

Specialist Estates Services **NEWSLETTER**

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Introduction from the Director

As I write this introduction, the sun is out for the first time in ages; the ground is dry and people are shedding the winter gear and contemplating the possibility of getting out!

There's certainly lots to be optimistic about and this newsletter hopefully will add to that 'spring' feeling!

Starting with Andrew Ward and Joanne Sewell's trip to the Radiological Society conference in Chicago: It was a really informative exercise, with themes highlighting how AI, advances in portability, and integrated digital platforms are reshaping imaging.

We also take the opportunity to put the spotlight on our newly recruited Network75 apprentices, Amelia Farmer (Surveying) and Thomas Reavell (Engineering). Their enthusiasm for their respective courses and the work we are doing in Wales is really encouraging and offers confidence that we have a strong pipeline of estate professionals who can take the NHS estate forward into the future.

Our ongoing push into the digital field is also featured, with coverage of our newly completed NHS Wales Estate Database (NWeD) and the soon to follow modernised Estates & Facilities Performance Management (EFPMS) system. We hope that this is just the beginning!

We've included a piece on the Duty of Quality, and our response, endeavouring to make it a central theme in all we do.

We welcome 4 new staff to the team and have included our usual history corner (which for some of us feels all too recent!).

Enjoy the read!

Stuart Douglas

Director

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Radiological Society of North America Annual Meeting (RSNA)

Attending the Radiological Society of North America annual meeting (RSNA) is always described as an opportunity to stay at the forefront of innovation in radiology and medical imaging — but this year, experiencing it in person truly brought that statement to life.

From 29 November to 3 December, Andrew Ward and Jo Sewell, the Imaging and Diagnostics team at SES, travelled to Chicago to take part in the internationally recognised RSNA Annual Meeting. As the leading global event in diagnostic imaging, RSNA brings together clinicians, researchers, scientists, and industry experts from across the world. The scale of the conference is impressive, but what stood out most was the shared sense of purpose; a collective commitment to improving patient care through innovation, collaboration, and evidence-based practice.

The breadth and quality of educational content were exceptional. Across focused scientific sessions and hands-on demonstrations, we were exposed to the latest advances in imaging technology, service delivery models, and research. It was particularly valuable to see how imaging suppliers are approaching the challenges faced by healthcare systems like our own workforce pressures, rising demand, digital transformation, and the need to deliver high-quality care as efficiently and safely as possible.

A major theme throughout the conference was the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence in healthcare. Diagnostic imaging continues to sit at the forefront of this transformation. We saw AI applications that support image analysis, improve image quality, streamline workflows, and contribute to radiation dose reduction, developments that have very real and meaningful patient benefits. What was especially striking this year was a clear shift in emphasis: while imaging machines continue to improve in speed and clarity, they are no longer the sole centrepiece of innovation.

The real transformation now lies in what happens after the image is captured.

Software solutions, AI-driven analysis and workflow optimisation are increasingly the primary drivers of progress. Radiology is becoming less about hardware competition and more about delivering actionable insights efficiently and consistently. The scanner is just one component in a much larger ecosystem designed to enhance diagnostic accuracy and streamline care delivery. Increasingly, value is created not only by producing high-quality images, but by how effectively those images are interpreted, integrated, prioritised, and acted upon within clinical pathways.



Radiological Society of North America Annual Meeting (RSNA)

That said, hardware innovation has by no means stalled, it is simply evolving in a different direction. A noticeable trend at RSNA was the move toward portability and flexibility. Emerging technologies include portable MRI systems designed for bedside or remote use, compact CT scanners suitable for emergency and community settings, and handheld ultrasound devices enhanced by AI support. These advances enable imaging to take place in more diverse environments, extending access beyond large acute hospitals to rural clinics and community care centres.

This decentralised approach to imaging could have significant benefits for healthcare delivery in Wales. By expanding access points and reducing logistical barriers, we could enable diagnostic tests closer to patients, improve equity of access and support more timely decision-making. It aligns strongly with broader ambitions around community-based care and integrated service models.

Of course, there were also innovative unveilings of larger scanners that have features that can assist with patient treatment such as biopsies and image guided injections; but also, that of making imaging simpler and quicker for the patient, the unveiling of a whole-body PET scanner and upright CT scanner were examples of this.

Alongside these developments, there was considerable focus on the growing importance of integrated digital platforms such as PACS (Picture Archive and Communication Systems) as the central hub for imaging ecosystems. Future innovation will depend on how effectively we connect AI tools, reporting systems, workflow management solutions, and enterprise imaging strategies into a cohesive, interoperable framework. Radiologists and service leaders are increasingly selecting solutions based not simply on technical performance, but on their ability to enhance workflow, reduce variation and improve patient outcomes.

The industry exhibition provided an invaluable opportunity to see these innovations first-hand and to better understand development roadmaps that will influence procurement and planning decisions over the coming years. For NHS Wales, this exposure is critical. It strengthens our ability to make informed, strategic investment decisions and ensures we remain aligned with international best practice.

Equally important were the networking opportunities. RSNA creates space for conversations that simply do not happen in day-to-day working life. Engaging with international colleagues allowed us to exchange ideas, explore potential collaborations and gain insight into emerging trends that will shape the future of radiology. These discussions broadened our professional perspective and reinforced the importance of thinking beyond organisational or national boundaries when planning sustainable diagnostic services.

The future of imaging, as reflected throughout the conference, will be defined by simplicity, mobility, and intelligence. Hardware will continue to become smaller and more portable, while software and AI will drive most of the innovation.



Radiological Society of North America Annual Meeting (RSNA)

From a Welsh perspective, attendance delivered tangible benefits. The international perspectives and innovations we encountered will directly inform our ongoing work to shape the future of diagnostic services in Wales. The knowledge gained will support the identification and realisation of benefits within current services and contribute to the development of a detailed programme and implementation plan that reflects both global innovation and local need.

Most importantly, attending RSNA strengthened our collective expertise. It provided clarity about where we can invest better, where we can achieve more and how we can continue to improve the quality, safety, and sustainability of the services we support. While the conference itself lasted only a few days, its impact will extend well beyond that week in Chicago, shaping conversations, decisions, and improvements across NHS Wales in the months and years ahead.



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Network75 Student Testimonials - Amelia Farmer

Studying Real Estate through the Network75 Degree Apprenticeship programme has given me invaluable practical experience alongside my academic learning. The programme allows me to combine university study with full-time professional work, enabling me to apply theoretical knowledge directly to real-world property projects and gain a much deeper understanding of how the property sector operates in practice.

My passion for property developed from a strong interest in economics and the way market's function. While studying Economics and Business at A-level, I became particularly fascinated by the property market, especially how interest rates influence demand, how inflation affects affordability, and how wider political and economic decisions shape the built environment.

These subjects encouraged me to explore how theory transfers into real-life decision-making within the property sector. A key turning point for me was reading an influential book on property investment, which introduced me to long-term investment thinking, market cycles, risk management, and the importance of sustainable property management. This helped me develop a broader perspective on property as both an asset and a service. Before this, I had little awareness of the surveying profession or the wide range of career pathways available within real estate. After researching the course and the Network75 scheme, I realised it was the perfect route for me, as it offered both academic learning and professional experience.

The last 5 months of my placement, I have gained exposure to a wide variety of property types, including hospital and healthcare sites, which has allowed me to understand how different environments operate and support essential services. I have assisted with site searches, prepared lease summaries, and I am currently shadowing a disposal process, these experiences have helped me develop a practical understanding of how property decisions are made. One of the most unique and exciting aspects of my role has been using the drone to survey several sites. This has enabled us to assess properties from a new perspective and understand how modern technology is transforming the surveying profession.

Overall, the Network75 programme has provided me with industry experience while allowing me to work towards my degree. It has helped me build confidence, develop professional skills, and gain insight into the realities of the property sector. The opportunities I have been given, along with the people I have met, have prepared me for a successful future in real estate, which I'm excited to see where it takes me.

Amelia Farmer

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Network75 Student Testimonials - Thomas Reavell

I joined the NHS through the Network75 scheme because it allows me to earn a degree from the University of South Wales while gaining experience in the electrical engineering industry. I work with the NHS for three days of the week and study for two days at the university. I enjoy this arrangement because it provides a good balance between work and study, making it easier to allocate my time effectively.

Studying through the Network75 scheme has allowed me not only to learn the theoretical side of electrical engineering but also to put that theory into practice within the industry. I've always found practical learning easier than classroom learning, so the Network75 scheme was the perfect choice for me.

I've always enjoyed working with electrics, and this interest continued into high school, where I chose Product Design as one of my GCSE and A Level subjects. This subject involved tasks such as soldering electronics and designing circuits, and I also needed to learn about British Standards for the exam. Much of what I learned in those classes has carried over into my work within NWSSP and my studies at university.

Over the six months that I have worked in SES, I have visited many hospitals across Wales to complete witnessing tests such as medical earth testing and fire alarm cause and effect. These jobs on site have helped me visualise the scale of the work carried out not only within SES but across all of NWSSP, and they have helped me understand how important this work is.

Overall, my first six months within SES have been brilliant. I'm grateful to have this opportunity and would like to thank my mentors and the team for their support.



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Technological Advances in SES

SES Launch NWED - The New All Wales NHS Estates Database



A cross department project team within NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) has successfully developed and launched a new national estates database after the UK Government unexpectedly withdrew key functionality from its long standing Electronic Property Information Mapping Service (e PIMS). The change, announced in early 2024, left the SES Property team with less than a year to source or create a replacement for the system they had relied upon for more than 15 years to manage properties across all NHS Wales organisations.

Faced with the loss of the critical property management tool, representatives from the SES Property team joined forces with colleagues from the Business Systems & Information (BSI) team, the Transformation Management Office (TMO), and the Chief Digital Officer. Together, they formed the NHS Wales Estates Database (NWED) Project Team, tasked with identifying options and delivering a solution at pace.

After evaluating commercial off the shelf systems and external development options, the team determined that none were suitable or cost effective. Instead, they chose to build a bespoke in house system capable of meeting the specific needs of NHS Wales. The result was the creation of the NHS Wales Estates Database (NWED), developed from the ground up and populated with data migrated from e PIMS.

The new NWED system was rolled out across NHS Wales during December 2025. It is easier and quicker to use than the old system and has additional functionality. The project avoided significant capital and revenue expenditure while ensuring that the SES Property team can continue delivering a high quality, Wales wide lease management service for NHS Wales.

One of the major functions of NWED is to manage property leases including:

- Lease commencement and expiry dates
- Break clauses
- Rent reviews
- Lease renewal reminders

NWED generates reports and alerts for lease breaks and expiry dates which estates teams need for effectively managing and planning their estate.

Andrew Nash

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Technological Advances in SES EFPMS

The future of our digital infrastructure is being built right now. Technology should make work easier - reducing friction, not adding to it. For too long, some of our most critical workflows have relied on tools never designed for the demands we place on them today. SES is changing that, and the work is already underway.

Saying Goodbye to Spreadsheets: A Smarter Way to Manage Imaging Assets

It started with a simple question: why are we still doing this in Excel?

Managing imaging assets through spreadsheets meant manual updates, version conflicts, and the ever-present risk of data being lost or overwritten. It was a process held together by habit rather than design - and it was holding us back.

So, we built something better. The EDS team is developing a dedicated web application for imaging asset management, purpose-built to replace the spreadsheet workflow entirely. Powered by HTML, CSS, and Python and underpinned by a secure, centralised database the application gives users full control through a clean, modern browser interface.

Adding a new asset is as simple as filling in a form. Updating a record takes seconds. Browsing the full asset library no longer means scrolling through endless rows, it means an organised, filterable view that surfaces exactly what you need, the moment you need it. Everything lives securely in one place. No duplicate files. No version confusion. Just accurate, reliable data the whole team can trust. The application is in active development, with the team focused on getting every detail right before rollout.

Laying the Foundations: EFPMS Database Development

Modernising individual workflows is only part of the picture. Lasting transformation requires the right foundations and that is precisely what the EFPMS database is being built to provide. Currently in planning and development, the EFPMS database will serve as a robust, centralised data layer for capturing and managing structured information across our services. It will bring order and consistency to data that is currently fragmented across disconnected systems enabling more accurate records, fewer manual processes, and better-informed decisions at every level.

This is foundational work - the kind that rarely makes headlines but makes everything else possible.

One Platform, Every System: The Integration Vision

These projects are each significant in their own right. But together, they point towards something far greater. The EDS team is actively planning the integration of all our existing systems into one unified platform, breaking down the silos, eliminating duplication, and removing the manual handoffs that cost teams time every single day.

The vision is clear: a connected digital environment where information flows freely, teams have what they need in one place, and technology finally works as hard as the people using it. We are building something to be proud of and we are just getting started. Updates will follow as each project progresses. Your feedback is always welcome - it keeps us building in the right direction!

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Duty of Quality Vlogs



Please click on the above image to watch our video

The Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020 introduced the Duty of Quality, a requirement that goes beyond simply meeting service standards. It places a clear responsibility on NHS bodies to continually consider how they can improve the quality of the services they provide every time they carry out their functions.

At its heart, the Duty of Quality is about embedding improvement into everyday decision-making. Enhancing quality and ultimately outcomes for service users must become a routine, integral part of how organisations plan, act, and evaluate their work.

The duty also applies to Welsh Ministers and requires NHS organisations to foster a strong culture of quality. This means maintaining an ongoing focus on improving both health services and population outcomes, not just reacting to issues as they arise.

To plan, deliver, and sustain this focus, NHS bodies are expected to follow six key steps, all grounded in a clear, shared understanding of what “good quality” looks like:

- Securing board-level support
- Assessing organisational readiness
- Building organisation-wide commitment and shared vision
- Developing improvement skills and infrastructure
- Aligning and coordinating activity
- Sustaining a whole-organisation approach

Progress will be demonstrated through an annual report submitted to the Welsh Government. Measurement will be structured around the Six Domains of Quality, supported by six enabling factors that help ensure improvements are meaningful, consistent, and sustainable.



Staff Changes



We're delighted to welcome several new colleagues to the team:

Steve Greck joins us as Assistant Technical Officer. Steve is an experienced CAD Technician who has worked in a number of roles in both the public and private sector, including 9 years for South Wales Fire & Rescue Service.

Luke Holifield has taken up the role of Senior Estates Advisor. He worked in the private sector as a Quantity Surveyor for regional main contractors for just over 10 years, Luke achieved his degree through the Network 75 scheme while working part time.

Amelia Farmer and Thomas Reavell have joined our Network75 programme. Amelia will be working with the Property team, while Thomas will be supporting the Engineering team.

Please join us in giving Steve, Luke, Amelia, and Thomas a warm welcome as they begin their journey with us.

New Publications

[WHTM - 07-01 - Safe Management of Healthcare Waste](#)



History Corner

Unusual Welsh Hospitals

Rookwood Hospital – Llandaff, Cardiff

Originally a mansion house, its name inspired by the large flocks of rooks overhead. Rookwood Hospital was repurposed during World War I to treat wounded soldiers. Later, it became one of the first spinal injuries units in the UK. After its acquisition following the war, the hospital was affiliated with the University Hospital of Wales, and by the 1970s–80s it housed eight wards caring for patients with spinal and brain injuries, strokes, multiple sclerosis, and Parkinson's disease. The main hospital closed in 2020, with services relocated to University Hospital Llandough. Today, several services remain on site, including the Artificial Limb and Appliance Services (ALAS), Electronic Assistive Technology (EATS), Wales Mobility Driving and Assessment Service (WMDAS), Mass Vaccination Centre, and Occupational Therapy.



Rookwood Hospital, Llandaff, Cardiff



H.M Stanley Hospital, St Asaph, Denbigshire

Hensol Castle Hospital – Vale of Glamorgan

Hensol Castle Hospital was one of Wales' most unusual psychiatric institutions. Opened in 1930, it served as a mental hospital for people with learning disabilities and was part of the interwar expansion of mental health and social care facilities. The hospital operated as a largely self-contained community, with wards, recreation areas, and farm facilities. Over time, care evolved from custodial approaches to more therapeutic and educational practices following post-war reforms. The hospital closed in 2003, with most patients relocated to supported living arrangements. Today, the historic castle and estate have been redeveloped as part of the Hensol Castle Estate, now featuring a conference and wedding venue integrated with the Vale Resort complex.

H.M. Stanley Hospital – St Asaph, Denbigshire

H.M. Stanley Hospital began life as a workhouse in 1839, built to provide poor relief under the old Poor Law system. Its most famous early resident was Henry Morton Stanley, the Victorian explorer and journalist, who spent part of his childhood in the workhouse. When the institution later became an NHS hospital, it was named in his honour.

By 1906, an infirmary was added to care for the sick, and by 1910, an infectious diseases unit treated conditions such as diphtheria and scarlet fever. In 1920, a maternity unit opened to serve families across northeastern Wales, long before the creation of the NHS. Later expansions included ophthalmology, stroke rehabilitation, and general outpatient services. With the founding of the NHS in 1948, H.M. Stanley Hospital officially transformed from a workhouse into a community and general hospital. By 2010, the aging buildings were deemed unsuitable for modern clinical use, and the hospital closed in April 2012. After closure, the site served as the Welsh Ambulance Service headquarters until 2019, after which it was sold. One enduring legacy is the Stanley Eye Unit, which was transferred to Abergele Hospital to preserve the historical link.

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