

AcademiWales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Annual Report 2022-23



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Welcome to our 2022-23 Annual Report. It is written as a timeline which highlights our main achievements across each three month period.

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You can find out more about us, the work we do, who we work with and our values by visiting our website:

gov.wales/academiwales

Front cover image: Elan Valley, where Winter School 2023 was held. Find out more about Winter School 2023 on page 8.

Director's overview

Alex Walters, Director, Academi Wales



It is my pleasure to introduce the 2022-23 Academi Wales Annual Report. What a year it has been! We have begun to see a move back towards our in-person events. We have learnt so much over the last couple of years about virtual and hybrid delivery, and this will remain an important aspect of our offer. But for many of the programmes we run, where we are looking to make a real impact on individuals and help leaders make real behavioural changes to enhance their leadership and achieve transformational results, face-to-face interventions are a hugely important part of what we do at Academi Wales. Take a look at the infographic on the next page to see some of our achievements.

Alongside all the great work you will read about in the body of this report, three key activities took place this year that have truly built the foundations for our future. This year, for us, was all about looking at what we do as Academi Wales, and starting to think about the innovations we can make to our offer over the coming years.

Firstly, in September, we began our ten year celebrations. It was fantastic to see many of our colleagues, stakeholders and friends at our celebratory event. This was a chance to look back at Academi Wales' amazing achievements, and at the impact we have had across public services since our inception in 2012. Celebrating our ten years remains a theme to our activities through to September 2023, as we continue the important activity of reflecting back, at the same time as starting to look ahead at what's to come.

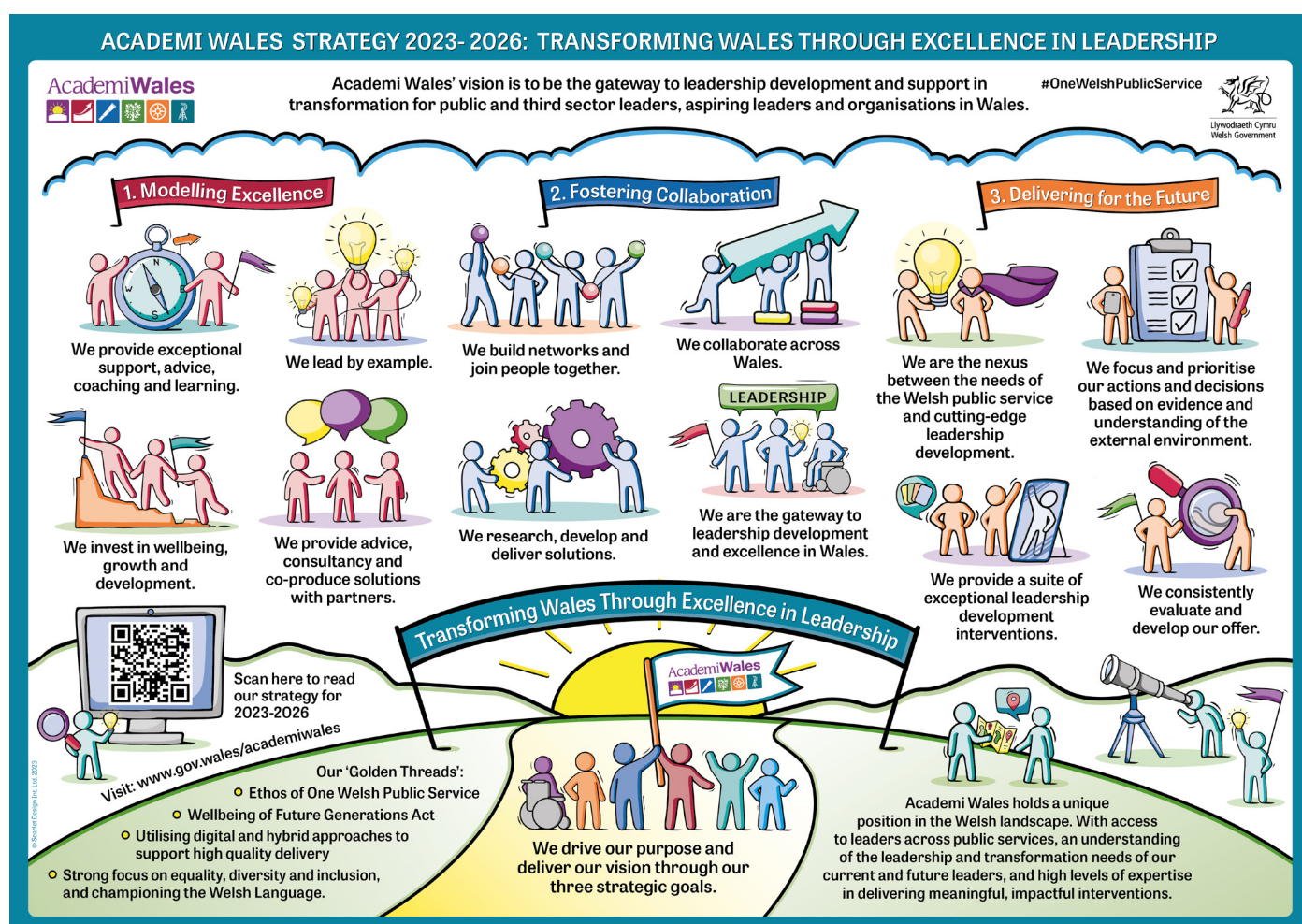
Secondly, this year has seen the team developing our new strategy, with its launch taking place during our ten-year celebratory event. Our new purpose – transforming Wales through excellence in leadership – is ambitious, and rightly so. Its ambition reflects the fact that we cannot achieve this alone, and highlights the importance of us collaborating right across public services to transform. Our vision: to be the gateway to leadership development and transformation support – further solidifies this focus on collaboration and partnership. We want to understand the Welsh landscape, and build and maintain excellent partnerships to allow us to signpost to relevant services, as well as collaborate and co-produce together.

We can only achieve what we have set out to achieve by operating as One Welsh Public Service. The One Welsh Public Service ethos has been a key driver for Academi Wales for many years, and this year has been no exception. This is evidenced by the broad range of organisations we have partnered and worked with throughout the year's activities, and you can read more about this in the main body of this report.

Thirdly, we have developed and embedded our new research and analysis function. This will enable us to identify and plug any gaps in our offer, evaluate our key programmes more deeply, and ensure we are truly meeting the needs of public service leaders operating in this modern and complex world. A stronger focus on research and analysis will enable our own organisational transformation, and ongoing development and innovation of our interventions right across Academi Wales.

Our intention is that you will continue to see the fantastic quality programmes and interventions from Academi Wales that you have become used to. But in addition, you will see over the coming years more innovation in our offer, more collaboration with all of you, and more research and evaluation. Next year's Annual Report will look different, as we aim to tell you about what we've been doing in the first year of our strategy delivery, and focus our updates against our three strategic goals.

I hope you enjoy reading more about the fantastic work the team have been involved in during 2022-23 and look forward to working across public services over the coming years, to transform Wales through excellence in leadership.

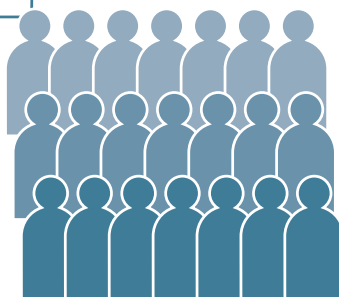


Our year at a glance...

Budget
£1.134k



3,079
delegates



Average cost
to deliver equated to

£368

per
delegate



We **delivered**



**events,
workshops,
courses and
conferences**



6,991

Twitter followers, and



7,749

subscribers to our
monthly opportunities
bulletin

30,408

people watched our
YouTube videos

That's an estimated total
viewing time of

5,821 hours!

 **YouTube**
channel

Academi Wales 10 year celebrations and new strategy launch

In March 2023, Academi Wales celebrated its 10 year anniversary by inviting friends and colleagues from far and wide to join in the launch of our [new strategy for 2023-2026](#).

The event took place at the new Hafod room at Cathays Park, Cardiff, and welcomed speakers ranging from past directors of Academi Wales and current team members, all sharing their fondest memories of Academi Wales, as well as hopes and ambitions for its future.

Alex Walters, current Director of Academi Wales said of the new strategy:

"Whilst our new strategy represents a real culture shift for Academi Wales, in many ways, it is more of a refresh of our offer and a clarification of all that we do. You will continue to see familiarity from our brand and solutions that we offer, as well as innovation, year-on-year."

Jo Hicks, previous Director of Academi Wales, said:

"Academi Wales the brand was born in a little room in this building...and following the legacy and work of its predecessor organisations, including PSMW, the launch of the Academi Wales brand allowed us to think about how we design, how we deliver, collaborative activities, interventions, programmes, that would establish new ways of working together across the public sector organisations."

"It was a privilege to lead a fantastic team, doing fantastic work, in a fantastic country. I look forward to watching with interest what comes next for Academi Wales, and how this strategy hits the road."

The event also provided an opportunity for us to share our visual representation of the strategy with a wider audience for the first time. We worked with Fran O'Hara or Scarlet Design to create the visual, which put Academi Wales' purpose, vision, and strategic goals into a pictorial format.

[Take a look here.](#)

[See more photos from the event on Flickr.](#)

[Read our new strategy for 2023-2026 here.](#)



Alex Walters



Jo Hicks

Equality and diversity statistics

Introduction

We are committed to ensuring our programmes are open and accessible, so we can support the development of a workforce that reflects the diverse communities that we serve. It is vital that we monitor and analyse diversity information, so that we can ensure that our programme marketing and recruitment practices are fair and transparent, and promote equality of opportunity.

We incorporate equality and diversity questions in all our event applications except for bespoke events and coaching sessions. After excluding exempt events the total number of applications in 2022-23 was 2,488. This figure forms the basis for the percentages reported in this section.

Ethnicity

- 89% of applicants described their ethnic group as 'White Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British'.

Sex

- 77.3% of applicants described themselves as 'Female'.
- 19.2% of applicants described themselves as 'Male'.

Sexual identity

- 86.1% of applicants described themselves as 'Heterosexual or straight'.
- The second largest category were those who responded 'Prefer not say' (8.7%).

Gender identity

- 94.5% of applicants stated that the gender they identify with is the same as their sex registered at birth.
- The second largest category were those who responded 'Prefer not say' (5.2%).

Age

- 19.2% of applicants described themselves as '40-44'.
- The second largest category were those who described themselves as '50-54' (17.4%).

National identity

- 57.6% of applicants described themselves as 'Welsh'.
- The second largest category were those who described themselves as 'British' (27.7%).

Ethnicity

- 89.1% of applicants described themselves as 'White Welsh / English / Scottish / Northern Irish / British'.
- The second largest category were those who responded 'Prefer not to say' (4.1%).

Disability

- 10.3% of applicants described themselves as having a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more.
- 4.7% of applicants said they had a physical or mental health condition or illness which reduced their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

Religion

- 47.7% of applicants stated they had no religion.
- The second largest category were those who described themselves as Christian (40.6%).

Pregnancy

- 0.3% of applicants described themselves as being pregnant.
- 0.6% of applicants said they had had a baby in the last 12 months.

Marital status

- 58.9% of applicants described themselves as married or in a civil partnership.
- The second largest category were those who stated they were single (17.9%).

Further information

We do not collect information for bespoke events as we do not play a role in selecting the delegates. We do not collect information for coaching sessions due to the nature of the offer.

April – September 2022 – Q1 and Q2

Continuous Improvement Team

Broken Basics to Brilliant Basics

June saw the completion and internal piloting of new workshop material. *Broken Basics to Brilliant Basics* is an interactive workshop based on the premise that most of us at some point during our careers have been exposed to and involved in initiatives that aim to 'create excellence' – greater efficiencies, increased productivity, and a quality assured service. The session challenges the reality of these aspirations with a 'wake-up call' that asks:

- Are we even doing the basics well?
- What do we understand to be the basics?
- What actions do we need to take to embed and sustain these essential requirements?

Talent and Succession Team

The One Welsh Public Service Leadership Summer School 2022

Celebrating its 17th year and a highlight on the annual calendar of Academi Wales's activities the Talent and Succession team successfully staged and delivered an online, fully virtual *One Welsh Public Service Leadership Summer School* from 28-30 June 2022. The programme was specifically designed to meet the key development needs of Wales' leaders, and those working within Welsh public service and voluntary organisations.

The most significant challenge for Welsh public sector organisations has been to adapt and develop a range of new skills to meet the needs of our new working environments, whilst recognising that the balance of sustainability with supporting employee needs is key as we create a new post-pandemic normal. This shift will see organisations increasing their focus on diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as environmental and social issues.

This intensive, three-day online learning experience brought together leaders and senior managers to address these key issues. It was both inspirational and insightful, enabling delegates to discover new perspectives and ideas that enhanced their skills and knowledge to take on these challenges to meet the needs of Welsh citizens in the most efficient and effective way.

The theme for 2022 was 'Creative Futures'. Participants heard from a host of inspirational internationally renowned speakers including Emmanuel Gobillot, John Amaechi OBE, Nick Obolensky, Dorothy Brown, Lt Col Andy Child and Linda Aspey to name a few.

Delegate feedback:

"Fantastic; completely exceeded my expectations. Not just another leadership and management course."

"Excellent opportunity, interesting mix of experience and knowledge amongst the groups and world class speakers who made me reflect and challenge myself."

"All of the speakers were inspirational in their own right. What a fantastic programme you've put together for us."

Leadership Development and Change Team

Mindfulness – Beyond Wellbeing onto Leadership and Personal Development

Mindfulness was developed in a health setting, bringing together ancient wisdom and modern psychology, this has cast mindfulness in a wellbeing role. The original mindfulness programme was developed in the 1980's, more recently several books with a mindful leader approach have been written, resulting in models to apply a living more mindfully to leadership, teams, and organisations. Academi Wales' Leadership Development and Change Team researched some of these programmes, and entered early discussions to deliver material on licence.

The strategy is to develop a programme called Introduction to Mindfulness. From there, the aim is to generate interest for a longer term mindful leader programme; and linking into a leader retreat, highlighting the benefits of connecting with the outdoors.

The best result from mindfulness practice is achieved by longer exposure to practice and in groups, thus presenting the team with the idea of creating a mindfulness community of practice. This approach supports Welsh Government, Sustainable Futures and Mindfulness Based Behavioural Insights (MBBI).

All-Wales Medicines Strategy Group

The Leadership and Development Team continues to adapt and deliver its programmes in both face-to-face and virtual settings, although the demand for face to face interaction is increasing. For instance, almost eighty members of the All-Wales Medicines Strategy Group benefited from a leadership development event, facilitated by Academi Wales, that brought them physically together for the first time in two and half years since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The energy was palpable as acquaintances were both made and renewed and group relationships reinforced. A similar impact was experienced when staff from Conwy County Council met together in Colwyn Bay, North Wales to participate in Academi Wales' *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* and *Positive Psychology* leadership development programmes.

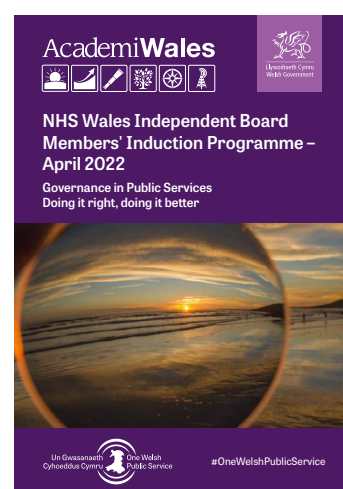
A member of the Leadership and Development Team successfully completed the prestigious *Oxford Executive Leadership Programme* delivered by Oxford University's Saïd Business School. Delivered entirely online, and with students from across the world, this intensive programme combined theory and functional practice and explored core leadership themes, including power and influence, motivation, authenticity and adaptability, change, complexity, and diversity. Academi Wales was not only able to benchmark and affirm the content of many of its current leadership programmes, but also identify opportunities for future offerings that will ensure the organisation remains at the cutting edge of leadership development.

Governance and Board Leadership Team

NHS Wales, Independent Members Induction Programme (27-28 April and 4-5 May)

In partnership with Welsh Government Officials and Senior leaders from across Welsh Public Services, Academi Wales delivered the 4 modules of this programme in April and May.

This programme is designed to provide newly appointed Associate and Independent Board Members with the relevant support and information to expand their knowledge, skills and outline what is expected in the board members' role, to help them meet the specific challenges and deliver the service changes required across the Wales NHS and the priorities set out in the Programme for Government.



This virtual, interactive programme provides opportunities for delegates to hear from experienced former Board Members and explore how to perform effectively in challenging times. It forms the foundation of fundamental knowledge on which members build upon, allowing them to engage in discussion on how best to manage the consequences of service change and improvements.

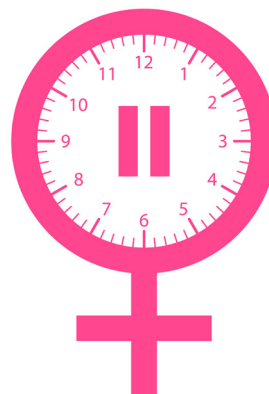
Programme modules include:

- An introduction to the ethos, priorities and aspirations of NHS Wales.
- Governance in the NHS and your role as an Associate and Independent Board Member.
- Quality, performance, planning and finance considerations.
- The importance of assurance and the role of the Board.

Continuous Improvement Team

Menopause Champions Session

The CI team delivered the first *Menopause Champions* session. The session involved 10 delegates as part of a trial run with the purpose of equipping them with the necessary knowledge to be able to go back to their organisations and be there to support and signpost colleagues for advice from trusted places.



Talent and Succession Team

One Welsh Public Service Coaching Conference

Building on the success of previous coaching conferences Academi Wales staged the *One Welsh Public Service Coaching Conference* as a live event on the 17 November 2022 with the theme 'Imposter Syndrome – The Secret Feeling of Being a Fraud'. The event was hosted in The Principality Stadium, Cardiff and the attendees comprised of 92 formal and informal coaches drawn from across the Welsh public sector.

The conference focused on developing skills and practical tools that can be used for personal growth to support the development of others, helping to build or reinforce existing practices as a coach or enhance their individual skills as a manager and leader. The conference provided a great opportunity for delegates to network and share their experience and good practice from across the Welsh Public Service.

The keynote themes included 'Imposter Syndrome In-Depth: the science, root cause and practical solutions for your clients' and 'Exploring how imposter syndrome, bullying and incivility and a lack of psychological safety at work, can show up in a coaching conversation'. Feedback suggested that the event was extremely well received and is becoming established as a high-profile event in Academi Wales' annual activities.

Delegate feedback:

"Great networking opportunity! Great to be back face-to-face to be able to enjoy the day and speak to others!"

"The whole day has been a great source of knowledge and insight."

Leadership Development and Change Team and All Wales Graduate Programme Team



All Wales Public Service Graduate Programme participants undertaking the 'Seven Habits of Highly Effective People' programme

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People two-day workshop for One Welsh Public Service Graduate Programme participants in Elan Valley

In October, All Wales Public Service Graduate Programme participants gathered together in Elan Valley, Mid Wales to undertake the *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* programme. Over two days, they experienced an enjoyable and transformational learning experience which demonstrated that Dr Steven R. Covey's timeless principles of personal and professional effectiveness remain both relevant and contemporary; especially within Welsh public services that require effective and agile leadership when responding to increasing demand, uncertainty and change.

Programme participants explored key habits, leadership principles and practices that motivated and inspired them to:

- take initiative
- improve interpersonal communication
- establish greater trust
- strengthen relationships
- increase influence
- balance key priorities.

One of the graduates said:

"I now feel I have more practical and transferable skills and am feeling more confident and in control of my work role. I've even shared some of the 7 Habits with my manager and she has been implementing them too!"

Leadership Development and Change Team

HPMA Awards

On 1 December, Academi Wales presented the award for Excellence in Organisational Development at the HPMA Awards. The awards were celebrating the most creative and innovative leadership projects and interventions from the NHS from throughout the pandemic. It was a special event because it was the first awards since the Covid-19 pandemic, celebrating the incredible achievements of those who help keep us safe through a very challenging time.

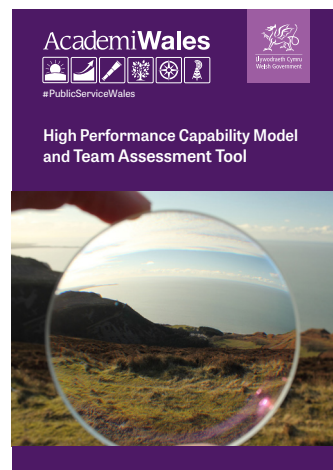


Academi Wales' Ross Storr presenting the award for *Excellence in Organisational Development* at the 2023 HPMA Awards

Governance and Board Leadership Team

October and November 2022 – High Performance Capability Workshops

Academi Wales facilitated *High Performing Capability Workshops* with 2 South Wales Police senior leadership teams: from Cardiff and Vale Business Command Unit (BCU) and Joint Scientific Investigation Unit (JSIU).



The workshop was developed to enable public and third sector organisations to assess their senior management team's performance, exploring 3 areas of capability (leadership, strategy and delivery) to identify areas of high performance and those that required improvement.

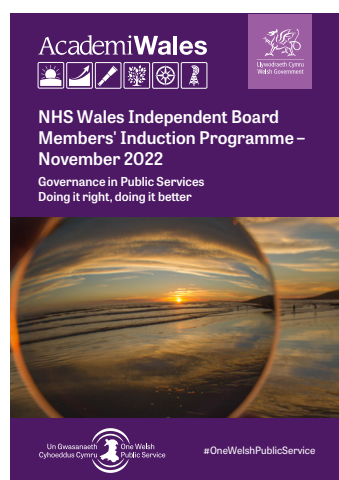
The workshops provided a starting point for informed discussion among the senior teams to address delivery and appropriate development priorities in their effectiveness, which identified key areas of the senior team's performance that were the strongest and those needing improvement. The workshop resulted in both senior teams identifying key priority areas which informed their business delivery plans for the remaining 12 to 18 months.

November 2022 – NHS Wales Independent Board Member's Induction Programme

In partnership with Welsh Government Officials and Senior leaders from across Welsh Public Services, Academi Wales delivered the 4 modules of this programme during November 2022.

The programme was designed to provide newly appointed Associate and Independent Board Members with the relevant support

and information to expand their knowledge, skills and outline what is expected in the board members' role, to help them meet the specific challenges and deliver the service changes required across the Wales NHS and the priorities set out in the Programme for Government.



This virtual interactive programme provided opportunities for delegates to hear from experienced former Board Members and explore how to perform effectively in challenging times. It forms the foundation of fundamental knowledge on which members build upon, allowing them to engage in discussion on how best to manage the consequences of service change and improvements.

Modules included:

- An introduction to the ethos, priorities and aspirations of NHS Wales.
- Governance in the NHS and the role of an Associate and Independent Board Member.
- Quality, performance, planning and finance considerations.
- The importance of assurance and the role of the Board.

January – March 2023 – Q4

Continuous Improvement

Whole Intelligence Awareness Raising Workshop

Malcolm Parlett defines 'Whole Intelligence' as the innate practical wisdom that is present in each of us – our being, doing and becoming; how we are and understand ourselves mentally, physically and spiritually; how we collaborate with others, experiment and innovate, and respond to life, whether in joyful or challenging times.

Malcolm believes that, in recent years, we have become more biased towards a cognitive way of interpreting the world, relying on logic and rationality as a means for making sense of what we see, experience and develop knowledge from. This has led to a 'dumbing down' of our other innate creative abilities that we all have access to within ourselves and often fail to recognise, let alone tap into, on a regular basis.

Attended by over 60 delegates, this event explored in detail one of the five abilities (responding to the situation), while also showing how the other four abilities (inter-relating, non-verbal knowing, self-recognising and experimentation), can frame and deepen the experience of the one selected. Delegates experienced a connection with their own 'Whole Intelligence', to experience a unique insight into the power and application of this approach in both their personal and professional lives.

The application of this approach looks to achieve greater satisfaction and confidence in responding to situations, building strong relationships, tapping into your physical, as well as cognitive intelligence, learning the power of self-reflection, and the importance of deliberate experimentation.

Delegate feedback:

"My feedback for this morning's event and the activities you highlight is unconditional praise. I found the session extremely helpful."

Talent and Succession

Winter School 2023



David Halpern CBE speaking at Winter School 2023

For the thirteenth year, Academi Wales staged the annual *One Welsh Public Service Leaders' Winter School*, returning as a live residential event from 7-10 February 2023, in the beautiful setting of Nant Gwrtheyrn, North Wales.

The Audience comprised of 34 senior leaders representing 27 organisations each working within the top three tiers of the Welsh public and voluntary service. This unique 4-day 'stretch' programme provided an opportunity to explore innovative ways to 'deliver the business', using a wealth of global knowledge and experience.

As part of the Academi Wales 10-year celebration, the theme for Winter School 2023 was 'Supporting leaders today to create a brighter tomorrow for Welsh Public Services – a celebration of 10 years' and captured the highlights of the Winter School programmes over the past 10 years. Bringing back high-profile speakers which included Thimon de Jong, Nazir Afzal OBE and Professor Eugene Sadler Smith. The Winter School programme provided the opportunity to explore new ways of leading and managing the business and develop new approaches to optimising performance.

Delegate feedback:

"Taking time out to focus on your leadership style is a necessity to lead well, and Winter School enables you to do that with like-minded individuals in a safe space in a stunning location, good for mind, body and soul – I will be a better leader having maximised this time out."

"A fantastic week with fantastic people, teaching me that's its ok to be human in your approach to leadership."

"Winter school has been the best leadership programme I've ever done, the programme of speakers is world class, and the opportunity to connect with senior leaders from Welsh public services is unrivalled. I've learned so much, have made wonderful friends and leave feeling inspired. I've never felt so invested in and so lucky to have such an experience."

Leadership Development and Change Team

Academi Wales Podcast

We were really excited to start the production of our Academi Wales podcast *Conversations on Leadership*.

Our podcast series was a chance for us to meet and interview leaders from across Wales and Europe, allowing our listeners to hear their leadership stories, while getting to know them on a more personal level. The podcast series gives the opportunity to gain leadership insights virtually as and when it's convenient to listeners.

We released episodes throughout the year and will be focusing on future guests and themes following feedback.

Leadership in a Nutshell

In January 2023, Academi Wales launched *Leadership in a Nutshell*, an interactive and bite-size workshop aimed at public sector staff who are preparing for, or are in, their first leadership and management role. Because of its online access, hour duration and midday time slot, *Leadership in a Nutshell* has quickly become an in-demand and successful contribution to the Academi Wales leadership and organisational development portfolio.

All Wales Public Service Graduate Programme Team



All Wales Public Service Graduate Programme participants taking part in an Introduction to Continuous Improvement workshop

Continuous Improvement Workshop

In March, All Wales Public Service Graduate Programme participants took part in an Introduction to Continuous Improvement workshop, as part of their bespoke learning and development programme. The one-day session was facilitated by Academi Wales and aims of the session included applying a structure team-based approach to problem solving and considering their role more effectively in Continuous Improvement work happening within the workplace.

Programme participants explored areas such as creating, testing, implementing, and maintaining the improvement.