



**Un Llais Cymru
One Voice Wales**

National Awards

2026

Nomination Guide



We are delighted to be holding our National Awards 2026.

The Awards are an opportunity to showcase Community and Town Councils, the services they provide for their local communities and the commitment and work of Members, Clerks and staff. This is an opportunity for local Councils to receive the recognition they fully deserve.

The innovative practice recognised will play a key part as an evidence base to Welsh Government, unitary authorities, the third sector and other key partners to highlight the good work local Councils are doing in their communities.

The winning entries of each award category will be announced as part of the National Awards Ceremony to be held at the Royal Welsh Showground, Llanelwedd, LD2 3SY on Wednesday 1 July 2026.

We are pleased that this well-established event has become an integral part of the annual calendar of activities of One Voice Wales, and that we are able to recognise, reward and celebrate the Councils, Councillors and staff who work so hard to best represent and deliver for the communities they serve.



Cllr Mike Theodoulou
Chair, One Voice Wales

Introduction

Who Can Nominate

A Member or officer of a Council can nominate a Council for an award. Please note: the One Voice Wales Awards process is only open to Community and Town Councils who are current annual members of One Voice Wales.

How to Apply

To apply you must complete our on-line Application Form, making sure you have completed all the required sections and answered all the questions as accurately as possible. We have introduced very strict Word Count limits to some sections. It is not possible to exceed these word limits; if you do, your Application Form will not be successfully submitted.

Closing Date: 30 April 2026 (midnight)

All applications will be assessed and scored by an independent Assessment Panel. The Panel is made up of national strategic partners that have an expert understanding and knowledge of the Community and Town Council sector in Wales.

Your aim should be to provide the Assessment Panel with a concise Application Form, referring to source evidence and signposting to any further documentation that can substantiate and support your application. You can include weblinks to other sources of information to support your application, but these will be included in your final word count for that section.

Applications should include examples of good practice which represent new or 'groundbreaking' ways of designing and delivering public services and/or proven ways of delivering service improvements and efficiencies.

Should you be successful in being short-listed for an award, we will trust that you agree to share the information you have provided as part of the assessment process and give your consent for us to use the material in future promotional activity such as Conference Reports. Successful applications will be promoted on our website, in the media and across our social media.

Assessment Process

Applications will be assessed against each Category Theme and the following governance criteria:

- contributes to the achievement of national and local priorities
- contributes to democratic governance by elected members and stakeholders and public accountability
- collaborating with internal and external partners
- learning from others and influencing service sector
- evidence of impact, improvement and achievement on equalities
- evidence of impact on citizen and communities
- evidence of efficient and effective resource management (human and financial)
- evidence of sustainability in service and financial planning
- costs used and the power upon which the project relied

Naturally, the more evidence of the above you can provide with your application, the more it will improve your overall assessment and scoring.
N.B. Please remember to keep below the Word Limit of each section.

Timeline

Deadline for applications: 30 April 2026 (midnight)

Assessment Process: An independent assessment panel made up of representatives of partner and stakeholder organisations will meet to assess and score all the applications received. All Councils shortlisted for an award will be notified as early as possible and will be expected to attend the Awards Conference to collect their award.

Awards Ceremony: A special presentation ceremony will take place on Wednesday 1 July at the Royal Welsh Showground, Llanelwedd.

Awards – Winners will be presented with an engraved glass award, and all runners-up will receive a framed certificate.

Award Categories

1. Best Governance Initiative

This could include your Annual Report or how you have used the Finance & Governance Toolkit, other sound or innovative governance arrangements which reassure the public that the Council is well run and properly managed.

This award will recognise a Council that has produced an informative annual report for its residents and the wider community outlining its work, achievements and aspirations.

Criteria

You will be asked to describe and explain any of the following:

- How you have used the Finance & Governance Toolkit
- How your Annual Report has been publicised and distributed
- What benefit does it bring to the Council, its community and the wider public
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the assessment process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must complete the Application Form, covering all the criteria and remembering to upload a copy of the Annual Report if applicable.

Evidence (additional attachments) highlighting the service would also be beneficial (no more than 6 photographs).

2. Best Democratic Health Initiative

This award is to highlight the work a Council has undertaken to improve the democratic health of the community. How has the Council encouraged engagement and voting at elections?

Who can nominate?

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Criteria

You are asked to describe and explain the following:

- The actions and initiatives undertaken by the Council to improve Democratic Health within the community
- How the Council has encouraged engagement and participation of residents in voting at Elections within the community
- How has the Council supported diversity.
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the judging process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must complete the Application Form, covering all the criteria.

Evidence (additional attachments) highlighting the service would also be beneficial (no more than 6 photographs).

3. Best Use of Digital Resources

This award is to acknowledge the most innovative use of digital resources used by a Council including a council website that provides information and signposting to the work of the Council and local services; digital communications and promotional activities; social media platforms and other digital Apps.

Many Councils embrace digital communications to deliver sustainable and modern solutions and services: hybrid meetings, social media platforms, vibrant and lively websites, electronic newsletters? Tell us about your Council's achievements.

Who can nominate?

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Criteria

You will be asked to provide:

- the website address and social media links/addresses, and describe why the digital initiatives or activities undertaken are innovative
- evidence supporting the benefit to the community or the wider public from the digital resources used
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the judging process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must complete the Application Form, covering all the criteria.

Remember to highlight the addresses of the nominated website, the social media platforms and Apps.

4. Best Sustainability Initiative

This award recognises a sustainable initiative introduced by the Council. You will demonstrate how the initiative benefits the local community and supports the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Who can nominate?

A Member or officer of a Council can nominate a Council for an award.

Criteria

You are asked to:

- Give the background and details of the initiative
- Describe how it benefits the community and supports the goals of the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the judging process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must complete the Application Form, covering all the criteria.

Evidence (additional attachments) highlighting the project would also be beneficial (no more than 6 photographs).

5. Best Environmental Project

This award is to highlight an environmental project undertaken by the Council that demonstrates how the project benefits the local community. Tell us how you encourage biodiversity, provide safe places for wildlife or help tackle climate change. Local Councils do great work in these important areas.

Who can nominate?

A Member or officer of a Council can nominate a Council for an award.

Criteria

You will be asked to provide:

- Background details on why and how the project was implemented
- Details and evidence illustrating how it benefits the local environment
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the judging process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must complete the Application Form, covering all the criteria. Evidence (additional attachments) highlighting the project would also be beneficial (no more than 6 photographs).

6. Best Heritage and Culture Initiative

The award is to highlight the work of a Council that has undertaken a heritage initiative or championed a cultural project within its community. Wales is a land rich in culture. The Land of Song, castles, industrial heritage and an ancient language. Is your Council a Heritage Hero?

Who can nominate?

A Member or officer of a Council can nominate a Council for an award.

Criteria

You are asked to describe and explain the following:

- Background details on why and how the project was implemented
- Details and evidence illustrating how it benefits the local environment
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the judging process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must complete the Application Form, covering all the criteria. Evidence (additional attachments) highlighting the Heritage project would be beneficial (no more than 6 photographs).

7. Best Tourism Initiative

This award is to acknowledge and highlight an example of a successful tourism initiative that has been introduced by the Council that actively supports the local tourism economy.

Wales is a beautiful land, full of wonderful scenery, a stunning coastline and interesting towns, cities and villages. Your entry will highlight a successful tourism initiative that the Council has introduced which actively supports the local tourism economy.

Who can nominate?

A Member or officer of a Council can nominate a Council for an award.

Criteria

You will be required to:

- Describe why there was a need for the initiative and the council's involvement
- Explain and provide proof that it is of benefit to the local tourism economy
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the judging process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must complete the Application Form, covering all the criteria. Evidence (additional attachments) highlighting the initiative would also be beneficial (no more than 6 photographs).

8. Best Community Engagement Initiative

Local Councils are at the grassroots of local democracy. This award celebrates an example of a successful community engagement initiative.

Tell us how the Council engaged with the community and how the community responded.

Who can nominate?

A Member or officer of a Council can nominate a Council for an award.

Criteria

You will be asked to:

- Outline the background to the initiative
- Describe the methods used to engage with the community
- Provide details on how the community responded
- Provide evidence supporting the success of the engagement initiative
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the judging process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must complete the Application Form, covering all the criteria. Evidence (additional attachments) highlighting the initiative would also be beneficial (no more than 6 photographs).

9. Best Youth Engagement Initiative

The award is to highlight the work of a Council that has developed and maintained successful engagement with the young people in its community. Our young people are our richest asset. Tell us how the Council has developed and maintained successful engagement with the young people in its community.

Who can nominate?

A Member or officer of a Council can nominate a Council for an award.

Criteria

You are asked to describe and explain of the following:

- How the Council established, maintained and managed effective engagement with local young people
- How the engagement process benefits the Council, young people and the community
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the judging process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must complete the Application Form, covering all the criteria. Evidence (additional attachments), if appropriate, highlighting the engagement with young people would be beneficial (no more than 6 photographs).

10. Best Older Persons Initiative

This award will recognise how a Council has developed and maintained successful engagement with the older persons within its community.

Who can nominate?

A Member or officer of a Council can nominate a Council for an award.

Criteria

You are asked to describe and explain the following:

- Background details on why and how the project was implemented
- Details and evidence illustrating how it benefits the Council, older persons or the local community
- Key partners and stakeholders involved in the initiative
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the judging process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must complete the Application Form, covering all the criteria.

Evidence (additional attachments), if appropriate, highlighting the service or asset devolved would be beneficial (no more than 6 photographs).

11. Best Devolution of Service or Asset Project

The award is to highlight the work of a Council that has undertaken devolution of a service or an asset within their community to sustain the provision of a much-valued service or asset. Community and Town Councils are taking on more and more local projects.

Who can nominate?

A Member or officer of a Council can nominate a Council for an award.

Criteria

You are asked to provide:

- Background details on why and how the project was implemented.
- Details and evidence illustrating how it benefits the local community.
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the judging process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must submit the Application Form, covering all the criteria. Evidence (additional attachments) highlighting the service or asset devolved would be beneficial (no more than 6 photographs).

12. Best Cost of Living Crisis Initiative

The Cost of Living crisis continues to impact on communities across Wales. Many Councils have put in place initiatives to tackle the crisis within their community or provided innovative service to help those impacted by the crisis.

This award is to highlight the work of a Council that has undertaken initiatives to tackle the Cost of Living crisis within their community or has provided an exemplar/innovative local initiative or service to help those impacted by the Cost of Living crisis.

Who can nominate?

A Member or officer of a Council can nominate a Council for an award.

Criteria

You are asked to describe and explain the following:

- The improved service and/or innovative initiative provided by the Council
- How the actions taken have tackled the Cost-of-Living crisis in the wider community
- Please Note: Additionally, applications will be judged against the judging process governance criteria.

How to apply

To apply you must submit the Application Form, covering all the criteria.

Evidence (additional attachments) highlighting the service would also be beneficial (no more than 6 photographs).



About One Voice Wales

One Voice Wales is the national representative organisation for Community and Town Councils throughout Wales. The vision subscribed to by One Voice Wales is:

“Working with local councils in Wales to shape places communities want to live in”

One Voice Wales aims to support Community and Town Councils in achieving this vision and has adopted the following Mission Statement to guide its work:

“To represent the interests of Community and Town Councils; raise awareness and understanding of this primary tier of government; and work collaboratively with our partners to ensure the sector contributes fully to the goal of developing dynamic and sustainable communities in Wales.”

One Voice Wales offers a comprehensive programme of Training Modules, many of which relate to topics and themes recognised in our National Awards Programme. Visit our Training Modules website page to find out more, and to help you choose the correct award categories and to plan your entries!

[Training Modules Overviews - One Voice Wales](#)

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