



S4C Board **Programme Policy Statement 2025–26** March 2025

S4C serves the audience with content that entertains, excites, and reflects Wales in all its diversity.

As a public service broadcaster, we have a duty to create the platform and ecosystem to drive the creative industries in Wales to create ambitious and unique content that appeals to all ages, backgrounds, and linguistic abilities.

S4C's aim is to be a destination for creative, engaging, and attractive Welsh content that is available to enjoy on various platforms in Wales and beyond.

At the same time, we value our loyal and long-standing audience, whose continued support remains crucial to S4C. While we look to expand and diversify our reach, we recognise the importance of serving viewers who have been with us over many years and continue to choose S4C as part of their daily lives.

Programme Policy Statement 2025-26

The aim is to commission distinctive and popular content that will attract a wide audience, including younger viewers, less frequent viewers, and those from the C2DE social demographic groups. S4C will be home to international rugby and football games, gripping dramas, powerful documentaries, and bold content for young people. There will be something for everyone on S4C.

We commission content based on a strong understanding of our audience – based on a combination of viewing data, feedback from our Viewer Panel, annual opinion survey, and detailed analysis of patterns on digital platforms. This insight is key to ensuring our content is relevant and personal, and reflects what is important to our diverse audience.

We will aim to appeal to audiences of all language proficiencies. Therefore, sports rights are as important as ever, as well as well-known formats like *The Voice*. We will play our part in the national goal of reaching a million Welsh speakers and aim to ensure more visibility and availability for S4C on digital platforms.

We will continue to provide comprehensive accessibility services – including subtitling, audio description, and signing – to make our content more accessible to everyone and to support our ambition to reach wider audiences, including those at the start of their Welsh learning journey and non-Welsh speakers.

Diversity, inclusion, and representation are central to the way we commission and present content. We work with our production partners to ensure our programmes reflect contemporary Wales in all its diversity – including different backgrounds, experiences, and communities across the country.

In a period of political instability around the world, our news and current affairs content will continue to reflect the international temperature as well as scrutinise important stories closer to home.

Although S4C is one channel, it is extremely important that our content is now visible across multiple platforms, from Clic, iPlayer, YouTube, and all social platforms. The aim is to offer the content viewers want on the platform of their choice.

Drama

Next year is going to offer even more drama and a wider variety of stories.

Following the success of **Bariau** at the Bafta Cymru awards this year, the series will return in April. The first series managed to appeal to viewers between 16 and 24 and less fluent speakers from mixed-language homes.

At the beginning of the summer, we will announce an exciting new drama for young people between 13 and 15. **Hafiach** features a young and diverse cast bursting with energy and is set in Rhyl – an area that is underrepresented on screen. The production values are as slick as our usual offerings but designed with the audiences of tomorrow in mind.

After the sweeping acclaim for the first series of **Y Golau** on S4C and Channel 4, another mystery from the fictional area of Llanemlyn will be released as a box set in September. **Y Golau: Dŵr** will be a gripping drama about family, community, lies, and deceit. As we commemorate 60 years since the flooding of Capel Celyn this year, it is worth noting that similar themes are part of the gripping plot of this series.

The crew of **Stad** Maes Menai will be back in November. Like the first series, this is an ensemble that digs deeper under the surface of its characters than its predecessor, *Tipyn o Stad*, but keeps the humour. The response to the first series was very encouraging and, in terms of Clic and iPlayer profile, the highest percentage of viewers were between 16 and 34 years old.

And after the success of the first series of **Dal y Mellt**, which was sold to Netflix, the second series of this gripping drama will be in the new year.

Rownd a Rownd will celebrate its 30th anniversary this year with a shocking story in September, and **Pobol y Cwm** hopes to increase its audience even more after seeing a 9% increase in online viewing (Clic and iPlayer) in the last 4 months of 2024.

Following Sinema Cymru's call for new scripts, a flood of applications came in, and the winning projects have been busy working on their pilot scripts. Following the success of **Y Sŵn**, we hope that one of the projects will start shooting at the end of the year so that cinematic stories in the Welsh language can once again have a platform in cinemas and create noise internationally.

Sport

We will continue to increase the coverage of women's football, having secured the Welsh rights to broadcast all of Wales' games in the finals of **Euros 2025**.

In addition to the **Euros**, we will continue to show highlights of every international game, and show more domestic games than ever before from the **Genero Adran** league live on S4C.

Sgorio will also continue to cover the **Cymru Premier**, and the progress of the main clubs in the **European Cup** games, as well as the **Wales Men's Under-19 Elite** games in a competition held in North Wales this year.

Following the record-breaking number of viewers watching S4C on BBC iPlayer twice in 2024 with **FA Cup** games, we will once again aim to secure the rights to show matches involving Welsh teams in this popular competition, as well as the rights for some games from the English league.

In a new partnership with BBC Wales, we will continue to show all of Wales men's international games, as they fight to reach the **FIFA World Cup 2026**.

Regarding **international rugby**, we will broadcast Wales men's and Wales Under-20s' **Six Nations** games, and once again this year, in partnership with TNT, we will show the autumn international games. We will follow the Welsh regions in the **United Rugby Championship** and the **European Challenge Cup**. There will be extensive coverage of grassroots rugby with **Super Rugby Wales** games, as well as the **Road to the Principality** finals and both the women's and men's **Varsity** matches.

Once again this year, we will follow Elfyn Evans as he races in the WRC on **Raliŵ**, and we will be back in France for the **Tour de France 2025**.

Entertainment

Growing successful brands and formats is one of the strategy's objectives, and many of our most well-known brands will return this year. **Priodas Pum Mil** is as popular as ever, and couples are eager to take part in the series once again. **Jonathan, Gogglebocs**, and **Am Dro** will also return. Following the strong response to **Sgwrs Dan y Lloer** last year, especially the programmes with **Noel Thomas** and **Daf James**, the series will once again bring us big and current names. And after **Y Llais** made such an impression with younger audiences, those starting to learn Welsh and non-Welsh speakers, we aim to bring the popular format back for another series.

But it is also important to develop new formats that can return, and the new dating show **Amour a Mynydd** proved popular among the age groups 25-44 and 45-64. The series will return to the Alps in the new year with 6 programmes this time and even more potential lovers. **Apres Amour**, the vodcast that followed the linear programme, proved to be a successful digital experiment, and it will also return.

Another new format on the slate this year is **Y Busnes Bwyd**, with eight business people competing for a mentoring package and financial prize to help their business grow. Tudur Owen (himself a food business owner) will be at the helm.

Music and Events

We will launch a new music brand this year, with two linear series along with a variety of content on digital platforms and social websites. All this offering will also have a home on the **S4C Music** YouTube channel – this channel will be a home for S4C Welsh music and also a convenient place for everyone of all ages to search for old and new music.

Some changes are in the pipeline for the **National Eisteddfod** offering, as we bring even more of the festival to our viewers by broadcasting evening events live. As usual, we will also broadcast live from the **Cerdd Dant Festival** and the **Young Farmers Eisteddfod**. Following last year's success, there will also be an additional emphasis on publishing content on our platforms from the Young Farmers Eisteddfod.

Cân i Gymru has now secured its place in our calendar during St David's Day and annually it evolves and develops. The new online voting system was a great success this year and we hope to increase the vote annually. **Noson Lawen** will undergo a refresh before returning in the autumn.

News and Current Affairs

With the tremendous growth in the number of people receiving news on multiple platforms, we will build on the work of strengthening the **Digital News** service by restructuring the team. The work already done has seen our TikTok and Instagram platforms grow, especially among younger people. 71 percent of our users on Instagram are under 45 years old and 57 percent are under 34 years old. This year's priority is to focus more effort on YouTube, creating a clear destination for all our News and Current Affairs content.

We have been collaborating with the BBC, which produces the television news service, to ensure the **S4C Newyddion** programme offers a distinctive service. It will continue to offer a mix of important Welsh stories, along with major global, UK and, of course, popular local stories. The programme has sent correspondents to the Middle East, America, and Ukraine to report on important news events.

Two individual **BYD Eithafol** current affairs documentaries will be presented by Maxine Hughes. One looks at the growth of the extreme right wing among young men in Wales, and the other compares cancer treatments in Wales and America, through Maxine's personal story since she is currently receiving treatment for breast cancer.

The programme **Bwystfil o Brifathro** will expose, for the first time, a 10-year investigation by two of Wales' most experienced journalists. It will reveal how Neil Foden, a prominent and highly respected headteacher, was allowed to climb to a position of privilege, while hiding the true horror of his own actions.

We will continue to ensure political analysis in our series **Y Byd yn ei Le** and **Pawb a'i Farn**. We will publish special editions of **Y Byd yn ei Le** in the form of a "vodcast" digitally first in months when the programme takes a break. And the series **Y Byd ar Bedwar** returns with a variety of programmes that will hold people to account, and tackle a wide range of topics that appeal to a diverse audience in terms of age and social status.

Looking ahead, we are preparing comprehensive coverage of the 2026 Senedd Election, including overnight results programming and analysis. This builds on S4C's coverage of previous elections and reflects our ambition to establish S4C as a home for major national events.

This year **Ffermio** will continue with their regular weekly programmes but also give viewers a taste of the Anglesey Show and Pembrokeshire Show with special evening programmes from the locations that will be

part of the channel's summer offering. And following the strong performance of **Teulu Shadog** among the C2DE audience, another series will return in the autumn.

Our children's news service **Newyddion Ni** will continue to help children understand some of the world's biggest stories, giving special attention to stories related to diversity and sustainability. This year we will also provide special programmes from the Urdd Eisteddfod, and on women's football before the Euros 2025 games. Work will also be done to reach out to a variety of schools.

Factual

Once again this year we will have striking documentaries, popular returning series, and ambitious co-productions on our factual slate.

We will broadcast a series of single true crime documentaries such as **Ruth Ellis: Y Cariad a'r Crogi**, which tells the story of the last woman to be hanged in Britain. Focusing on this girl from Rhyl, the documentary will reveal new research and interviews with individuals who have never spoken before. **Pwy Laddodd Harry a Megan Tooze?** will follow South Wales Police as they reopen the case of the double murder of the married couple in the rural village of Llanhari in 1993. Also part of the crime season will be two two-part films. **Con Jones, Twyllwr Gorau'r Byd** tracks one of Wales' most prolific fraudsters, who forged cheques and impersonated a doctor and a minister, among other crimes. **Corff yn y Cae: Pwy Laddodd Hilda Murrell?** will look at the murder of the anti-nuclear campaigner in 1984 and the theories that her death was a conspiracy by the authorities.

One of our most successful series last year on all platforms was **Y Llinell Las**. The series following North Wales Police officers will return in the spring. **Curo Tu Ôl i'r Drws** will be a challenging programme that tells the stories of domestic abuse victims and the work being done by Dyfed Powys Police to ensure justice for every victim.

In **Y Chwiban Olaf**, we will follow Joe Allen in his final year as a professional football player and witness his decision to retire. **Dŵr Du** will look back at one of Wales' biggest environmental disasters, while Iolo Williams will focus on the nation's rare treasures in **Natur Bregus Cymru**, and **Y Crwydryn** will be a feature film celebrating country music in Wales.

We will also celebrate Welsh history through **Cynefin, Cyfrinachau'r Llyfrgell**, and another series of **Stori'r Iaith** with Ian Gwyn Hughes, Ruth Jones, Guto Harri, and Sarra Elgan. History will be the subject of **Cyfrinachau Carcharor Rhyfel** as well, this time the story of the Welshman imprisoned in Stalag Luft during the events immortalised in the film 'The Great Escape'.

Our collaboration and co-production with other broadcasters continue. **Cyfrinachau'r Llong gyda Sean Fletcher** is a co-production with Sky History in the UK and BBC Select in North America, exploring a special piece of history in Wales of international importance. History and science are the subjects of **Gronyn Gobaith – Cymry CERN**, a co-production with ARTE, and in the field of crime, **Seal Bay** is a co-commission with BBC Wales.

Core favourites such as **Dechrau Canu Dechrau Canmol** and **Cefn Gwlad** will continue, and the well-known gardener Adam Jones will join the **Garddio a Mwy** team. **Heno** and **Prynhawn Da** were relaunched last year and now have a familiar team of main presenters and new faces like James Lusted and Paul Stumpey Davies reporting regularly.

Young People

Hansh continues to attract and entertain the 16-24 audience and its following and engagement are growing month by month. It has been a successful year of expanding reach on social media platforms, with TikTok and Instagram attracting an average of 280,000 viewing sessions each month.

Following the success of **Strip** and **Tanwen & Ollie**, there will be two more series this year continuing to push boundaries and raise a few eyebrows! Several new series will also appear as we evolve and expand our long-form content. For the first time on Hansh, we will bring a 'fixed rig' series following young homeless users of the **GISDA** service in Gwynedd. **Bar Hansh** will venture out to Greece to run the first Welsh bar on the strip in Zante. The thought-provoking series **Ar Led**, which will be filmed in the

northeast, will intertwine sex education and humour. Meanwhile, **Cymru ar Gyffuriau** will be an opportunity to explore the modern drug scene in Wales with Zahrra Erami.

Developing talent continues to be a theme and cause for celebration for Hansh. Following a successful pilot, we will release the comedy series **Bwmp**. Written by Ciaran Fitzgerald and starring Jenna Preece, this will be the first series on S4C written by an individual with cerebral palsy and led by a disabled actress.

Caryl Burke has been developing her craft by presenting the short comedy **RSVP**, and she is one of the comedians selected for a training scheme in collaboration with Little Wander and Channel 4. Familiar faces from Hansh's short form, Jac and Gwion, will develop a long-form script called **Gwagle**. And the short film **Teth** is already making a big impression at film festivals around the world.

Children

S4C's children's content remains as important as ever to the main strategy to entertain our younger viewers, attract new speakers to our content, and maintain the language. With us broadcasting 40 hours of children's content every week as well as providing content on YouTube Cyw and other children's platforms, there is plenty to entertain our younger viewers and their families.

As part of **Cyw**'s offering and following the success of the all-inclusive series **Harri'n Helpu**, which features a partnership with the Makaton society and a child from Pendalar special school in the main role, more adventures of big Harri and little Harri will be broadcast later in the year. Viewers will also have the opportunity to be enchanted by the underwater world by joining **Mari'r Forforwyn** and her underwater world. This series has derived from the 'Secrets of the Aquarium' series for BBC2.

Following the popularity of Ben Dant, the beloved pirate will once again roam the schools of Wales in the series **Bendibwmbwls**, highlighting why recycling matters. And the new fun drama **Gwyliau**, revolving around the light-hearted adventures of holiday park staff, will come to the screen later in the year.

For **Stwnsh**, we will have the extreme adventure series **Epig**. The studio series **Taclo'r Tywydd**, a format and set collaboration with Fíbin Media and TG4 from Ireland, will be broadcast in the autumn. In the drama field, the second series of **Y Coridor** will come to the screen, and **Itopia** will return at the end of the year.

For viewers aged 13-15, the drama **Hafiach** about the lives of young people in Rhyl will be seen at the beginning of the summer, the first in a drama scheme for this particular age group.

We cannot forget about our animations, of course, and the big story of 2025 is that the **Smyrffs** will once again be on S4C after 40 years. It will be nice to see the characters in their new look back on S4C once again.

Digital

S4C publishes content across digital platforms every day, reaching hundreds of thousands of people, in Wales and beyond. Our increasing presence on these platforms is a key part of digital transformation with the aim of attracting new and different audiences to S4C and to the Welsh language.

Building on the success of digital content such as **Y Fficsar**, **Apres Amour a Mynydd**, and **Yr Anthem** in 2024-25, we will continue to develop S4C's offering on YouTube by commissioning exciting digital-first content tailored specifically for the platform. Live streaming will continue to be an important part of our digital publishing strategy, contributing significantly to overall viewing time. Music, entertainment, sports, and politics have become core themes for our live events on YouTube, boosting engagement and widening our reach.

One of the main objectives of digital-first content is to engage younger viewers. By continuing to provide a digital platform for a wide range of national voices and experiences, from events like **Pride Cymru** and the **Urdd Eisteddfod** to sports content like **MMA** fighting and the **Tour de France**, the data proves that we're reaching new and younger viewers on YouTube and across social media.

Over the next year, we will focus on strengthening key S4C sub-brands on digital platforms (e.g., Hansh, Cyw, Sports, and Learn Welsh) and launching the new music brand **S4C Miwsig**. Further investment in this area will ensure we stay ahead of changing viewer habits in a rapidly evolving media landscape.