Welsh Headlines — 16 Nov 2026

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? Top Story: Carers strategy promises faster recognition as charities question the funding

The Welsh Government publishes its National Strategy for Unpaid Carers today, with seven priorities it says were shaped by what carers themselves said mattered most after a full public consultation. Deputy Minister for Social Care, Mental Health and Women's Health Delyth Jewell called carers the "backbone of care" in communities across Wales. "Their contribution to the health and wellbeing of our nation is extraordinary, but we must never take it for granted," she said.

The priorities include identifying carers' needs and responding more swiftly, better access to respite and to information about their rights, improved advice and mental health support, and action to help carers balance caring with paid work. Young carers get a particular focus, with the strategy aiming to ensure caring responsibilities do not damage their education, wellbeing or opportunities. Jewell recently visited the Sunflower Café at the Ebbw Vale Institute, a weekly dementia-friendly support group for unpaid carers.

Carers Wales said the strategy "looked positive in parts" but was "disappointed" that manifesto promises would be excluded, and questioned how it will be funded. The need is stark: the 2021 census identified about 8,200 carers aged five to 17 in Wales, within an estimated 5.8 million unpaid carers across the UK, 170,000 of them young. Neraya, 15, from Bridgend, who cares for two sisters, said she once had to stand in front of her primary class and explain what a young carer was because "teachers themselves didn't understand". People in her position, she said, want "a

childhood of our own".

? Budget: Plaid's first draft budget lands tomorrow with less real-terms cash

Finance Minister Elin Jones publishes the first draft budget of the seventh Senedd on Tuesday (17 November), warning that money available for day-to-day spending will buy 0.5% less next year. Her predecessor Mark Drakeford promised every department at least the same spending power; Cardiff University's Wales Fiscal Analysis team says higher inflation makes that much harder to repeat. The UK Government's autumn budget added £450m for Wales over four years — for 2027-28, £165m extra day-to-day funding and £19m off capital, a net £146m before inflation. The Welsh Government has confirmed it will match the £100 cost-of-living payment for households in council tax bands A to D, estimated at around £120m this financial year. The OBR expects UK CPI to average 3.4% in 2027, and Wales Fiscal Analysis notes much of the extra UK departmental spending goes to defence.

?? Politics: Skates insists powers policy is unchanged after conference apology

Ken Skates has said Welsh Labour has not ditched its calls for new Senedd powers, a day after telling conference the party had focused too much on the issue. Asked twice by BBC Politics Wales whether Labour still wants policing and the Crown Estate devolved, he said: "Yes, yes, and there's been no change in policy on that." He added that transfers should be judged on "what's best for Wales", but that Westminster-to-Cardiff Bay powers had been "the focus of all debate for far too long" without a matching debate about powers moving onward from Cardiff Bay to Aberystwyth, Wrexham and Merthyr. He would not be drawn on whether it would be wrong for Andy Burnham to refuse those transfers. Skates called the "Red Welsh Way" a response to divided opinion in the party and said Eluned Morgan had been in an "unwinnable situation" when she became first minister in 2025. The Llandudno conference closed on Sunday.

? Policing: Face scans four times more likely to target ethnic minorities, South Wales figures show

Internal South Wales police figures show 24% of people selected for facial recognition checks in 2025 were from ethnic minorities, against 7% of the force area's population.

The data, obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by Big Brother Watch and shared with the Guardian, relates to "officer-initiated facial recognition", in which officers photograph a person on a smartphone and run the image through an algorithm called Neoface against custody mugshots. Officers initiated scans of 257 adults and 14 children in 2025, including two under-10s; in about one in 10 cases a scan was for a suspected missing person, and the technology was used to identify a dead person about once a fortnight. Where a match was made, arrests followed in 48% of cases and no further action in a third.

Big Brother Watch's Jake Hurfurt called the figures "alarming" and said "intrusive biometric tools are being used to disproportionately target minority communities". Aliya Mohammed of Cardiff-based Race Equality First said facial recognition "is not neutral because it uses AI" and can "reinforce and even amplify inequality". Alvi Choudhury, 26, was arrested in February for a burglary in a city he had never visited after the software confused him with another man of south Asian heritage. South Wales Police said the figures raised "concerns about disproportionality" and that it was reviewing its approach; the force has pioneered several versions of the technology.

? Cymru Fyw: Prisoner absconds from Prescoed as youth joblessness bites

Gwent Police are appealing for information after Dwayde Stock, 32, absconded from HMP Prescoed near Coed-y-paen on Saturday. He was last seen at 18:00 on Saturday on Malpas Road, Newport. He is described as a white man, 5ft 9in, of slim build, with his hair tied back, wearing a grey jacket, grey tracksuit, black tracksuit trousers, black trainers and a black watch, and has links to Newport, Cardiff, Lancashire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. The public are urged not to approach him and to call 101.

Separately, 14.6% of 16- to 24-year-olds in Wales are NEET — not in education, employment or training. Ffion Johns, 24, from Llanelli, has applied for 100 jobs since June and had three interviews. "I'm fed up now," she said. "I try and try, I try to do different things... but I've had no luck at all." The Urdd, which offers apprenticeships, says more than 1,000 people have been through its programme; its apprenticeships director Catrin Davis said providing opportunities for young people is "crucial". The UK Government is expected to publish the Milburn review of the benefits system for under-25s shortly.

? Media: S4C seeks above-inflation funding as BBC Wales cuts jobs

The UK Government is reviewing how S4C is funded after March 2028, with the Welsh-language broadcaster seeking an above-inflation settlement and protection for the

programmes it gets from the BBC. In a letter published by the Welsh Affairs Committee, media minister Ian Murray said ministers were weighing long-term funding options and how to strengthen S4C's partnership with the BBC on programming, technology and distribution, with decisions on the next BBC Charter due in a White Paper later this year. The BBC supplies S4C with Welsh-language programming worth about £20m a year under a statutory duty. S4C puts its 2026-27 licence fee allocation at £100.67m. BBC Wales announced in September it would cut 58 roles — about 45 full-time posts — and 20 hours of annual television output as part of a £500m savings plan, with Radio Cymru programmes including *Dros Frecwast* and *Dros Ginio* dropped. First Minister Rhun ap Iorwerth warned the cuts could leave the BBC in breach of its public service obligations; director-general Matt Brittin said the BBC takes its responsibilities to Wales seriously.

? Culture: Cardiff music scene mourns Richard McCarthy

Promoter, DJ and band manager Richard McCarthy has died suddenly at 58, prompting tributes from across the Cardiff and south Wales music scene. A lifelong mod, he began promoting gigs in the mid-1980s at venues including The Central Hotel and Clwb Ifor Bach, drawing fans from across the UK, before managing Newport indie band The Pocket Devils — fronted by actor and film producer Jonny Owen — between 1992 and 1994, including the Radio 1 competition that saw them support INXS at The 100 Club. "He was sharp and clever. Brilliant company with impeccable music taste and dress sense," Owen said. He later ran Britpop and indie nights at Cardiff venues.

Also today: S4C marks Portmeirion's centenary with a behind-the-scenes documentary series filmed with the 250 staff who keep the Italianate village running — head painter Martin retires this year after almost 50 years. **And Billie Piper will star in *Sketchbook*, a supernatural horror shot on "the outskirts of an old iron town" somewhere on the perimeter of Merthyr Tydfil or Aberdare**, playing a single working-class mother opposite Woody Norman as her son, reunited after years in foster care. Swansea-born director Jamie Jones, a BAFTA Cymru breakthrough award winner for *Obey*, said the horror is "a metaphor for families that are in impossible situations". **Meanwhile the Lisvane mansion that doubles as Freddie's home in Disney+ series *Rivals* has been cut by £1.5m to £6.5m after failing to sell at £8m** — the 24-acre Foxfield estate, previously home to Peters Pies owner and Cardiff RFC chairman Peter Thomas, comes with a tennis court, wine cellar, gym and a rugby-ball-shaped staircase.

? Housing & councils

Plans for 44 homes near Trinant Sports and Social Club in Caerphilly county borough have been refused over "significant" layout and design concerns. Officers said the scheme off Conway Road was "heavily dominated" by car parking and "not considered visually appropriate", that landscaping and open space "appears to be an afterthought", and that the

affordable homes had been "entirely grouped" together rather than spread through the site. Davies and Jones Developments Ltd had secured outline permission in 2023 and was seeking reserved matters approval.

Senior Caerphilly councillors have discussed revised lease terms for Llancaiach Fawr behind closed doors as they try to reopen the Tudor manor, shut since 2024 when the council was spending nearly £500,000 a year subsidising it. Cabinet heard an update on 11 November after deciding commercial sensitivities outweighed the public interest; a monitoring officer's report cited "personal information about the identity of the potential operator" and detailed financial information. The council chose a preferred operator in summer 2025 and says negotiations are progressing well; Plaid MS Lindsay Whittle has called the continuing uncertainty a "farce".

The Welsh Government has approved a £147m replacement for the River Dee bridge at Queensferry without a public inquiry. Deputy Transport Minister Mark Hooper authorised the road and compulsory purchase orders on Friday, concluding outstanding objections were about compensation and could go to the Upper Tribunal's Lands Chamber. The 1960 bridge carries about 70,000 vehicles a day; inspectors found its concrete deck continuing to deteriorate, with weight restrictions or lane closures possible if it were left. The new A494 crossing will be built about 12 metres upstream and the old bridge demolished, with its piers left in the river. A Flintshire councillor wanted three lanes each way at peak times; the Welsh Government said the two-lane design offered better value and less environmental impact.

? Health & society

About 8,800 people who died in Wales in 2025 spent their final year in fuel poverty — a quarter of all deaths registered — according to research for Marie Curie Cymru. The Loughborough University study found 28% of working-age people who died in 2025 had experienced fuel poverty in their final 12 months, up from 23% in 2024; among pension-age people the figure rose from 23% to 26%. In all 22 Welsh local authority areas at least a quarter of working-age people who died last year had been in fuel poverty. Since 2023 an estimated 24,400 people in Wales have died in fuel poverty and 17,800 in poverty. "Dying people should not have to face spending their final moments in a cold home because of spiralling bills," said Natasha Davies of Marie Curie Cymru, urging ministers to go further than matching the £100 UK budget payment by extending Council Tax Reduction eligibility to people with terminal illness.

A Y Byd ar Bedwar investigation has raised concerns about Derwen, the Gwynedd and Betsi Cadwaladr service supporting about 250 children with complex needs. FOI figures show more than half its social workers left between 2023 and 2026 and were not replaced by staff with the same qualifications, while average caseloads rose 24% from 25 to 31. Twenty-five families were waiting to be allocated a social worker last month. A former staff member said "children are being failed" and that colleagues were "breaking down". Euriona Croft, from Bethel near Caernarfon, says she is "on her knees pleading" for more support for her autistic son Ashton, 10, who gets ten hours of care a week and two nights of respite every six weeks.

? Sport

Steve Tandy has challenged Wales to back up the 35-28 win over New Zealand when Australia visit the Principality Stadium on Saturday (20:10 GMT). "We've gone up another notch or another couple of levels, so it's important we back that up," he said. Victory would give Wales a third successive home win; they sit fifth in the northern hemisphere table, behind Scotland on points difference after Australia lost 15-12 at Murrayfield on Sunday. Captain Dewi Lake said "our mindset has changed".

Darts: Beau Greaves went out of the Grand Slam of Darts at the group stage despite beating Niels Zonneveld 5-3 in Wolverhampton, having lost heavily to Luke Littler on Saturday. Fifth seed Jonny Clayton is also out after Rob Cross beat him 5-1 with a 114.32 average and three 180s.

Boxing: BBC Sport Wales visits Llanrumney Phoenix ABC on the eastern edge of Cardiff, where Joe Cordina's world-title image hangs above the sparring ring and Lee Selby lends his experience — six kilometres and, as the piece puts it, "a million miles" from the Joshua-Fury card at the Principality Stadium on 11 December.

?? Weather

No Met Office warnings cover Wales — the ice warning for Scotland and northern England runs to 10:00 today and the snow warning for the Midlands, northern England and southern Scotland to noon on Tuesday. BBC Weather has Cardiff on heavy rain and light winds today, 8°C, with a low of 5°C. The Met Office expects a bright, chilly start on Monday before rain and stronger winds arrive from the south-west in the evening, with freezing rain or snow over upland parts of mid and north Wales — "rain at lower levels", said meteorologist Aidan McGivern. Tuesday turns blustery with occasionally heavy showers and strong coastal winds, easing on Wednesday.

Method: SearXNG for leads (mixed mode — one usable GOV.WALES lead, the rest index/aggregator, plus stale WalesOnline and iPlayer hits), then indexes and article bodies fetched via the Playwright service on MacBach (.100:8090): BBC Wales, BBC Wales Politics, BBC Cymru Fyw, BBC Sport (Wales, Welsh rugby), Nation.Cymru (news, home, sport, culture), the GOV.WALES news index, Guardian Wales RSS and BBC Weather. Every fetched page was date-swept: the Cardiff data centre plan and Welsh Green leader pieces (12 Nov), Owain Wyn Evans (13 Nov), the jilted bride at the altar (13 Nov) and the Nations League permutations piece (14 Nov) were dropped as pre-compile features, and the Flintshire £1m illegal tip clean-up was dropped as already covered on 13 Nov. Not repeated from yesterday: the All Blacks win itself, the Norway defeat, the Menon review, Morriston charges, Betsi's chief executive, the Monsanto campaign, Kyffin Williams, Bonnie Tyler, Charlotte Church and the housing round-up. No UK roundup file existed for today, so no UK-side de-dup. Nitter, Phice, Flaresolverr and Reddit skipped as instructed; WalesOnline bodies, ITV Wales and senedd.wales remain unusable through the fetch service.

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