

## News release

# SRA appoints new Head of Welsh Affairs

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We have increased our engagement with the legal sector in Wales by appointing our first ever Head of Welsh Affairs.

Former Head of Policy at Citizens Advice Cymru, Liz Withers will lead our public affairs and stakeholder engagement activities in Wales, including strengthening our understanding of the Welsh legal landscape and working with local consumer groups.

Based in Wales, she will also support the roll out of key SRA initiatives within the country, including supporting the adoption of technology and innovation and the introduction of the new Solicitors Qualifying Examination. She will also work to establish, subject to pandemic restrictions, a new SRA Wales office.

Developing an increased presence in Wales is a key objective within our 2020-23 Corporate Strategy.

**Anna Bradley, Chair of the SRA said** 'Appointing Liz as our first ever Head of Welsh Affairs is a big step forward for us, as we work with both the users of legal services and solicitors in Wales. The legal landscape in Wales is changing and we want to play our part, not only through the phased introduction of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination in Welsh but across other key areas, such as the use of technology and other ways that people can access the legal help they need.

'We have a clear commitment to doing more in Wales and I know that Liz, with her insight, expertise and strong track record of working in the public interest, will be instrumental in doing that.'

**Liz Withers, SRA Head of Welsh Affairs, said:** 'I'm excited to be establishing the SRA's presence here in Wales. I'm keen for the SRA to play an active role in the development of an inclusive and sustainable Welsh legal sector, that allows the public to access appropriate and good quality legal advice, when and how they need it.

'The last year has been a very difficult period with many changes for both solicitors and the public. So I'm looking forward to listening to people's experiences and working to support the provision of good quality legal services in Wales.'

Prior to the SRA Liz worked in a number of high-profile public affairs roles within Wales including for Citizens Advice Cymru, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, National Autistic Society and Consumer Focus (Wales).