THE CYBER RESILIENCE CENTRE
FOR THE WALES

The Cyber Resilience Centre for Wales

ANNUAL REPORT

JUNE 2024

Welcome

Welcome to the 2024 Annual Report. The WCRC has now been operating for three years, with the centre continuing to build on its initial successes. This report is an opportunity for me to highlight our progress and some of our key achievements over the last year.

Supporting Welsh businesses and organisations is a key part of our mission at the centre, and we have delivered inputs at events across Wales, including Chepstow, Tonyrefail, Caernarfon, Llanberris, Llandeilo, Welshpool, and many other places across Wales. Our strategy of community outreach events has continued, working with community policing and local Cyber Protect officers, visiting business and charity premises throughout the country to provide guidance and support to improve their cyber resilience. Over the last twelve months the WCRC has continued to have the fastest growth of any of the centres across Wales and England, continuing to have the largest membership base which is a great achievement for not just the centre, but our partners, ambassadors, policing and the members themselves who have all contributed to this.

In the last year the WCRC has achieved significant success in the social care sector where Welsh Government funded an additional member of staff for the centre, allowing us to engage with over 270 social care organisations across Wales. Many of them were care homes and delivering training licenses saw 2,500 people learning more about cyber resilience, making the sector safer from cybercrime.

We have also been working with partners to develop our 'Incident Response' events. These are aimed at decision makers in organisations, and provide inputs by experts from legal, ICO, incident response, insurance and policing to help inform how to reduce vulnerability to a cyber-attack and highlight the support that exists. We're already working on future events and attendees have said how useful they have been.

It has also been particularly pleasing to see the engagement we have had with our membership at events, engagement days and follow-up calls, along with the feedback that so many have implemented the simple measures we advocate to make their businesses more cyber resilient, is hugely encouraging. The knowledge that we are supporting business and charities to reduce their vulnerability to a cyber-attack makes the hard work the team puts in worthwhile. But we still recognise there is so much to do to persuade businesses all over Wales, that cybercrime is a real threat, and becoming cyber resilient is something they need to invest time and resources into.
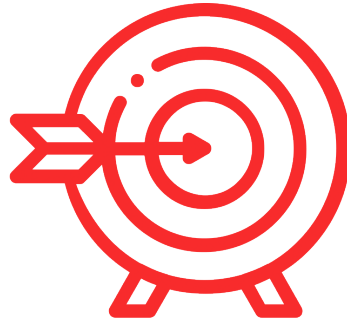
Best wishes,

Paul Peters
Detective Superintendent, Director, The Cyber Resilience Centre for Wales

Achievements

The WCRC has built up its membership to almost 3000 businesses and charities across Wales.

Importantly, 95% of our members are charities, sole traders, micro-businesses, and SMEs, covering a wide range of sectors and geographically spread throughout Wales.

The WCRC has created a cybercrime case study digest to inform businesses and organisations of real-life examples, and the measures that can prevent attacks which is available on the centre's website.

The WCRC is Cyber Essentials Plus certified which is part of the government-backed scheme that demonstrates that measures have been put in place to protect an organisation, whatever its size, against a whole range of the most common cyber-attacks.

"Tai Calon finds immense value in our Cyber Resilience Centre for Wales Community Ambassador membership. The WCRC serves as a valuable hub of information and offers essential services tailored to the needs of SMEs.

Recently, we had the opportunity to participate in one of their events focused on ransomware, which proved outstanding. The WCRC brought together a diverse panel of experts, each proficient in their respective fields, who effectively demystified this complex topic.

We highly encourage anyone in Wales to explore WCRC's resources; their contributions truly enhance business operations."

Community Ambassador

Our Strategic Goals are:

- To support businesses and organisations across Wales to develop their cyber resilience

- To support the talent pipeline

- To generate revenue to support self-sustainability

- To increase membership and deliver a positive customer experience

- To contribute to the reduction of cybercrime across Wales

One of our strategic goals is supporting the student pipeline.

This is an opportunity to engage with students, to be seen as role models, and to encourage students to consider some of the career options that are available within policing that they may not previously have thought of. We have two student programmes:

Cyber PATH – This is part of the national programme with students recruited from Welsh universities to provide baseline cyber security services. The centre currently has eleven students who are currently part of the Cyber PATH programme which has a track record of previous students successfully moving on into full-time employment. The centre has consistently delivered services including staff awareness training, policy reviews, corporate internet discovery and vulnerability assessments throughout this year with positive feedback being received.

Client Relation Managers – Business student placements provide the centre with the support that allows us to provide regular contact in the customer journey whilst giving the student experience of working in the commercial world which helps develop their abilities and understanding. As well as placements, the centre has contracted students to provide additional support to businesses.

It's particularly rewarding to witness our students develop and gain confidence – particularly those that have delivered our staff awareness training sessions and been involved in customer relations.

Marketing

Over the last year we have continued to recognise the strength in our collaborative work and have forged partnerships with regional organisations **that are aligned with our own objectives**. This in turn has helped us create more insightful and informative content across shared comms channels, extending our reach further.

These relationships have also helped bolster our profile across the Welsh business community assisting in promoting the cyber security message.

Our ongoing campaign work has had a more targeted approach the last 12 months, with focus on specific sectors - these have included the Welsh social care sector when the WCRC launched the first-of-its-kind initiative, promoting and encouraging organisations to sign-up to free cyber security training. And, cyber insurance, teaming up with the Cyber Resilience Centre for the South West to host a series of webinars to insurance brokers, highlighting the barriers preventing businesses in accessing the right policies, how to overcome them and the importance of improved communications surrounding cyber insurance for businesses. For both, a dedicated comms plan was created, delivering targeted content and messaging through shared blogs and social media, driving that awareness piece.

Our relationship with the media has also continued to develop securing a dedicated feature in Care Markets – the only monthly independent healthcare title which concentrates solely on news and trends in social care where we were able to showcase the campaign work and success the team has been delivering. This was followed by an invitation to take part in the Wales Business Insider magazine's roundtable monthly event to discuss cyber security issues for businesses and resulted in a double-page feature in the publication, securing the WCRC's reputation within the Welsh cyber security sector.

We have achieved a following of 1,664 on LinkedIn, 554 on X (formerly Twitter) and 164 followers on our Facebook page.

"As a result of engaging with the Cyber Resilience Centre for Wales when they attended at the club, I was made aware of the threat to my sport club from cybercriminals and as a result of the advice given to me, I have put security measures in place. I wasn't aware of what we could do previously to protect ourselves but now I am far more confident that we are far more secure. "

Allan Blackburn,
Tonyrefail Boxing Club

Community Engagement

This year the WCRC has continued to work with the Police Cyber Protect Network to support businesses, charities and other organisations.

The continuation of the WCRC Community Engagement Days has seen the centre team up with local Cyber Protect officers and community policing to visit businesses in towns and cities across Wales.

In fact, the WCRC has visited over 50 different places to deliver workshops, engagement days and presentations at events, in addition to the presentations and guidance provided in online events

Community Ambassador Membership

We have had businesses and charities join us as Community Ambassador members which has been developed specifically for businesses and organisations which want to be a part of our cyber community and are committed to supporting organisations across the region to develop their cyber resilience. We have worked with them to produce blogs aimed at informing their sectors and the wider business community of the importance of cyber resilience.

Our Community Ambassadors this year are: **Tai Calon Community Housing**, **Cardiff Metropolitan University's Cybersecurity Information Networks Centre**, **The Cyber Innovation Hub**, **FORCardiff**, **Centre for Digital Services**, **Cartrefi Cymru Co-op**, **Exercise3** and **Corassure**. We are keen to attract more organisations to join our Community Ambassador membership and help promote the cyber resilience message across Wales.

Membership

With close to 3000 members of the Cyber Resilience Centre for Wales, it is important that we ensure we continue our engagement so that cyber security and improved resilience remains a current focus. The centre makes contact with members every three months and conducts a survey as part of this to assess our impact. The most recent results show over 78% of members had improved their cyber knowledge since being a member and taken steps to improve their security. Although most of our members have not been the victim of cybercrime, their baseline knowledge of cyber security has increased since joining the centre's community with more than 50% telling us they have improved password security and introduced of two-factor authentication.

Our Partners

The WCRC would like to thank our partners for their commitment and contribution.

We have four private sector representatives, one from the charitable sector and representation from senior policing on our management board which acts as the WCRC steering group. We have private sector representation with **Craig Gillespie** of **Chainalysis**, **Leanne Connor** of **Thales**, **Robert Howell** of **Monmouthshire Building Society** and **Simon Tee** of **Kilsby Williams Chartered Accountants**, and also **Simon Gibson** of **The Alacrity Foundation** from the charitable sector.

We also have representation from senior leadership in policing across Wales: Police and Crime Commissioner **Jeff Cuthbert** of **Gwent Police** who has recently stepped down from the board, **Chief Constable Pam Kelly** from **Gwent Police**, **Seb Phillips**, Director of Finance & Resources for **North Wales Police**, and Assistant Chief Constable **Jason Davies** of **South Wales Police**.

Our Advisory Group has representation from across Wales. This includes **Mike Learmond** of **FSB**, **Paul Butterworth** of **Chambers Wales**, **Dewi Gaylard** of **Orangebox**, **David Teague** of **ICO**, **John Lloyd-Jones** of **Metrobank**, **Carrie Gwyther** of **Capital Law**, **Ian Tumelty** of **Cardiff Against Business Crime** and **Michael Groves** of the **Welsh Government**. They are there to assist with growing our membership and feeding back on campaigns/products.

And our Cyber Essentials Partners, the IASME certification bodies which are approved Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus certifiers in Wales. These are **Arcanum Cyber Security**, **Astrix, Excellence IT**, **Jovasi Technologies**, **Knox Cyber Security**, **Morgan & Morgan**, **Seiber** and **Stable**.

Finances

- Home Office Funding – A three-year funding settlement through National Cyber Security Program is in place until March 2025

- The company uses the services of Kilsby Williams Chartered Accountants

- The company has continued to trade successfully and is financially solvent

- The company is VAT registered, filing returns on a quarterly basis

- Corporation tax liability is up to date

- Companies House returns have been filed

ERYRI CONSULTING LIMITED
Health, Safety, Quality & Environmental Consultancy

""My company first heard about WCRC while we were researching what resources could help us to improve our cyber security. We received excellent introductory documents upon becoming a member, which really helped us to focus on what we should be doing to protect ourselves and our clients.

"We have achieved ISO 27001 (the information security standard) and part of this entails a strong focus on information security awareness. Being a member of the WCRC really kick-started us into raising levels of awareness across the whole team (which is a big part of information security – people are your best assets here).

"When we were looking for reputable companies to help us to test the robustness of our systems, the WCRC was on hand with some excellent leads, and put us in touch with a range of best-in-class professionals. I would definitely recommend becoming a member.""

Chris Pritchard,
Business Management Consultant (ISO Standards),
Eryri Consulting

The next twelve months

Cybercrime continues to present a risk to organisations across Wales, with increasing sophistication and evolution of attacks. The WCRC's ambition is to continue to grow, whilst maintaining its current level of engagement with businesses, charities and other organisations, including business groups and trade bodies, to raise awareness and encourage investment in robust cyber security measures.

But we recognise that there are significant challenges ahead. We have already experienced the challenge of convincing SMEs that they are vulnerable to a cyber-attack, and combatting the false belief that a small business in a small country won't be attacked is a strand of our messaging. We have also seen businesses not reporting cyber-attacks to law enforcement, significant under-reporting by the business community hampers the efforts of law enforcement to gain a true understanding of the situation, but also prevents intelligence on the methodology of attacks being shared with the wider business community. But there is work to be done to promote Action Fraud as the place to report cybercrime, as feedback suggests that few organisations know where to report cybercrime or understand the support that law enforcement can bring to the table.

The WCRC will look continue to work with organisations which can signpost us as a resource to improve the resilience of those businesses within their own supply chains, thereby improving their own resilience to a cyber-attack.

We will also continue to provide opportunities for our students to develop and grow in confidence, both as part of Cyber PATH but also those we engage in customer support roles. We will also continue to engage with universities across Wales to identify further opportunities to collaborate.

Lastly, supporting our community of members is key to our success, and developing our customer experience is an important part of our journey. We have recently published our Case Study Digest which highlights actual attacks that have taken place in Wales. We will continue to encourage organisations to share their experiences allowing others to learn from them and take steps to mitigate the effects of these attacks.

Paul Peters
Ditectif Uwch-arolygydd Dros Dro | Temporary Detective Superintendent
Cyfarwyddwr Y Ganolfan Seibergadernid yng Nghymru | Director of The Cyber Resilience Centre for Wales
E-bost | Email: Paul.Peters@wcrcentre.co.uk
Gwefan | website: www.wcrcentre.co.uk

THE
CYBER
RESILIENCE
CENTRE

FOR THE **WALES**

enquiries@wcrcentre.co.uk

www.wcrcentre.co.uk

@CRCWales

linkedin.com/company/cyber-resilience-centre-for-wales