached, including the arrangements for reviewing the Tribunal's decisions or appealing to the High Court;
- Various other provisions, including: administrative rules regarding the recording of decisions, submission of documents and setting deadlines.

## Practice Directions

The President is authorised, under section 124 of the Measure and Rule 4 of the Rules, to issue Practice Directions to provide practical advice on how to interpret and implement the Rules.

### Practice Direction 1 – Commencing a case

Rule 10 of the Rules provides that an application to the Tribunal must be made by submitting a written document (notice of application) to the Tribunal. Rule 12 prescribes the information that must be included in a notice of application or accompany said notice.

The purpose of this Practice Direction is to publish a form which, when used by an applicant, will assist the applicant (or the applicant's representative) to conform with the requirements of Rule 12. That form should be used to submit a notice of application.

Nevertheless, it is not a legal requirement to use this form. An applicant may supply the information prescribed under Rule 12 by some other means, but the use of the form will:

- ensure that all the required information is provided;
- assist the Tribunal to consider that information in the most consistent and effective way possible.

## Practice Direction 2 – The use of the Tribunal’s languages

Rule 6 of the Rules provides:

- that the English and Welsh languages shall be the languages of the Tribunal;
- that each party or witness shall have the right to use either language in the proceedings of the Tribunal.

The purpose of this Practice Direction is to provide practical advice on how the Rules should be interpreted and applied in accordance with Rule 6.

In accordance with Rule 4(4), the contents of this Direction are subject to any instructions given to the Tribunal in relation to a specific case.

This Practice Instruction relates only to communications which form part of the proceedings of the Tribunal in relation to a specific case, and which are governed by the provisions of the Rules.

## Practice Direction 3 – Exercising the functions of the Tribunal

This Practice Direction describes the arrangements for determining who will usually take decisions in the Tribunal’s name. It provides, for example, that the President of the Tribunal (or another legally-qualified member of the Tribunal) will deal with preparatory questions, before a case reaches a hearing, whilst the hearing, and the final decision on the case, will be the responsibility of a panel of three Tribunal members.

## Practice Direction 4 – Applications to the Tribunal to cancel an evidence notice

This Practice Direction applies the Tribunal’s procedures to a particular class of appeals which can arise out of an investigation by the Commissioner into a complaint, namely appeals to the Tribunal against evidence notices given by the Commissioner under paragraph 5 of Schedule 10 to the Measure.

## Members of the Tribunal

The Welsh Ministers are responsible for appointing and reappointing the Tribunal’s President, legally qualified Members and Lay Members. The Presiding Officer and Members were appointed after the vacancies were advertised, and following a competitive interview by a panel convened on behalf of the Welsh Government, or via a competitive cross-ticking process. The President and other Members of the Tribunal were appointed for a term of five years, or, in the case of cross-ticketed Members, while their service was still required.

<b>President</b>	The President has judicial responsibility over the Tribunal and its Members.
<b>Legal Members</b>	The legal Members are Lawyers (Barristers or Solicitors) and they are responsible for presiding over hearings and for exercising functions in relation to preliminary steps – e.g. issuing directions in relation to the evidence presented by parties.
<b>Lay Members</b>	Lay Members have a wide range of knowledge and experience relevant to the work of the Tribunal. They play a full part, with an equal voice to that of the other Members (including Legal Members) in the decision-making of the Tribunal.

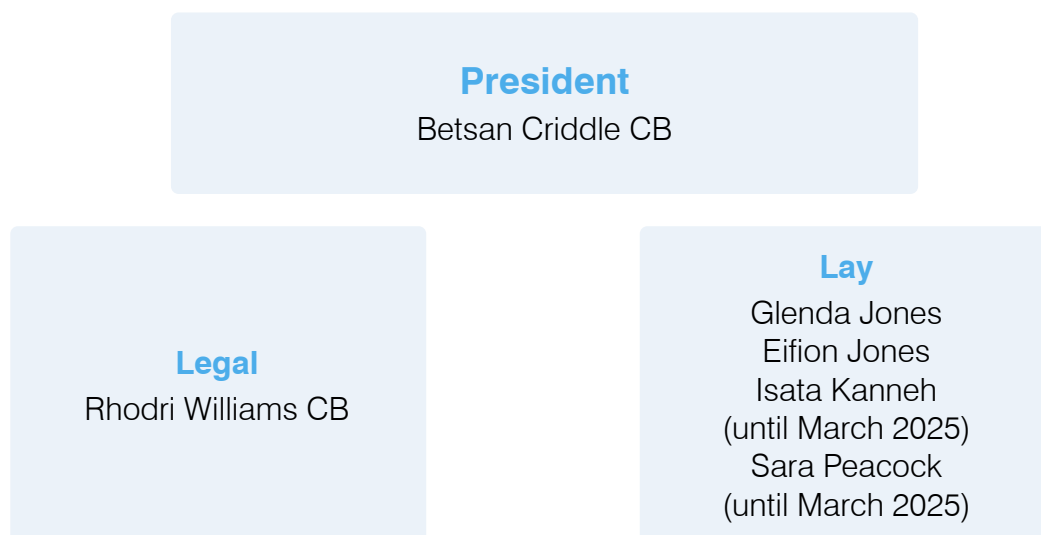
## Secretariat

The day-to-day administration of the Tribunal is delegated to the Tribunal's secretariat, which deals with the preliminary work and the work of processing applications to the Tribunal. Prior to a hearing, the secretariat will consult with the President and/or the Legal Member who will be chairing a particular hearing on any legal matters which may arise in the preliminary stages of cases, and will send any written rulings or directions to the parties in question.

The secretariat is a contact point for the Tribunal's members and customers. The administration is provided, under section 127 of the Measure, by the Welsh Government.

## Appointments and reappointments

Betsan Criddle CB was appointed President of the Tribunal in October 2024 following the retirement of Iwan Jenkins.



After a 10 year term of service at the Tribunal, Isata Kanneh and Sara Peacock's term ended in March 2025. The Tribunal is very grateful to them for their valuable contributions.

A recruitment campaign was carried out by the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) in Spring 2025 to appoint Lay Members for the Welsh Tribunal. The Tribunal also recruited Lay Members in May 2025 through a cross-ticking process.

## Training

The President of the Welsh Language Tribunal has a statutory duty, under section 133 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, to maintain appropriate arrangements for the training of Tribunal Members.

The 2024-2025 Annual Training was held in March 2025 for all members and staff of the Tribunal. Sessions were held on the regulation of Welsh language standards and the development of standards for the water sector in Wales, as well as reflecting on the work and processes of the Tribunal.

## Contacting the Tribunal

Here are the Welsh Language Tribunal's contact details:

Address:	Welsh Language Tribunal Oak House Cleppa Park Newport NP10 8BD
Tribunal Helpline:	03000 256702
Tribunal E-mail:	<a href="mailto:tyg@gov.wales">tyg@gov.wales</a>
Tribunal website:	<a href="http://www.welshlanguagetribunal.gov.wales">www.welshlanguagetribunal.gov.wales</a>

## The Tribunal's Accessibility

You are welcome to communicate with the Tribunal in Welsh or English. Rule 6 of the Rules provides:

- that the English and Welsh languages shall be the languages of the Tribunal;
- that each party or witness shall have the right to use either language in the proceedings of the Tribunal.

[Practice Direction 2](#) provides practical advice on how to interpret and apply the Rules in accordance with Rule 6.

Please make sure that you give details of any additional needs you, or your representative, have when you send your application notice to us. For instance, if you need a signer or interpreter during the hearing, or if you require any additional arrangements to be made for the hearing, we will ensure that the necessary steps are taken.



## Section 2 – Performance and Development

This section discusses:

- Numbers and statistics
- Internal reviews and appeals to the High Court
- Complaints
- Effectiveness of our service

### Numbers and statistics

The Measure enables an individual or an organisation to appeal to the Tribunal on the following matters:

- Section 58 – Determination by the Commissioner that the requirement to comply with a standard (or to comply with a standard in a particular respect) is not unreasonable or disproportionate.
- Section 95(2) – Determination by the Commissioner that there has been a failure to comply with the requirement of a standard.
- Schedule 10, paragraphs 9 and 10 – appeals against evidence notices issued by the Commissioner during an investigation.
- Section 95(4) – Enforcement action which the Commissioner has decided to take.
- Section 99(2) – Determination by the Commissioner that there has not been a failure to comply with a standard.
- Section 103 – Determination by the Commissioner not to carry out an investigation into a complaint (or to discontinue an investigation).

### Applications

3 new applications were received during 2024-25 and the Tribunal has also dealt with 1 application carried over from 2023-24. Of the 3 new applications, 2 have carried over to 2025-2026. 'Carried over' in this context means a case whereby the application was not completed before the end of the year in which the application was received.

Type of application	Number received in 2024-25	Carried over from 2023-24	Carried over to 2025-26	Accepted *	Rejected	Withdrawn
Section 58	-	-	-	-	-	-
Section 95(2)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Section 95(4)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Section 99(2)	-	1	-	-	1	-
Section 103	3	-	2	1	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

\* 'Accepted' in the context of a case under section 103 means that the Tribunal has given permission for the case to proceed.

### The types of cases brought to the Tribunal during 2024-25 (2 cases):

Type of case	Number of cases
Applications for a review of the Commissioner's decision to not investigate a complaint (Section 103 of the Measure)	1
Applications against a determination by the Commissioner that there has not been a failure to comply with a standard (Section 99(2) of the Measure)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>

### How cases were resolved in 2024-2025

Type of appeal	2024-2025
Withdrawn	-
Permission to make an application was refused (cases under section 103)	2
Permission to make an application was granted (cases under section 103)	1
Appeal rejected	1
Appeal accepted	-
Carried over to 2025-26	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

Time Between Receipt of an Application and Resolution	
Average number of working days between receiving the application and resolution	How the application was resolved
13 days	Permission to make the application was refused (cases under section 103 of the Measure only)
46* days	Permission to make an application was granted (cases under section 103 of the Measure only)
38 days	Decision on the appeal (cases under section 99(2) of the Measure only)
79 days	Number of working days between receipt of application and resolution, on average

\* The period of time between permission refused on paper to make an application until permission was granted to make the application following an oral hearing.

## Hearings

During 2024-2025 the Tribunal held:

- 2 hearings by the panel.

## Internal reviews and appeals to the High Court

### Internal review of the Tribunal's decision

A party may apply to the Tribunal to review its decision on the grounds:

- a) that the decision made is incorrect due to a significant error on the part of the Tribunal's administration;
- b) that a party who had the right to be heard at the hearing, but who failed to appear or be represented, had a good and sufficient reason for not attending, or
- c) that there is an obvious and important error in the decision.

An application for a review of the Tribunal's determination must be made in writing, stating the grounds, no later than 28 days after the date that the decision was sent to the parties.

During the period of this report, no applications for an internal review of a decision were received.

Appeals to the High Court

A party, with the permission of the Tribunal or the High Court, may appeal to the High Court on a legal point arising from a determination of the Tribunal.

The Tribunal must receive your application for permission to appeal to the High Court within 28 calendar days from the date the parties were notified of the Tribunal’s decision. It is up to the person considering an appeal to take their own legal advice.

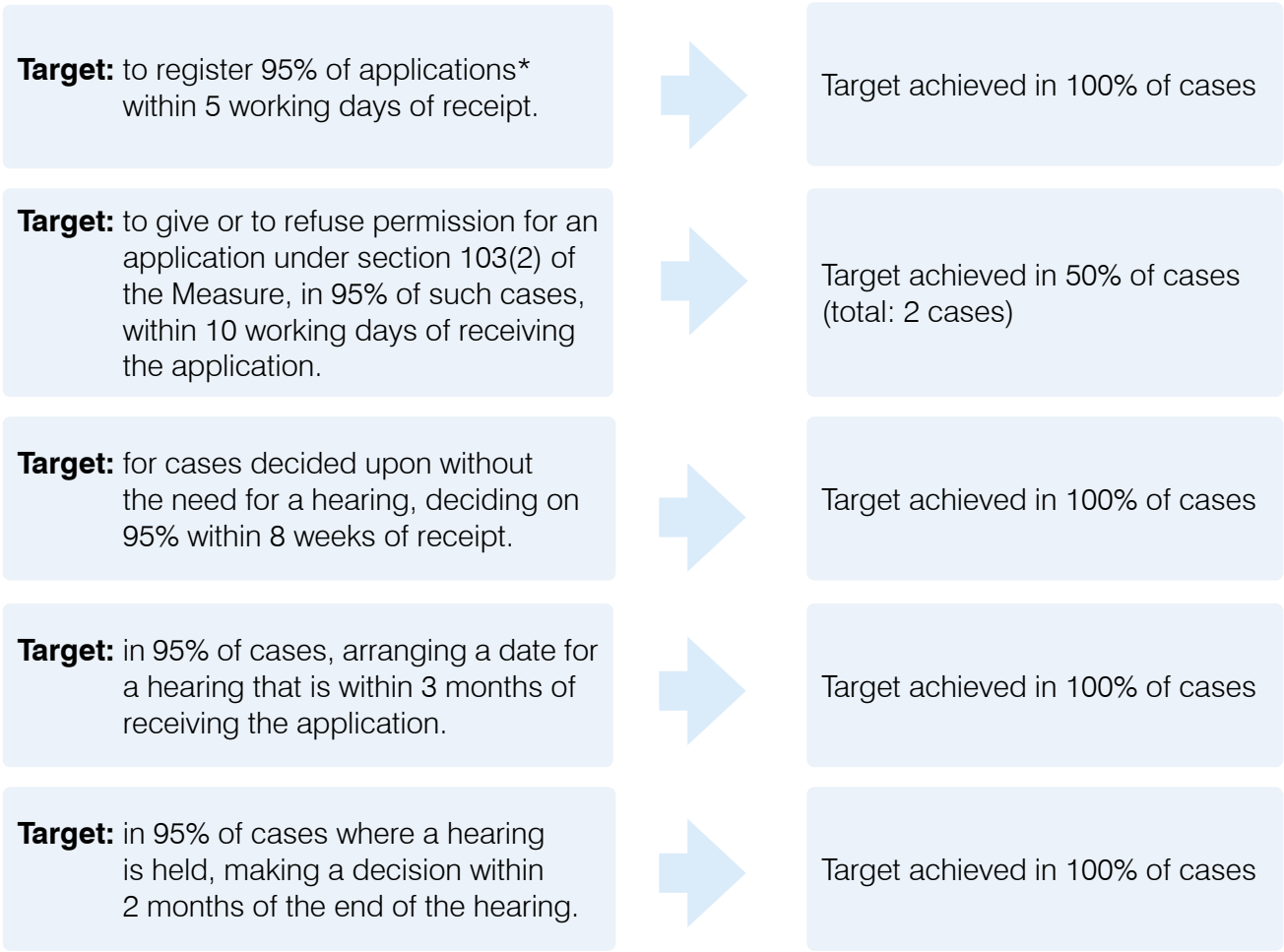
During the period of this report, the Tribunal received 1 application for permission to appeal to the High Court against a determination of the Tribunal.

Complaints

The Tribunal did not receive a complaint during the period of this report.

Effectiveness of our service

In order to monitor the effectiveness of our services, we will aim to have key performance indicators in place to measure customer satisfaction with two key aspects of our work: the efficiency of our service, and its quality.



## Section 3 – Business Priorities

In this section:

- **Business Priorities 2025-2026**

It is important that the Tribunal develops in a way which enables us to provide our customers with the best possible service. This section deals with how the Tribunal will build on its achievements by focusing on business priorities and our commitment to our users.

Business Priorities for 2025-2026:

- To plan and provide training for all members.
- To continue to monitor and update the Welsh Language Tribunal's website.
- To provide a high quality service.
- To fine-tune how the Tribunal works, based on the experiences of dealing with cases, in order to ensure work of the highest quality when considering and deciding on cases.
- To conduct face-to-face hearings where possible but to continue to hold virtual hearings if doing so is preferable and fair in relation to the case and the parties.
- To continue to develop information to be included as part of the original application form, in order to improve case efficiency.

## Section 4 – Expenditure

### Expenditure for 2024-2025

Contents	Amount (£)*
Total Tribunal Running Costs†	£ 17,000
Proportion Attributed to Training	£2,300

\* rounded to the nearest £100

† This does not include any administrative staff costs.