



**Annual General Meeting, 23 May 2018**  
**Cyfarfod Cyffredinol Blynyddol, 23 Mai 2018**

**AGM/2018/04**  
**Agendum 7**  
**CCB/2018/04**  
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## **Review of Activities and Developments**

As Wales's national academy the **Learned Society of Wales (LSW)** brings together the most successful and talented Fellows connected with Wales for the shared purpose and common good of advancing and promoting excellence in all scholarly disciplines. The Society works to improve public awareness and understanding of research and scholarship from Wales, and provides analysis and comment on matters pertinent to Wales.

The Society's most important resource remains its Fellowship and its Secretariat, as well as the partnerships forged across a range of stakeholders including universities, professions, business, industry and government.

The year 2017/18 saw an increase in the workload of the Secretariat. This involved managing the growing volume and diversity of events and activities across Wales, servicing the year-long nomination and electoral process, providing expert comments and consultation responses on a number of Welsh and UK government policy issues, together with ensuring due compliance with legislative, governance and regulatory requirements.

Amanda Kirk joined the Society in June as the Clerk to Council, replacing Gwen Lloyd Aubrey who took up a position at the WJEC. Professor Peter Halligan left the position of Chief Executive in late February 2018, and in the interim Dr Sarah Morse has acted up as the Acting Chief Executive. Tia Culley has provided administrative support on a casual basis since February, and has helped to organise the Fellows' Dinner and medal ceremony, and is working to support the organisation of the next International Symposium, which will be held in Cambridge in September.

The Society remains very grateful for the engagement and commitment of its Fellows and the generous in-kind support provided by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, as well as the other Welsh universities.

The activities of the Society are shaped by the charity's mission:

- *to celebrate, recognise, preserve, protect and encourage excellence in all of the scholarly disciplines, and in the professions, industry and commerce, the arts and public service;*
- *to promote the advancement of learning and scholarship and the dissemination and application of the results of academic enquiry and research; and*
- *to act as a source of independent and expert scholarly advice and comment on matters affecting the wellbeing of Wales and its people and to advance public discussion and interaction on matters of national and international importance.*

In March 2018, the Council resolved to add a further aspect to the Society's Mission, to recognise the organisation's potential to inspire:

- *To **champion excellent research and researchers, catalyse ambition and inspire researchers, youth and society more generally***

This ambition will be reflected in an increase in our outreach activities with young people, and teachers.

## **Celebrating Scholarship— Society Medals and Prizes**

Medals and awards, conferred on the basis of merit have provided a long and distinguished history of recognition in academia and other national academies. The Society continues to develop its own portfolio of medals, and in the last Society year has secured funding to establish two new medals for outstanding public engagement work by researchers. The Society's medals not only recognise academic excellence, but also recover and promote the long legacy of Welsh achievement.

At the Society's Fellows and Awards Dinner, the President will announce and award four of the Society's six medals. The **Menelaus** and **Hugh Owen** Medals will not be awarded this year, but the third **Frances Hoggan Medal** for outstanding female researchers in STEMM will be awarded, along with the second series of **Dillwyn Medals** (supported by Airbus) for early career researchers in STEMM, arts and humanities and the social sciences. Nominations received this year were of a high quality, but the volume of nominations was relatively low. This is in part due to pressures on the office which limited the promotional campaign. The nomination window will open earlier in 2018/19 and there will be a concerted effort to promote the medals to increase nominations.

Members of the medal committees are listed in Appendix B of the Governance and Governing Instruments paper.

Following the successful synergistic model operated by the **Royal Society of Edinburgh** and **Scottish Crucible**, the LSW now contributes to the evaluation/selection of potential Welsh Crucible candidates and evaluation/selection of the subsequent competitive grant applications for the Welsh Crucible fund. The Society also continues to support the In **Welsh Crucible Prize** awarded to the best of the completed research projects.

## **Programme of lectures and Events**

In keeping with the Society's Mission to promote scholarship and learning across Wales, the Society supported or organised 30 events during the last Society year.

Details of the programme of events past and future is available to view on the Society's [website](#).

This year saw the Society further develop the series of **Partnership Lectures**, organised with universities and other organisations in Wales; in November we supported the Annual Edward Lhuyd Lecture, organised by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, in December we co-organised the annual joint lecture with the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion and in March we held a partnership lecture with the Open University in Wales. The last year also saw the first joint lecture with the Campaign for Science and Engineering (CaSE); the lecture, by the Chief Executive of Innovate UK, Dr Ruth McKernan CBE, on 'New Strategies for Backing the UK's Leading Innovators in Wales ' was held at Cardiff University in February. Partnership lectures with the National Museum of Wales, the University of Wales Press, and the National Library of Wales are in development.

In April, the Society supported a symposium organised by the Cardiff Metropolitan University's Hodge Foundation Research Project on The Future of the Welsh Economy, which considered the 'Institutions Needed for Economic Development. The event built on the work of the Society's first International Symposium.

We also worked with the **National Assembly's for Wales' Research Service** s to develop a seminar series aimed at promoting evidence-led policy and provide Assembly Members with the opportunity to learn, exchange and discuss new ideas with leading academic experts. The Exchanging Ideas Seminar Series (EISS) was a series of four events, addressing how ambitious Welsh Government policy should be in 4 areas: **Economic strategy, finance and infrastructure; Growing and diversifying civil society in Wales; A smarter energy future for Wales; and Health and Social care in rural Wales**. The seminars provided a forum to present and disseminate research findings in an accessible format, on issues that are relevant to the programme of business of the

National Assembly for Wales. Attendees included AMs and their support staff; party researchers, Assembly Research Service staff, Assembly Commission staff and representatives from industry and the third sector.

## Recognition and Relevance

In addition to advancing learning and knowledge, a key aspect of the Society's missions is *"to promote and contribute to cultural, social, environmental and economic development within Wales and beyond"*.

To achieve this aim, the Society has to be seen as relevant by its stakeholders, and cultivate an appropriate public-facing image. This is in keeping with the main aim of the Strategic Plan (2014-18) to be *"acknowledged both as the recognised representative of the world of Welsh learning internationally and as a source of authoritative, scholarly and critical comment and on policy issues affecting Wales"*.

In the course of the last year, the Society consulted its stakeholders to capture their views, and to feed these in to the development of the next Strategic Plan. A number of stakeholders made the point that the Society was unique amongst organisations in Wales for being able to speak out on issues and convene discussions from a non-partisan, neutral position, using its credibility as an independent, evidence-based organisation to address difficult, long term issues. They considered that there is a space in the public sphere for the Society to lead and shape debate. [A summary of the responses received is available here](#). Further details of the Stakeholder Consultation can be found in Agendum 6.

During the last year, the Society has grown its national and international impact, and demonstrated its social value as a respected, independent and influential voice for Wales. An important part of this aspect of our work was the *Wales and the World* publication, which appeared in the *Times Higher Education* in September 2018. Over 15,000 copies were distributed and the publication received much positive feedback, and has underlined the role the Society plays in public life in Wales. [Wales and the World is available here](#).

Over the last year, we have continued to strengthen our relationships with national academies in the UK and academies in Europe, and Officers have represented the Society at a range of national and international academy events including the Royal Society of Edinburgh's event 'How can national academies work together to tackle global issues?', [a report on which is available here](#).

## Government policy and related issues

In accordance with the Society's Mission *"to act as a source of independent and expert scholarly advice and comment on matters affecting the wellbeing of Wales and its people and to advance public discussion and interaction on matters of national and international importance"*, the Society, has provided responses and consultations addressing a number of areas of UK and Welsh government policy.

The Society submitted responses and evidence to the following reviews:

- The Commission on Justice in Wales
- The Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Care in Wales
- The Independent Review of S4C
- The Welsh Affairs Committee's Brexit: Agriculture, Trade and the repatriation of powers inquiry
- The Welsh government's consultation on A reformed post-compulsory education and training system
- The House of Lords Constitution Committee inquiry on the EU (Withdrawal) Bill
- The Welsh Government's consultation on developing an interpretation act for Wales
- The joint consultation on the European (Withdrawal) Bill and its implications for Wales, run by the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee and the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee

- The National Assembly for Wales's Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee consultation the promotion of Wales abroad.
- The Welsh government's Review of Research and Innovation in Wales (Reid Review)

*Further details of the Society's comments and submissions are available on the Society's website.*

The Society has also continued to work with the other national academies on policy issues related to Brexit, and in August we issued a joint statement with the British Academy, the Royal Irish Academy and the Royal Society of Edinburgh have published a statement expressing our readiness to engage with the UK Government as it proceeds with the negotiations with the EU and in facilitating the various other arrangements which will be necessary after the UK exits the EU. The statement also made recommendations regarding research and funding post-Brexit, as well as the relationships between Westminster and the devolved administrations as the UK leaves the EU.

## **Networking and Relationship building**

Recognising the importance of communicating the Society's mission and benefits and the need to further develop relationships with a range of stakeholders, the Chief Executive, Acting Chief Executive, Fellowship and Engagement Officer, the President and Officers of the Society have during the year met with representatives of a wide range of organisations.