

# Cross Party Group on Learning Disability

October

15

Notes from the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting on Wednesday 15 October 2025.

The meeting was online on Zoom.



## People who came to the meeting

- **Sioned Williams MS** – Member of the Senedd, Chair
- **Sam Williams** – Learning Disability Wales, co-Secretary
- **Sara Pickard** – Mencap Cymru, co-Secretary
- **Mark Isherwood MS** – Member of the Senedd
- **Sally Thomas** – Parent
- **Joe Powell** – All Wales People First
- **Zoe Richards** – Learning Disability Wales
- **Lucy O'Leary** – Learning Disability Wales
- **Gerraint Jones-Griffiths** – Learning Disability Wales
- **Kai Jones** – Learning Disability Wales
- **Victoria Waller** – Gig Buddies Cymru

- **Adele Rose-Morgan** – Parent
- **Janis Griffiths** – Stolen Lives
- **Darren Smith**
- **Tracy Lowe** – Scouts Cymru
- **Eloise Tong** – Hijinx Theatre
- **Leah McKinney**
- **Sarah Washbrook** – Parent
- **Jac Hughes**
- **Jan Paterson** – Epilepsy Action
- **Rachel Martin**
- **Eryl Williams** – Gwynedd Council
- **Gabrielle Preece**
- **Jenny Mushiringani Monjero** – Llais Cymru
- **Daniel Bray** – Your Voice Advocacy
- **Danielle Richards** – Swansea Council
- **Tom Morris** – Swansea Council
- **Wayne Crocker** – Mencap Cymru
- **Sion Jones** – Mencap Cymru
- **Stuart Todd** – University of South Wales
- **Julie Isaac-Evans** – Adult Learning Wales
- **Andrew Jenkins** – Senedd
- **James Radcliffe** – National Autistic Society
- **Anne-Marie Carpenter** – All Wales Forum of Parents and Carers
- **Gillian Eastwood**
- **Kelly Stuart** – All Wales People First
- **Donna Thomas** – Here2There
- **Claire Jones**

# About this document



This is an easy read version. The words and their meaning are easy to read and understand.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. They have been explained in a box below the word. You can see what all the words in **blue** mean on **page 16**.

## 1. Welcome and introductions



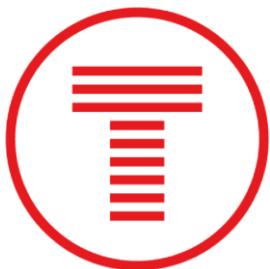
**Sioned Williams** is a Member of the Senedd and **Chair** of the Cross Party Group.

The **Chair** of the group is the person in charge of the meetings.

Sioned welcomed everyone to the meeting.

She introduced the first speaker, Sally Thomas.

## 2. Presentation about problems with passenger assistance



Sally Thomas is the mum of Danny, a young man with a learning disability. Sally talked about the problems Danny has had when using the **Transport for Wales Passenger Assistance Service.**



This service should help disabled people when they travel on trains.



Sally showed a video message from Danny.



Danny is a member of Hijinx Theatre and wants to be an actor. He started a drama course but needs help to travel there.



Being able to travel is important for Danny. It helps him go to Hijinx and learn new skills.



Danny does not feel safe travelling without help. He is worried Transport for Wales will not support him properly.



Danny did 6 weeks of travel training. This helped him get used to the journey and feel more confident.



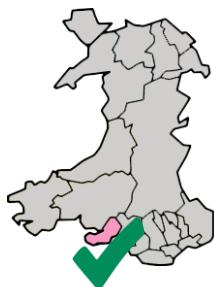
But when they arrived in Cardiff from Swansea, no one came to help Danny.



Sally has complained to Transport for Wales many times about Danny not getting the right support at Cardiff station.



She has not had clear answers about anything getting better. She is still waiting for information about what will change.



Sally said that Danny has had good support from the Passenger Assistance Service at Swansea station but not Cardiff.



Sally believes staff at Cardiff station need better training.



Sioned thanked Sally for her talk. She said transport must be **inclusive**.

**Inclusive** means everyone can use something in a safe and fair way.



When transport is not **inclusive**, it can cause many problems for disabled people.

### 3. Questions and ideas



After the presentation some people asked questions and shared their ideas.



Eloise Tong from Hijinx said some journeys were marked as completed even when no one met the passenger. She asked Transport for Wales how often this happens and why the system shows no problems. She said people are being left without help.



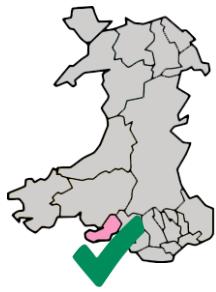
Sioned said she will share Danny's story in the Senedd. She is still waiting for a meeting with Transport for Wales.



The group agreed to write to the Chief Executive of Transport Wales James Price and the Cabinet Secretary for Transport Ken Skates about the problems with Passenger Assistance.



Adele Rose Morgan talked about local work in Swansea on learning disability and transport.



Sally said staff in Swansea have been fantastic. She said it is sad that Cardiff staff are not giving the same support.



Daniel Bray talked about using buses in Swansea and Neath. He is pleased about new voice messages on buses. They tell you what the next stop is.



Wayne Crocker from Mencap said their helpline gets many calls about transport problems. He would like an **accessible** transport helpline officer to give better advice.



**Accessible** means something is easy for everyone to use, including disabled people.

## 4. Presentation about advocacy, self-advocacy and the challenges in Wales



Joe Powell from All Wales People First talked about **advocacy** and **self-advocacy** in Wales.

**Advocacy** means someone speaks up for you.



**Self-advocacy** means you speak up for yourself.



**Self-advocacy** is important because people with a learning disability must have a say in decisions about their lives.



All Wales People First worked with ADSS Cymru on a report for the Welsh Government about **advocacy** in Wales. They have not had a response yet.



Some problems for **advocacy** include:

- More people need **advocacy** but the money to pay for it has stayed the same.
- More crisis work because services are closing.
- Resources are being shared and this can make learning disability **advocacy** weaker.
- There is not enough **advocacy** for people who do not use words or have complex needs.



Problems with **self-advocacy** include:

- The **Advocacy Grant Scheme** has ended.
- Work becoming project-led not person-led.
- People with complex needs may have worse results because medical staff speak for them.

Joe said this is important because these problems may lead to:



- Fewer **advocacy** services. Less **advocacy** for people with a learning disability.



- More risk for people with a learning disability.



- More times when people cannot speak for themselves.



- People having less choice and control over their own lives.



Joe said **self-advocacy** needs to be taught and supported. He said taking part in society helps challenge attitudes about learning disability.

## 5. Questions and ideas



After the presentation some people asked questions and shared their ideas.



Wayne Crocker said people did not hear enough about the Bus Services (Wales) Bill survey and events. He asked how many disabled people took part and shared their views on **accessibility** and services.



**Accessibility** is about how easy something is to use, including for disabled people.



Janis Griffiths said **advocacy** is important for her son. She is worried some **advocates** do not have the right training for people with different communication needs.



Adele Rose Morgan said it is hard to find support for **non-instructed advocacy**. **Non-instructed advocacy** is when an **advocate** speaks for someone who cannot tell them what they want.



Wayne asked about making a plan for local **self-advocacy** support that includes costs.



Wayne and Joe are joining a new **Housing and Community Regeneration Equality Advisory Board**. This group may help change how housing and communities are made for disabled people.

## 6. Any other business and ideas for future meetings



Sioned asked if there was anything people would like to talk about in future meetings.



Adele asked the group to talk more about **inclusive** education. She said the group should discuss the **Additional Learning Needs Act**.



Also the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People**. She said people need to know more about these rights.



Wayne talked about the **Learning Disability Consortium State of the Nation survey**. The survey asked people with a learning disability and families what needs to change in Wales.



The survey closed on 14 November 2025. The report will launch on 3 December 2025 at the Senedd.

## 7. Next meeting



The next meeting will take place on:  
**Wednesday 10 December 2025** at 12:15pm.  
Online on Zoom.



Anyone with ideas for the meeting should email Sam Williams: [samantha.williams@ldw.org.uk](mailto:samantha.williams@ldw.org.uk) or Sara Pickard: [SaraE.Pickard@mencap.org.uk](mailto:SaraE.Pickard@mencap.org.uk).



Sioned thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and sharing their ideas.



You can find all the easy read agendas and notes of the Cross Party Group here:  
[www.ldw.org.uk/project/cross-party-group-on-learning-disability/](http://www.ldw.org.uk/project/cross-party-group-on-learning-disability/)

# Hard words

## Accessibility

Accessibility is about how easy something is to use, including for disabled people.

## Advocacy

Advocacy means someone speaks up for you.

## Advocate

An advocate is someone who speaks up for a person or a group.

## Chair

The Chair of the group is the person in charge of the meetings.

## Inclusive

Inclusive means everyone can use something in a safe and fair way.

## Self-advocacy

Self-advocacy means you speak up for yourself.