



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Legal Services

Information Pack





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

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Foreword

Thank you for your interest in the posts of Welsh Government Lawyer.

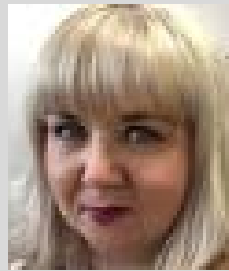
This is an opportunity to make a substantial contribution to delivering high quality legal advice and support at the heart of government and devolution in Wales.

The Legal Services Department is the largest public sector legal department in Wales and is responsible for the delivery of all legal services to the Welsh Government. It is an exciting time to be involved in taking forward the new devolution settlement, with new and enhanced powers. The appointment of additional lawyers will further strengthen the ability of the Legal Services Department to support the Welsh Government at this critical time.

As a government lawyer you will be part of the Civil Service and the Government Legal Service. Your experience will give you a unique understanding of the devolution settlement in Wales. It offers lawyers a unique opportunity to work within a dynamic environment that places them at the heart of devolved government, projects of national significance and profile, at the cutting edge of major constitutional developments, including the significant challenges raised by withdrawal from the European Union, and at the forefront of the policy and law making process.

You will provide legal advice in a fast paced, public law environment where often the issues are high profile and significant in terms of the developing UK constitution. You will work in a team situation, gaining experience of working with lawyers, policy clients and Welsh Ministers to shape policy in Wales.

This is an exciting time to be joining the Welsh Government and to be able to play an important part in the delivery of the Welsh Government's programme for government. We look forward to receiving your application.



Helen Lentle
Director of Legal Services

Government Lawyer Biographies

Chris Humphreys
Local Government & Community Safety Team Lawyer



“If you’re not already working in Government, you have nothing to fear in applying to join us. The work here is varied and challenging but, at its heart, just like any other legal work. I came from a University teaching background and was quickly able to get to grips with the type of public law work involved and the skills needed to meet the daily challenges. Each day brings something unique and you feel like you’re making a difference.”

Louise Davies
Transport Team Lawyer



“Having trained and practised in a corporate/commercial law firm, I had very little experience of public law prior to joining the Welsh Government’s Legal Services Department. Following qualification, I worked at Eversheds Sutherland for 5 years dealing with Planning, Environmental and Compulsory Purchase matters so the move to the public sector was quite a change for me. I currently work in the Legal Services Transport Team and have been involved in some very interesting, varied work. The work is challenging and often takes you outside your comfort zone (particularly having been a “specialist” previously) but as you’re not working against a fee estimate or watching your billing figures you have the luxury of more time to consider the problem fully – which is something I’d never experienced previously. The Welsh Government has given me a different perspective of the legal world and provided me with the work/life balance that I was looking for. I most certainly haven’t regretted the decision to move!”

Sarah Tyler
Social Care Team Lawyer



“I joined the Welsh Government Legal Services Department last year having previously worked in private practice for over 10 years. I was a member of a Chambers in Swansea practising as a self-employed Barrister. I mainly practised in the area of Family Law and spent the majority of my time at Court, representing and advising lay clients. I now work in the Social Care Legal Team. Although the work is significantly different to my previous role, there has been the opportunity to develop skills in new areas and there is a wide variety of work within the team. It was a significant change of career, yet the skills and knowledge I built up in private practice gave me a good footing to undertake a lot of the work I have been doing here.”

Alison Henders-Green
Planning Team Lawyer



“Prior to joining the Welsh Government I worked in private practice for over 20 years, specialising in Commercial Litigation. I have been working for the Welsh Government Legal Services Planning Team for just over 4 years. I find the work varied, challenging at times and intellectually demanding. It is an enjoyable working environment and I have had the chance to work on interesting, high profile projects including advising on Building Regulations in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower disaster.”

Heidi Mason
Social Care Team Lawyer



“I joined the Welsh Government’s Legal Services Department in June 2020, having previously been employed as a childcare solicitor in a local authority for the best part of 20 years. I am part of the Social Care Team in Legal Services, and have already been given the opportunity to advise on a wide range of diverse and interesting matters. The work is both unique and challenging and has enabled me to quickly build upon my previous experience. I am excited at the opportunity to develop my knowledge and skills further.

Legal Services and Welsh Government offer flexible working arrangements which has meant that I have been able to achieve a good work/life balance - working part-time whilst also reaping the benefits of a challenging and rewarding role. I am a fluent Welsh speaker and have made links with other Welsh speakers in Legal Services.

I have also been able to communicate with clients through the medium of Welsh which has been a positive experience for me as there was little opportunity for me to do this in my previous role.

Despite starting my career with Welsh Government in the midst of the coronavirus lockdown, I have been made to feel extremely welcome and have been well supported by members of my team and right across the department. I have not looked back!!”

Nick Howard
Constitution Team Lawyer



“I joined Welsh Government in 2014 after working as a Senior Lecturer at the College of Law, and University of South Wales. I’d specialised in Constitutional and Administrative Law, but wanted to do it rather than just talk about it! Since joining, I’ve been able to work on things that just wouldn’t come across your desk elsewhere – like the Miller case on Article 50 TFEU, which was the first time the entire Supreme Court bench had sat; various National Assembly Bills; a major constitutional Bill going through the UK Parliament (the Wales Act 2017); and judicial review cases. I love what I do – it’s challenging, varied and there is room to be creative as you’re working at the margins of a developing constitutional settlement. It’s also a great place to work with flexible hours, a good annual leave allowance and social activities like Wednesday night 5-a-side.”

Tim Jones
Environment and Energy Team Leader



“I moved to Welsh Government Legal Services in 2014 from GLD (TSol as then was), where I’d spent time advising several different Whitehall Departments. Quality of life and cost of living on this side of Offa’s Dyke were factors in our decision to leave London, but my wife (another Government lawyer!) and I were principally drawn to the opportunity of working in a more compact organisation. Working previously for the State Government of Victoria (Australia), I had particularly liked the greater sense of proximity to the strategic operation of Government as a whole and opportunities for working across-Government offered by an organisation of this size.

Those hopes have absolutely been borne out by my experience since joining – first as Team Leader for the lawyers advising the Counsel General directly on a huge range of matters, and latterly as Team Leader of Energy and Environment. With a portfolio of responsibilities in the team equivalent to roughly half of Defra plus bits of BEIS, all our lawyers carry substantial individual responsibility, but (I hope!) find the breadth and variety of exposure which this provides stimulating and satisfying. I certainly enjoy working with such bright and kind colleagues.”

Charlotte Cheetham
Commercial Team Lawyer



“Before joining the Commercial and Public Contracts Team in the Welsh Government’s Legal Services Department, I spent over 5 years working at Blake Morgan – initially as a trainee solicitor and later qualifying into the firm’s Commercial team. In private practice I had a large number of public sector clients and regularly advised them on commercial and contract law matters. I started to become curious about what it would be like to work in-house so when a vacancy arose at the Welsh Government as a commercial lawyer, I decided to explore it further. I really enjoyed working in private practice but I’ve never regretted the move to the Welsh Government.

I’ve now been a commercial lawyer for the Welsh Government for 18 months and I’ve had the opportunity to be involved in some very interesting work during this time. Some of my work is similar to the type of work I did in private practice but a lot of it is brand new such as working on legislation and contributing to submissions to Ministers. It’s been nice to have a new challenge and I’ve had plenty of support and encouragement to develop new skills. My colleagues are fantastic; I’ve got a good work/life balance; and there are lots of opportunities for learning and development.”

Legal Services Department and its Values

Over 100 lawyers and support staff provide legal advice and legislative drafting services to Ministers across all Welsh Government Cabinet portfolios.

The department consists of 18 legal subject teams which largely reflect the Welsh Government's Cabinet portfolios.

The teams are:

- Commercial & Public Contracts
- Property
- Housing, Communities, Community Safety, Equalities & Regeneration
- Constitution & Justice
- Economy and Tax
- Education (Further & Higher)
- Education (Schools), Welsh Language
- Education (Schools), Culture, Media, Sport & Tourism.
- Employment
- Environment
- Europe & International Trade
- Health
- Local Government & Finance
- Planning
- Transport
- Social Care
- Rural Affairs
- Food, Fisheries and Marine.

Those legal team portfolios are designated by the Director of Legal Services, and may be the subject of change from time to time to reflect the wider organisation of the Welsh Government, the business needs of the office or to facilitate professional development within the office.

Government Lawyers report to and support the posts of the Senior Government Lawyers and Deputy Directors of Legal Services.

As a Government Lawyer, you will be part of a large team responsible for the delivery of all legal services to the Welsh Government.

The services provided by the department include advice on complex matters of public and commercial law, the drafting of instructions to the Office of Legislative Counsel (the Welsh Government's equivalent of Parliamentary Counsel's Office), the drafting of primary legislation, the preparation of all Welsh Government subordinate legislation, the handling of high profile litigation and the drafting of a wide variety of commercial agreements.

The Legal Services Department's Management Board provides strategic leadership and is collectively responsible for delivering the department's organisational objectives. It plays a key role in ensuring that the department is equipped to provide a professional, efficient and high quality service in accordance with the department's values of being connected, enabling and committed, and in accordance with the department's vision of "professionalism, impartiality, excellence".

The Role

The posts currently available are Government Lawyer Public Law and Commercial Law posts.

Key Responsibilities

- Public Law post only - Prepare, or assist in the production of, full instructions for primary legislation either relating to Bills forming part of the Welsh Government legislative programme or relating to Welsh provisions in UK Parliamentary Bills.
- Public Law post only - Draft, or assist in drafting, a range of subordinate legislation and other formal documentation within the team portfolio and to monitor its passage through Senedd procedures as necessary.
- Commercial Law post only – Advise on, negotiate and draft a wide variety of public contracts and commercial agreements including those that facilitate the provision of financial support to business and Welsh Government investment in externally led projects that support policy objectives.
- Commercial Law post only - Advise and support in-house clients in connection with public procurement law and process and state aid compliance.
- Provide and contribute to the provision of legal advice within a team portfolio.
- Contribute to the effective delivery of services within the team portfolio.
- Contribute to the team and ensure responsiveness to customer/client's needs and changing circumstances.
- Undertake such other duties, responsibilities, tasks or projects as are specified by the Team Leader or a Deputy Director of Legal Services which are commensurate with the level of the post.
- Provide support and cover for colleagues within the office as directed by the Team Leader or a Deputy Director of Legal Services.

Appendix C

Legal Services Department Structure

