Welsh Headlines — 11 Oct 2026

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Compiled 09:35 BST, Sunday 11 October 2026 • Sources: BBC Wales and BBC Wales Politics indexes, BBC Cymru Fyw, BBC Sport Wales, BBC Weather and warnings, Nation.Cymru (news / home / sport / culture), GOV.WALES news index, The Guardian Wales (RSS) — all via the Playwright fetch service (192.168.178.100:8090). SearXNG (:8086) returned the usual index-and-aggregator mix usable only as corroboration. Nitter, Phice, Flaresolverr and Reddit skipped (services down).

? Top Story: Hundreds rally in Caernarfon against the Menai data centre

More than 300 people gathered at Y Maes in the centre of Caernarfon on Saturday morning to protest against plans for a 101-acre data centre on the Menai Strait.

The rally began at 11:00 and was the largest street demonstration yet against the scheme, which developers want to build on the long-derelict former Friction Dynamics (Ferodo) site between Caernarfon and Y Felinheli in Gwynedd.

The developer, **Gwelyfenai**, says the complex — covering about 41 hectares, with the tallest building around 30 metres high — would bring roughly 950 construction jobs and 210 permanent roles, and would "transform and revitalise" a brownfield site.

Opponents are not convinced. **Ernest Dyson**, who lives near the proposed site, said it was "basically the destruction of the most beautiful part of the Menai Strait… The people of the area are custodians of it. That's what we must think of."

Liz Saville Roberts, the Plaid Cymru MP for Dwyfor Meirionnydd, told the rally: "We know that we need data centres but they have to be the right size, the right technology and in the right places… We have too long a history in Wales of extractive industries that left nothing behind and have little benefit for communities. That mustn't happen again in the 21st Century."

Former Ferodo worker **Stephen Farrer** said he would like to see something happen on a site that is "crying out for something", but that this plan is "completely out of place": "We don't know about the noise or what's going to be going on there."

More than 22,500 people have signed a petition opposing the scheme (campaigners now put the figure above 23,000). The planning application to Gwynedd Council is out for consultation until **17 October**. (BBC Wales — Nicholas Bourne; BBC Cymru Fyw — Harri Evans, 10 Oct)

?? Politics & the Senedd

?? Reform MS calls her party's arrested ex-leader "our Welsh leader"

A Reform MS's weekly newspaper column has described Dan Thomas — who resigned as the party's Welsh leader after his arrest — as "our Welsh leader".

Laura Anne Jones MS, the former Tory who defected to Reform, wrote in the *Abergavenny Chronicle* (published Saturday 10 October) that Mr Thomas "delivered a superb speech and made clear that, here in Wales, Reform is already leading from the front". She appeared to overlook the fact that Mr Thomas quit the leadership on 21 September after being arrested in mid-September on suspicion of assault and controlling or coercive behaviour.

Reform named **Helen Jenner** (Bangor Conwy Mon) as its new leader in Wales on 21 September. Gwent Police confirmed Mr Thomas — who denies wrongdoing and says he was released without charge — had been bailed pending further enquiries, and he remains a Reform MS for Casnewydd Islwyn. In the same column, Ms Jones highlighted Jordan Bardella's speech and a memorandum of understanding between Reform and France's National Rally on Channel crossings. (Nation.Cymru, 11 Oct)

? Third Menai bridge "could take a decade", says transport minister

Deputy Minister for Transport Mark Hooper insists a third Menai crossing will be built — but has warned it may take eight to 10 years before anyone cuts the ribbon.

Mr Hooper visited Menai Bridge on Friday to reaffirm the Welsh Government's commitment, a week after the announcement of a new route east of the Britannia Bridge, estimated at around **£670 million**. Eight years ago a Labour-led government backed a crossing at £400m before scrapping it under Mark Drakeford's administration. Mr Hooper accepted "the frustration" of residents but said design work, environmental assessments, business cases and statutory approvals all lie ahead: "I

may not be the one cutting the ribbon in eight to 10 years time, but I can say, we are committed." *(Update on the 7 October coverage of the announcement.)* (Nation.Cymru — Dale Spridgeon, LDR, 10 Oct)

?? Newport residents: closing M4 junctions would "make traffic worse"

People living close to the M4 in Newport have attacked Welsh Government proposals to shut junctions on the motorway to ease congestion at the Brynglas Tunnels.

The plan would completely close **junction 27 at High Cross** and close eastbound slip roads at **junction 26 in Malpas** and **junction 25 for Caerleon**. Resident **Jon Rhind** said traffic already adds 20 minutes to his journey: "I can only see it making things worse… a southern bypass might be more appropriate." Council leader **Dimitri Batrouni** has vowed to fight the proposals. *(Update on the 9 October coverage.)* (BBC Wales — Nelli Bird, reporting from Newport, 10 Oct)

? Wales backs period dignity on International Day of the Girl

The Welsh Government has marked International Day of the Girl by reaffirming its commitment to ending period poverty and building a "Period Proud Wales".

The **Period Dignity Grant** ensures period products are available in every school in Wales and in community venues including foodbanks, libraries and leisure centres, while the wider *A Period Proud Wales* plan encourages sport, cultural venues and employers to provide free products. Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Member for Social Justice and Equality **Sioned Williams** said: "Period dignity and poverty affects individuals, families and communities across Wales, making it an issue for all of us… Our Period Proud Wales plan is about breaking down stigma and making sure that no one is held back by something as natural as a period." (GOV.WALES, 11 Oct, 00:01)

? Education & Skills

? GCSE attainment gap widens for pupils from low-income families

The GCSE attainment gap between pupils from low-income families and their classmates has widened in Wales, with results falling more sharply among those eligible for free school meals.

Provisional figures for 2025–26 show the gap on the Welsh Government's main measure of achievement grew from **78.6 to 82 points** in a year. Pupils eligible for means-tested free school meals recorded an average Capped 9 score of **295.3**, down from 300.8; among those not eligible it fell from 379.4 to **377.3**. That is a decline of 5.5 points for FSM-eligible pupils against 2.1 points for their classmates.

Capped 9 combines a pupil's nine best qualification results, which must include literacy, numeracy and science; an A* at GCSE is worth 58 points, an A 52 and a C 40. The gap is wider than the 77.3 points recorded in 2019 but remains below the 87.1-point gap of 2023. Free school meal eligibility is used as an indicator of low household income and does not capture every pupil whose family faces financial hardship. (Nation.Cymru — Mark Mansfield, 10 Oct)

? "Don't lose a generation": urgent clarity demanded on skills reform

The sector training young people in Wales says it needs urgent clarity from the Welsh Government over plans to reform the skills system, as the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) rises.

At the end of 2025, **17%** of 16- to 24-year-olds in Wales were NEET — up 5.5 percentage points on the previous year and 4.4 points over five years. Around **56,000** young people are affected. Economy Minister **Adam Price** told the Senedd's Economy Committee in late September that the present system is not working; the Welsh Government says it hopes to publish details of a new plan in the coming weeks. (BBC Cymru Fyw — Rhodri Lewis and Gwen Aeron, today, Welsh-language)

?? Housing, Planning & Regeneration

? Council defends 770 homes on showjumping centre farmland

A council has defended plans for up to 770 homes on farmland at the David Broome equestrian event centre, arguing the need for affordable housing outweighs the loss of agricultural land.

The site at **Crick**, between Caldicot and Portskewett west of Chepstow, is the largest of four strategic housing sites in Monmouthshire County Council's local development plan. At the plan's public examination on Thursday (8 October), the council confirmed a pre-application consultation had been launched that week for **400 homes and a new primary school** on council-owned land at Bradbury Road within the strategic site.

Council director **Craig O'Connor** said the site was justified by its proximity to Caldicot, existing services and its rail station, and by a lack of brownfield land in the area. Independent inspector **Julie de-Courcey** questioned the selection of a site where **89% of the land is grade two — best and most versatile — agricultural land**. (Nation.Cymru — Twm Owen, LDR, 11 Oct)

?? Newport considers quitting its Grade II* Civic Centre over £102m repair bill

Newport City Council is considering moving out of its listed headquarters after an independent review found the building could need up to £102 million in repairs and refurbishment.

The **Civic Centre** has been at the centre of council business since the 1960s but has "steadily become underutilised" as working habits changed after the pandemic. Cabinet members are expected next week to approve the next stage of exploratory work on relocating — one option only, with no immediate change for staff. Council leader **Dimitri Batrouni** said: "The independent evidence shows the Civic Centre is much larger than we now need and would require significant investment." The 24,000 sq m building's listed status is a big driver of the cost. (Nation.Cymru — Nicholas Thomas, LDR, 11 Oct)

?? Penrhys estate's £209m regeneration takes a step forward

Plans for a £209m regeneration of the Penrhys estate in Rhondda Cynon Taf have moved forward after housing association Trivallis appointed Wates Residential as its development partner.

The ten-year programme would redevelop the estate in phases, delivering **800 to 900 homes** — about 121 in the first phase in the north-west of the estate — plus a new village centre, around 1,000 sq m of commercial space, green areas and community facilities. Construction is targeted to begin in **2027**, subject to approvals, with training, employment and skills programmes for local people. (Nation.Cymru, 10 Oct)

Also in planning: a three-storey block of **16 flats** is proposed on the site of a demolished former car wash at **173–175 Cowbridge Road West, Caerau, Cardiff** (Nation.Cymru — Kieran Molloy, LDR, 10 Oct); and **Caergwrle Methodist Church** in Flintshire has won permission for solar panels against officers' recommendations, despite sitting in a conservation area (Nation.Cymru — Alec Doyle, LDR, 10 Oct).

?? People & Justice

? Worker paralysed in 30ft pylon fall wins at least £10m

A maintenance worker left paralysed after falling 30ft from a power line has won at least £10 million in compensation.

Gavin Pugh, from Bangor, Gwynedd, was 33 when he was dismantling a pylon in Staffordshire in April 2022 and unknowingly clipped his safety line to a section secure at only one end. The line slipped loose and he fell, suffering life-changing injuries to his brain, neck, shoulder, ribs and internal organs; he now needs a wheelchair for life.

He sued his employer, **Wood Transmission and Distribution Ltd**, after the Health and Safety Executive found "adequate safety arrangements" had not been in place. The Cheshire-based firm was fined **£240,000** in 2024, before High Court proceedings brought by Mr Pugh. HSE inspector **Robert Gidman** said the "tragic incident" could have been prevented with adequate arrangements to protect workers; the pylon had been worked on by others and a nut left loose, which Mr Pugh did not know about. (BBC Wales — Catriona Aitken, 10 Oct)

?? Man, 52, dies at scene of Swansea motorbike and car crash

A 52-year-old man from Crook, County Durham, has died following a crash between a motorbike and a car in Swansea.

South Wales Police said they were called to the incident near the **Glais roundabout on the A4067** at 22:40 on Friday. Paramedics and a Wales Air Ambulance attended, but the man died at the scene; his family has been informed. The force is investigating and has appealed for information and dashcam footage. (BBC Wales — Danielle Herbert; BBC Cymru Fyw — Harri Evans, 10 Oct)

??? The £300 scan that found a "silent" heart attack

A Cardiff man has described how a routine cardiac screening led to potentially life-saving treatment — and revealed he had unknowingly suffered a heart attack.

Simon Morris, 55, agreed to pay £300 for a heart scan after his daughter was offered free screening by the Welsh charity **Calon Hearts UK**. Tests showed he needed an angioplasty to reopen narrowed arteries, and that he had suffered a symptomless "silent" heart attack. Looking back, he said there had been warning signs on long walks with his children that he put down to stomach trouble: "What an idiot. You should have done something about that then."

After cardiac rehabilitation he has returned to an active lifestyle and climbed **Yr Wyddfa**, aiming to raise £10,000 for Calon Hearts UK. (BBC Wales — Nicholas Bourne, 10 Oct)

?? The family who sold everything for a one-way ticket

Dani and Tom Wooldridge sold their home and possessions in May this year and bought one-way tickets to Indonesia with their three children, with no end date in sight.

Dani, 39, a nurse who also ran an aesthetics business, and Tom, 38, who had a construction business, are travelling with Olivia, 12, Morgan, seven, and four-year-old George, hoping to see every continent. Five months in and speaking from Lombok, Dani said the couple had always talked about travelling: "Once you start having kids and you've got the mortgage… it's kind of, 'oh it's not the right time'." (BBC Wales — Natalie Grice, 9 Oct, updated 10 Oct)

? Welsh folklore's "untapped potential" in video games

A Welsh character called Rhiannon, a mystical bird trainer who lives with a flock of the mythological Adar Llwch Gwin, features in the Chinese role-playing game *Reverse: 1999* .

Developer **Bluepoch** said many aspects of Welsh culture "resonated strongly with the world and stories" of the game, and co-founder KK said the game "likes to draw inspiration from Welsh mythology". Voice actor **Rebecca Wang** described learning the language — including "the amount of Ws" — as challenging but fun. **Aaron Elias**, who runs a gaming website, said Welsh history has "untapped potential" in gaming and more representation could raise the country's profile. (BBC Wales — Oscar Edwards, 10 Oct)

?? Cymru Fyw (Welsh-language)

? Murals "tell the story of our history and identity"

From Welsh mythology to local heroes, a rise in the number of murals is turning the walls of towns and villages into spaces that "tell stories about our history and identity", according to artists and academics.

The latest example is a mural of **Rhiannon**, a character from the Mabinogi, in **Abertyleri (Abertillery)**, weaving elements of the town's landscape into the work. Artist **Paul Shepherd** (*Walls by Paul*), who painted it, said the growth has been driven by people seeing examples in other towns and "wanting the same thing", plus more funding and opportunities for large-scale public art. (BBC Cymru Fyw — Manon Wiliam, today, Welsh-language)

? Lidl replaces Welsh signs put up by mistake in Nottingham

Lidl has replaced bilingual Welsh and English parking signs at its Nottingham supermarket after they were installed in error.

The signs went up at the **Carlton Road** store during recent maintenance work and have now been swapped for English-only versions. A spokesman for the German chain said they "take pride in our support of the Welsh language... but it appears our enthusiasm for the language briefly crossed the border". Businesses and public-sector bodies in Wales are legally required to have bilingual signage; Lidl became the first major supermarket to win the **'Cynnig Cymraeg'** award in 2023. Nottingham is home to the oldest active Welsh society in the east Midlands. (BBC Cymru Fyw — Harri Evans, 10 Oct, Welsh-language)

? Dolly Parton's niece falls for Welsh after recording *Jolene*

Jada Star, the country singer and niece of Dolly Parton, says she has "truly fallen in love with Wales" after recording a Welsh-language version of *Jolene* with Welsh singer Bronwen Lewis.

The pair's friendship began when Jada saw a TikTok of Bronwen singing the song in Welsh about two years ago; they recorded together in Southampton. "I truly believe anyone can speak Welsh, it's such a lovely feeling to speak the language, it's a comfortable language," said Jada, who now wants to "wander every inch of Wales" and may visit the Eisteddfod. Bronwen said she was inspired by Jada's attitude: "I would never have pushed singing in Welsh on Jada — the fact she wanted to and was interested lifted my heart." *(Follow-up to the 9 October release of the Welsh-language* Jolene*.)* (BBC Cymru Fyw — Anna George, 10 Oct, Welsh-language)

? 50 years of Wales' most iconic shirt

Football shirts can be precious objects, especially when they represent a golden era — and Wales' 1976–79 Admiral kit is among the most iconic.

Collector **Peris Hatton**, from Kinmel Bay, told BBC Radio Cymru's *Dros Ginio* that the shirt is "one of the favourites in the collection", complete with its original 1970s Admiral bag. He found it in

London about 10 years ago in a collection in Camden. (BBC Cymru Fyw — Rhys Ffrancon and Trystan ab Ifan, 9 Oct, Welsh-language)

? Culture

- □□ ***Cleddau* returns to S4C with a coercive-control storyline** — the second series of the Pembrokeshire-set crime drama begins on Sunday, reuniting DI Ffion Lloyd (**Elen Rhys**) and DS Rick Sheldon (**Richard Harrington**) after a swimmer discovers a body in the River Cleddau. The pair hunt a killer who uses a dating app to lure women. Writer **Catherine Tregenna** worked with policing consultant **Lisa Casler**, whose credits include *Happy Valley*. (Nation.Cymru, 11 Oct)
- □□ **Ceri Richards works go under the hammer** — seven lots by the Dunvant-born artist (1903–1971) feature in Olympia Auctions' online sale *From the Studio*, with bidding closing on Sunday 11 October from 3pm. Top lot *La Cathédrale Engloutie, Jeux de Vagues* — part of Richards' response to Debussy — is estimated at £8,000–£12,000. (Nation.Cymru, 11 Oct)
- □□ **O'Connell's Bakery returns to Abergavenny** — the husband-and-wife business, forced to close earlier this year after a flood added to rising overheads, has taken the keys to the old café in the town's indoor market and will open a new bakery and sandwich bar. (Nation.Cymru, 11 Oct)
- □□ **Hay-on-Wye named 48th most beautiful small town in the world** — the Powys "town of books", home to more than 20 bookshops and the Hay Festival, placed 48th in Love Exploring's global ranking — higher than previous Welsh high-flyer Tenby. (Nation.Cymru, 10 Oct)

? Sport

? Swansea City 2-1 Norwich City — Toshack watches Swans stay top

John Toshack was in the stands as Swansea City came from behind to beat Norwich City 2-1 and stay top of the Championship — a sixth win from their opening nine games, the club's best start to a season this century.

The 77-year-old legend was joined by members of the **1981 team** that won promotion to the top flight, marking 45 years since he guided the Swans from the Fourth Division to the First. Head coach **Vitor Matos** — whose side have already won more of their opening nine than Toshack's promotion winners or Brendan Rodgers' 2011 play-off side — urged fans to enjoy the moment but refused to talk about history: "I have so many things to think about to prepare for games." (BBC

Sport — Chris Wathan; Nation.Cymru, 10 Oct)

? Leinster 29-5 Cardiff (URC)

Cardiff's winning start to the season ended in Dublin as champions Leinster — back at the revamped Laya Arena in front of 20,600 — scored three tries inside the first quarter and ran out comfortable winners.

Hugo Keenan, Jimmy O'Brien (twice) and Jack Conan crossed before the break, with Jamie Osborne adding a fifth late on. **Mason Grady** scored Cardiff's only try in the first half; the Blue and Blacks left with nothing. (BBC Sport — Chris Kirwan, 10 Oct)

? Ospreys and Scarlets finally up and running

There was relief in west Wales as the Ospreys and Scarlets both claimed their first wins of the 2026-27 URC season — the Ospreys beating the Dragons at Rodney Parade to inflict a first defeat of the campaign on their hosts, and the Scarlets edging past Benetton thanks to Sam Costelow's late penalty.

Cardiff, who began with two wins from two, showed spirit in defeat by Leinster. With 24 tries scored across the three games involving Welsh sides, attention now turns to the scrap for international selection before **Steve Tandy names his Wales squad for the Nations Championship on 20 October**. (BBC Sport — Chris Kirwan, today)

? Wrexham 1-1 Derby County — Rathbone rescues a point

Ollie Rathbone's close-range strike in the 88th minute earned Wrexham a point at Pride Park after Sam Szmodics had given Derby the lead.

Manager **Phil Parkinson** praised his side's "fighting spirit" but admitted the injury that forced off **Josh Windass** — last season's player of the season — "doesn't look too good": "The quality wasn't always where we needed it to be, but I don't think anyone can fault us for keeping chipping away." (BBC Sport — Ian Mitchelmore, 10 Oct)

? Glamorgan's rollercoaster County Championship survival

Glamorgan finished sixth in Division One and retained their top-flight status for the first time in their history — but only after a nervy late-season revival.

A second-half blip left them staring at relegation, before a points deduction for Leicestershire and a **184-run win over Surrey** kept Wales in the top tier. Captain **Kiran Carlson** and England Lions international **Asa Tribe** led a strong batting start, averaging 276.1 runs an innings across their first eight games. (BBC Sport — Ioan Griffiths, today)

?? Weather

No weather warnings are in force for the UK (BBC Weather, checked 09:35 BST).

Cardiff outlook (BBC Weather, updated 08:58 today): Today (Sunday 11th) — light cloud and light winds, 16°C/13°C. Monday 12th — light rain and a gentle breeze, 19°C/15°C. Tuesday 13th — light rain showers and a moderate breeze, 19°C/9°C. Wednesday 14th — sunny intervals and a gentle breeze, 18°C/13°C. Thursday 15th — light rain and a moderate breeze, 19°C/9°C. Friday 16th — sunny and a gentle breeze, 16°C/5°C. Saturday 17th — sunny and a gentle breeze. Sunrise today 07:29, sunset 18:29.

? Quick Summary

Story	Status
Menai data centre	300+ rally in Caernarfon; 22,500+ petition; consultation closes 17 Oct
Reform MS column	Laura Anne Jones calls arrested ex-leader Dan Thomas "our Welsh leader"
Third Menai bridge	Hooper pledges it will be built — but "could take a decade"
M4 junctions	Newport residents say closures would "make traffic worse"
Period dignity	Welsh Government marks International Day of the Girl
GCSE gap	Widens 78.6 → 82 points; FSM pupils down 5.5 points
NEET / skills	17% of 16-24s NEET; sector wants urgent clarity on reform
770 homes at Crick	Monmouthshire defends showground site; 89% grade 2 farmland
Newport Civic Centre	£102m repair bill prompts relocation review
Penrhys	£209m regeneration; Wates appointed; 800-900 homes
Pylon fall	Gavin Pugh wins at least £10m; employer fined £240,000
Swansea crash	Man, 52, dies near Glais roundabout
Silent heart attack	£300 scan leads to angioplasty; Yr Wyddfa fundraiser

Story	Status
Welsh gaming	*Reverse: 1999* character Rhiannon; folklore "untapped potential"
Swansea City	2-1 Norwich — stay top; Toshack marks 45 years
Cardiff Rugby	Beaten 29-5 at Leinster
Wrexham	1-1 at Derby; Windass injury concern
Glamorgan	Division One survival secured for first time
Weather	No UK warnings; Cardiff 16/13 today

Method note: compiled in cron mode. SearXNG (:8086) again returned an index-and-aggregator mix (WalesOnline, BBC Wales, ITV Wales, Nation.Cymru, Senedd.wales, NewsNow, plus a Frankfurt Book Fair result) with no usable article leads, so the sweep ran through the Playwright fetch service (192.168.178.100:8090, MarkItDown): 13 index/feed pages and 71 article pages, all successful. De-duplicated against yesterday's 10 October Welsh file, this morning's UK file and folder-wide keyword greps over the Headlines archive. Dropped as repeats or stale: the balaclava-ban story (10 October top story), Drakeford's Wales Office call (covered 8-10 October), the M4 junction announcement itself (9 October — only the residents' reaction is new), the third Menai crossing announcement (7 October — only Hooper's "decade" visit is new), the bank cashier repayment and the Prestatyn murder (10 October), the Gavin and Stacey The Choir reveal and Michael Douglas's marriage comments (8 October), the Dolly Parton Jolene release itself (9 October — the niece's follow-up interview is new), and the Welsh Music Prize (UK file). Nation.Cymru's sport and culture category pages were badly stale — 13 of their cards dated 24-26 September (Zeta-Jones, Fury-Joshua, Bellamy/Portugal, Cleddau's predecessor items) and were discarded on the date sweep; the fresh items above are all dated 10-11 October. BBC Cymru Fyw items carry no dateline on the article page, so the homepage's relative stamps were used (murals and skills both "1 awr yn ôl").

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