Welsh Headlines — 11 Nov 2026

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? Top Story: A standing National Commission for Wales — with independence on the agenda

The Welsh Government has published terms of reference for a National Commission for Wales, an independent standing body advising on the country's constitutional future — with independence among the options. Constitution Minister Dafydd Trystan Davies told the Senedd on Tuesday it would cost "in the ballpark" of £500,000 a year. It will be co-chaired by Dame Menna Rawlings, a former ambassador to France and High Commissioner to Australia, and Professor Emyr Lewis, emeritus professor of constitutional law at Aberystwyth.

Its remit covers independent advice on devolution priorities — the Crown Estate, rail infrastructure, justice and policing — a national conversation with people across Wales, research on the political and economic questions ahead, and the three options the previous Independent Commission identified: enhanced devolution, a federal UK and independence. It will also weigh the balance of power between tiers of government, "including the scope to transfer further responsibilities to regional or local levels" — a nod to Andy Burnham's government, which wants more devolution to Welsh regions.

Professor Lewis said there was "no pressure": "We're not campaigners, we're advisers." Davies said the UK "is under increasing strain". YesCymru chair Rob Hughes called it "one step forward" but said "if we add a referendum tomorrow, we're not winning it", with the group eyeing 2032. Reform's Helen Jenner called it "ridiculous"; Labour's Huw Thomas said it was "another week and

another commission"; Tory Darren Millar attacked a "constitutional merry-go-round". No referendum will be held this term, which runs to 2030.

?? Senedd & politics

Reform MS Joe Martin has been banned from speaking in the Senedd until he apologises for claiming white people are being "replaced". Llywydd Huw Irranca-Davies ruled that Martin's question during Tuesday's business statement on the "demographic replacement of white British people" was "unnecessarily provocative and deliberately offensive", adding: "Until I receive a clear indication that the member understands the boundaries of acceptable parliamentary conduct and apologises to the Siambr, we will not be calling him to speak." Martin told the chamber that "mass immigration and differing birth rates mean that, in just 37 years' time, in 2063, we will be a minority in our own country", naming London, Birmingham, Leicester, Slough, Luton and Manchester as places where he said it had already happened. Trefnydd Heledd Fychan immediately sought a ruling from the Deputy Llywydd: "We cannot differentiate between people of different religions, different sexuality, different skin colour. We are a government for everyone here in Wales." Martin was formally warned in September over earlier conduct, and MSs walked out of a speech in June in which he joked that Welsh students were unable to read and Indian nurses were taking Welsh jobs.

A second Reform MS is facing questions over where he lives. Nation.Cymru's Martin Shipton reports that Steven Rodaway, MS for Gŵyr Abertawe, is registered at Companies House as a resident of Turkmenistan, as a designated member of an LLP called Auriol Event Leadership. Candidates must have their main address in Wales to stand for the Senedd. The firm, whose two other partners are listed in Turkmenistan and England, was dissolved last week.

At First Minister's Questions, Rhun ap Iorwerth was challenged over the pace of school safeguarding reform after S4C News revealed that only three of the 13 recommendations relevant to the Welsh Government, from the *Justice Through Our Courage* report into paedophile head teacher Neil Foden, have been completed. Ken Skates raised the Children's Commissioner's concerns; the First Minister said recommendations were "completed or are in varying stages of progress, some very, very close indeed to being completed" and that the point was "absolutely making sure that we put in place lasting measures". His predecessor as education secretary, Lynne Neagle, told BBC Cymru Fyw that the three completed items happened "under the Labour government" and called for more urgency from Plaid ministers. Also at FMQs: ap Iorwerth said he would "not take lessons from Reform on the Covid inquiry" after Helen Jenner asked about a Plaid MS's suggestion that a full public inquiry might have wasted £10m, and Darren Millar accused ministers of "dragging its heels" on the defence technical college.

? Media

ITV Wales plans to cut two programmes and reduce producer roles at its Cardiff headquarters. The broadcaster is proposing to end the long-running rural affairs series *Coast and Country* and the weekly arts and entertainment programme *Backstage*, and is consulting staff after telling most of them on Tuesday morning. BBC Wales understands producer numbers could fall from six to two, with more output made in studio rather than on location. ITV said the changes would not affect the amount of news and current affairs it broadcasts and cited "significant economic pressure" across the industry; the move follows Sky's £1.6bn deal to buy ITV's broadcasting and streaming operations, and BBC Wales' announcement in September of 58 job cuts.

? Health

Health visitors will return to work next week after a deal ended a nine-month strike that saw thousands of appointments cancelled. Unite said the agreement with Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board would see all health visitors offered new roles, calling it a "historic pay win"; about 100 staff have been on strike since February over job grading, saying they were losing up to £9,000 a year. Home visits in the board area — Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf — fell from 6,140 between March and May 2025 to 909 in the same period this year. Unite general secretary Sharon Graham called it "a magnificent victory"; chief executive Paul Mears said the immediate priority was restoring services, with a new specialist health visitor role to be developed. Plaid MSs for the area said they were "very relieved" and called on the board to rebuild relationships with its workforce.

?? Justice

The petition for law reform brought by the family of Sophie Brimble has passed 100,000 signatures. Sophie, from Crickhowell, was 20 when she died in July 2017 after her boyfriend Jay Bayliss crashed into a lamp-post in Brynmawr while racing at almost three times the 30mph limit. Bayliss was found responsible at a trial of facts but ruled unfit to plead; the judge could impose only an absolute discharge, with no prison term or driving ban. The petition went from 12,655 signatures to more than 100,000 in nine days before closing on Sunday, crossing the threshold at which a debate in Parliament must be considered. "It just goes to show that hard work, determination and the power of people coming together really can make a difference," said her sister Aimee Coombes, who led the campaign. The Ministry of Justice has said it agrees the law needs updating and is considering reforms; the Law Commission dates the current unfit-to-plead rules to 1836.

A driver who stole a minibus, hit a cyclist and drove the wrong way down a dual carriageway has been jailed for three years. Darragh O'Grady, 31, from Dublin, arrived at Holyhead on 24 August, stole a woman's phone and bank cards, then took a taxi firm's minibus. He knocked cyclist Richard Owen Roberts unconscious with a wing mirror and later drove the wrong way on the A55. Sentencing him at Caernarfon Crown Court, Judge Betts said it was "only a matter of sheer luck that you didn't kill yourself or someone else". O'Grady admitted taking cocaine and

Valium as well as drinking.

Relatives of a brother posthumously accused of murdering his sister at a Pembrokeshire farmhouse nearly 50 years ago hope for a fresh inquest after meeting a senior coroner. Martha and Griff Thomas were found dead at Ffynnon Samson farmhouse in Llangolman in 1976. A 1977 inquest found Martha, 70, was unlawfully killed and returned an open verdict on Griff, 73. Dyfed-Powys Police's Operation Hallam review is understood to have made no significant discoveries.

?? Housing & planning

Campaigners trying to stop a data centre on a Cardiff park-and-ride site say the council could be acting unlawfully if it approves the scheme this week. Save Cardiff East has written to the city's monitoring officer arguing objectors have not had long enough to respond before Thursday's planning committee, which officers have recommended should approve the Llanrumney scheme: "The register now holds 1,569 documents; the technical material runs to many thousands of pages, and the description of the power plant has changed at least five times."

Plans for 146 homes, a hotel and a care home beside the Highbeech roundabout in Chepstow have been submitted, with 13 objections lodged in a week. The Mounton Road site is the first "strategic site" in Monmouthshire's replacement local development plan to come forward.

Carmarthenshire council has opened consultation on closing four rural Welsh-medium primary schools — Ysgol Blaenau, Ysgol Pontiets, Ysgol Carwe and Ysgol Bancffosfelen — with responses due by 22 December. Two national childcare organisations have warned that the Bancffosfelen closure would also put the village's Welsh-medium playgroup, which operates on the school site, at risk.

? Communities

An empty £10m business park in Bridgend has been described as looking like "an apocalypse" after tonnes of rubbish and a caravan were dumped there. Brocastle Business Park, built with Welsh Government money in 2021, has stood empty for five years; locals said about 100 people living in 40 caravans occupied the site for several months, and business owners reported three unauthorised encampments there in the past year, each larger than the last. One nearby shop owner said she "slept with one eye open". The Welsh Government said the occupation was unauthorised, fly-tipping is a crime, and removal work was under way.

The Newport Ship will stay in storage for the foreseeable future, with councillors expected to confirm the position given the estimated £27.5m cost of a permanent display venue and the "very limited availability" of a suitable site. The 15th Century vessel was found in 2002 during construction of the Riverfront Theatre; its 2,500 timbers were conserved and returned to a Newport

store. Campaigners want it reassembled at full 30m length, as the Mary Rose was in Portsmouth, and say they are "angry and frustrated".

? Education & faith

Some secondary schools in Wales are not providing religious education at all, despite it being compulsory, according to the largest study of religion, values and ethics (RVE) provision since the Curriculum for Wales was introduced. Academics from Bangor University and the National Centre of Religious Education for Wales analysed FOI responses from 135 secondary schools. In North Wales, 12.8% of responding schools reported no mandatory provision in Year 10 and 17.9% none in Year 11; in South Wales the figures were 3.4% and 6.9%.

? Culture

Cerys Matthews has received an OBE for services to music, and paid tribute to her family. The Cardiff-born singer and BBC 6 Music presenter, 57, was given the medal by the Prince of Wales, and said she accepted it in memory of her family and "in gratitude of the freedoms I have as a female in this era". She wore Black Watch tartan in memory of her grandfather Oswald, who took part in the D-Day landings, and said Prince William discussed Catatonia with her, "evidently" a fan.

Monmouth has been named the happiest place to live in Wales in Rightmove's 15th annual "happy at home" index, which drew responses from more than 24,000 people. Richmond upon Thames topped the UK table.

? Sport

Aaron Wainwright has emerged as a major injury doubt for Wales' Nations Championship match against New Zealand in Cardiff on Saturday. The Leicester number eight, Wales' most experienced forward and best ball-carrier, picked up a leg injury and has been seen in a protective boot; he did not train on Tuesday, and Steve Tandy names his team on Thursday. New Zealand wing Will Jordan is out with a hamstring injury.

Brennan Johnson is set to win his 50th cap against Norway on Saturday, becoming the third-youngest Welshman to reach the mark after Ethan Ampadu and Chris Gunter. The Everton forward says he wants more major tournaments with Wales, with Cardiff a host city for Euro 2028.

Wales have called up uncapped MK Dons striker Aaron Collins after Kieffer Moore withdrew injured. Collins, 29, a former Newport County player, has 17 goals in 16 games this season.

Tomas Francis says the prospect of a fourth World Cup drives him on. The 34-year-old prop could join Gareth Thomas, Stephen Jones, Gethin Jenkins, Alun Wyn Jones and George North as the only Welshmen to play at four.

?? Weather

No weather warnings are in force for the UK. Cardiff has a cloudy start with any early light rain or drizzle soon easing, then a dry afternoon with bright spells developing, high 10°C. Tonight becomes clear and chilly, low 4°C. Thursday and Friday are dry, bright and cold, 8°C by day and -1°C overnight; Saturday brings sunny spells and cloud, with rain spreading in on Sunday.

Method: SearXNG for leads (front pages, aggregators and a GOV.WALES release), then indexes and article bodies fetched via the Playwright service on MacBach (.100:8090) — BBC Wales, BBC Wales Politics, the BBC Welsh Parliament topic page, BBC Cymru Fyw, BBC Sport, Nation.Cymru (news, home, sport), the GOV.WALES news index, the Guardian Wales RSS feed (nothing newer than 9 Nov) and BBC Weather. WalesOnline and ITV article pages are walled or failing through the service and were skipped, as were Nitter, Phice, Flaresolverr and Reddit. Items already covered — the £130m cost-of-living package, community right to buy, Alex Norris on justice devolution, the Green Party leadership contest, Cardiff University's vice-chancellor, the badger petition — are not repeated; the Senedd passed the mini-budget on 3 November and it is not re-reported here.

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