

Welsh Headlines — 25 Aug 2026

??????? Welsh News Roundup — 25 August 2026

? Top Story: Anger as Welsh Government met Indian arms firm linked to Israel

The Welsh Government has come under fire after it emerged that it met **Sagar Defence Engineering** — an Indian company specialising in drones and crewless vessels that works in partnership with Israel Aerospace Industries — at last month's **Farnborough International Airshow**. The firm publicised the meeting on social media. **Adam Price**, Enterprise, Connectivity and Energy Cabinet Minister, attended the airshow, described by the Campaign Against Arms Trade as one of Britain's biggest arms fairs.

Mukti Shah, spokesperson for the South Asia Solidarity Group, said campaigners were "horrified" that Sagar Defence was "now in talks with the Welsh Government", noting the company's partner IAI "is notorious for its role in the genocide of Palestinians" and that India is the biggest buyer of Israeli weapons globally. **Professor Anandi Ramamurthy** of Sheffield Hallam University said "everyone should be alarmed at the increasing military alliance between Israel and an India run by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party". **Adam Johannes** of Cardiff Stop the War Coalition accused the Welsh Government of a lack of transparency, saying statements after Price's Farnborough trip gave a false impression ministers had only met civilian businesses — pointing to Price's separate meeting with **ADS Group**, the arms industry trade body, to discuss the Wales Defence Growth Deal, which campaigners say envisages expanding military testing and drone development in Wales.

In response, the Welsh Government said Farnborough was "an important trade event for civil aerospace, which is an important employer in Wales", that Price met Airbus and ADS, and that "an ethical defence framework is being developed, informed by discussions with Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive counterparts, and will guide future engagement with the sector".

?? Politics & Senedd

Reform branch added 'laughing' emoji to post about journalist's cancer-stricken child

Reform UK's official **Pontypridd Cynon Merthyr branch** added a "tears of joy" laughing reaction to a Facebook post about Nation.Cymru news editor **Emily Price's** 12-year-old daughter, who was diagnosed with **Burkitt Lymphoma** — the fastest-growing human cancer — in November. The child underwent major surgery to remove a 15cm tumour in December before an intense four-month chemotherapy regime. Price had posted that her daughter "is doing much better" and announced a new Facebook page. Reform UK said the incident was an "accident" and apologised "unreservedly" for the offence and distress caused. The branch is overseen by campaign coordinator **Martin Roberts**, who also works as a caseworker for Reform MS **Jason O'Connell**; earlier this month Price reported that Reform's "Head of Wales" David Thomas had stepped down as the group's Senedd chief of staff after two months.

☐ Nation.Cymru — 25 Aug

Reform MS likens Senedd to royal court after 'court jester' walkout speech Caerdydd Penarth Reform MS **Joe Martin** told evangelical podcaster Faith Jarvis (interview aired Friday) that he may have "overcooked" the June speech that triggered a walkout by Plaid Cymru, Labour and Green members — in which he joked Welsh children couldn't read and claimed nurses were on universal credit because jobs were going to workers from India. Martin called his joke "well crafted", branded rival politicians "thin skinned", likened the Senedd chamber to a king's court where it is "the function of the court jester to poke fun at the king", and said: "I don't regret what I said." (*Follow-up to the June walkout; separate from his 21 Aug whiteboard video on net zero.*)

☐ Nation.Cymru (Emily Price) — 25 Aug

Welsh MPs press for action over toxic waste legacy exposed by Buried Ruth Jones, Labour MP for Newport West and Islwyn and chair of the Welsh Affairs Committee, said Michael Sheen's *Buried* series had "vividly brought to the screen" the same concerns raised in the committee's inquiry into Wales' industrial legacy. The committee has written to Welsh Secretary **Stephen Kinnock** pressing for funding for contaminated-land clean-up, support for those at risk and a coordinated four-nation approach to testing, and will return to the inquiry "in the coming weeks". (*Compact update — the episode 2 / Llwyneinion funding row was the top story on 24 Aug.*)

☐ Nation.Cymru — 24 Aug

Plaid's first 100 days: scale of childcare challenge 'even more apparent' BBC Cymru's assessment of the Plaid Cymru government's first 100 days focuses on its flagship promise of **20 hours of free childcare a week** for every child aged nine months to four, 48 weeks a year. Education correspondent Bethan Lewis says the scale of delivery has "if anything become even more apparent" — the government must first complete the previous administration's rollout of 12.5 hours for two-year-olds (only three local authorities were offering it fully at the start of term;

ministers say it will be complete by end of March 2027), while opposition parties will scrutinise the timing and funding of a policy costing hundreds of millions. On the economy, the government is focused on "establishing new bodies and structures": Economy Minister Adam Price has appointed a chair of a panel for the planned **National Development Agency**, a high-street taskforce has been announced, and a target set to halve the productivity gap with the rest of the UK.

📺 *BBC Cymru Fyw — 25 Aug (Welsh-language)*

? Local & Community

Asbestos killed my mum in her 40s — was her school to blame? **Caroline Bryan** was 46 when she died from mesothelioma, an incurable cancer linked to asbestos, just three months after her diagnosis. Her family is bringing a **High Court claim against Cardiff Council**, arguing she was exposed to asbestos while a pupil at the old **Fitzalan school site** in Cardiff in the 1990s; council documents obtained by their legal team show asbestos was used "quite extensively" at the site. Daughter **Brooklyn Bryan, 26**, said her mother had "never had the sort of career that would have exposed her to asbestos" and wanted "justice — not just for herself, but to stop anyone else going through the same thing". Solicitor Phillip Gower (Redkite) said the buildings were in "pretty poor condition". Cardiff Council said it would not comment on live proceedings but that asbestos management in its buildings "is taken extremely seriously". The case is set to be heard in **early 2027**.

📺 *BBC Wales (Will Fyfe & Angharad Thomas) — 24 Aug, updated 25 Aug 08:34*

Rail companies sued for £5m over Llangennech fuel spill Network Rail is suing **DB Cargo UK** and **Touax Rail** for more than £5m over the August 2020 derailment near **Llangennech, Carmarthenshire**, in which 10 of 25 wagons came off the rails, spilling 446,000 litres of fuel. About 300 people were evacuated after the blaze; 116,000 litres ignited while 330,000 litres drained into wetlands forming part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The Rail Accident Investigation Branch concluded in 2022 that a set of wheels locked, likely from a brake defect after "inadequate maintenance practices". Network Rail says the wagon "had not been maintained with reasonable care". The train was running Milford Haven to Theale; the line closed for six months and 30,000 tonnes of fuel-soaked soil had to be excavated. A hearing is due, with defences not yet filed.

📺 *BBC Wales (Oscar Edwards) — 24 Aug*

Owl 'sanctuary' closes to the public after damning undercover investigation **Ebbw Vale Owl Sanctuary** — open seven days a week since 1998 with free entry — has announced it will close to the public, with the **final day 31 August**. The decision follows an undercover investigation by **Freedom for Animals** which highlighted welfare concerns flagged as far back as 2018: poor aviaries, insufficient enrichment, inadequate protection from the elements, underfeeding, limited access to clean water, and birds being bred for sale. Founder **Malcolm Jones, 87**, blamed "haters" and the cost of meeting zoo-licence expectations, saying he is "heartbroken" and will now open just **six days a year** while continuing to care for the birds.

📰 *Nation.Cymru (Stephen Price) — 25 Aug*

Aberystwyth University pauses £53m Old College upgrade Plans to turn the Grade I listed **Old College** — the first home of the University of Wales — into a cultural hub with a four-star hotel and museum have been paused, with a further **£24m** believed to be needed on top of the original cost. The building will be made weatherproof while a review considers "future costs, funding and the most appropriate timeline". The first phase was to include a science exhibition, business units and function rooms creating 130 jobs and drawing 200,000 visitors a year; work had included restoring 664 window frames and 20,000 slates. Aberystwyth mayor **Emlyn Jones** called the delay surprising but said the project is "too important to never be completed". Work to make the building safe also revealed remnants of the fire of 8 July 1885 that destroyed much of the original structure.

📰 *BBC Wales (Paul Pigott) — 24 Aug*

- **Syphilis testing push:** people in the Swansea Bay area — which has some of the highest syphilis rates in Wales — are urged to get tested even without symptoms. Advanced nurse practitioner Carly Porter said cases span ages 17 to 70-plus and "education is important, as is destigmatising syphilis". (*BBC Wales — 24 Aug*)

? Economy & Business

Steel: Llanwern workers on 'light duties' as cheap imports flood market Community Union president **Andrew Gutteridge**, who worked at Llanwern for over 30 years, says workers are being put on lighter duties as cheap imported steel floods the UK market, with Llanwern's UK market share down to **25%**. Since July's tariff changes, galvanised steel imports from Vietnam, South Korea and India have surged — Gutteridge called it "heartbreaking" to see Vietnamese steel arriving at Newport Docks, 10 minutes from the plant: "Tata is still making massive losses so the concern from the workforce is how long can it continue." He also said Tata's electric steel-making plans at Port Talbot could be delayed up to **eight months** due to an electrical issue, and that the UK government's tariff review could take 12 months. The Welsh Government said it will raise the issue with the UK government "at the earliest possible opportunity". (*Compact update to the 24 Aug Guardian story on Llanwern running half-empty.*)

📰 *BBC Wales (Oscar Edwards) — 24 Aug 19:47*

- **Au Vodka sale:** the reported **£500m** sale of the Swansea viral vodka brand to Sazerac (owner of Southern Comfort and BuzzBallz) — first reported 17 Aug, with founders Charlie Morgan and Jackson Quinn set to bank £100m+ each — has not previously appeared in the Welsh roundup; no new development since. (*BBC Wales — 17 Aug*)

? Environment

Drought leaves woman without running water for first time in 30 years **Genista Tanner, 72**, who lives in rural Ceredigion and relies on a well across the road, says it has run dry for the first time in 30 years — she has had "no fresh water coming from the well into the house for at least a month". She is one of more than **100,000 people in Wales** reliant on private water supplies, which the British Geological Survey warns are vulnerable in droughts. Tanner now lives on bottled water, borrowing from friends and family, and drives 40 minutes to shower at her daughter's home in Aberystwyth: "I've discovered that 1.7 litres of water will wash my hair... I never realised the value of water until I didn't have it." Natural Resources Wales said climate change means groundwater "may not be so reliably available all year round in the future". Wales remains in drought status after its driest July on record.

☐ *BBC Wales (Dani Thomas) — 24 Aug*

? Culture & Entertainment

Hundreds of Welsh heritage sites offer free entry this September Cadw's annual **Open Doors** festival runs through September, with castles, abbeys, archives, museums and places of worship opening free across Wales — 19 Cadw monuments among them, including **Strata Florida Abbey** (tours 25-26 Sept), **Harlech Castle** and **Caerwent Roman Town**. Highlights include St Davids Bishop's Palace (26-27 Sept), Laugharne Castle (19-20 Sept, where Dylan Thomas wrote), behind-the-scenes tours at Ruthin Gaol's Victorian prison archives, the Cold War nuclear monitoring post, Dolbelydr — the 16th-century house where the first Welsh grammar was written — and one of the last surviving Welsh clom cottages.

☐ *Nation.Cymru — 25 Aug*

Campaigners bid to turn Conwy's empty civic hall into Welsh-language cultural hub **Pwyllgor Cymraeg Aberconwy** has unveiled a **£5.9m** vision to take over the vacant Grade II-listed **Old Civic Hall in Conwy** via community asset transfer — a live music venue, food hall and Welsh-language cultural centre. The building, whose 240-seat theatre closed in 2014, has been empty since the library moved out in 2019; a private "apart-hotel" plan by Nautical Point Ltd was withdrawn earlier this year. The group, working with Menter Iaith Conwy, has secured a viability grant from the Architectural Heritage Fund. Campaigner Morgan Dafydd said the theatre "is a unique space within the town... well-suited for live music events".

☐ *Nation.Cymru (Dale Spridgeon, LDR) — 24 Aug*

? Sport

Final call for volunteers ahead of Tour de France's historic Welsh debut Organisers have issued a final call for **JOY Makers** volunteers for the Tour de France's first-ever visit to Wales — stage 3 of the 2027 race on **Sunday 4 July, starting in Welshpool and finishing in Cardiff**. Around 1,250 people have already registered interest; applications close **Tuesday 1 September**.

Anyone aged 16+ can apply, with the Welsh Government and WCVA offering a "Readiness to Work" employability scheme for 18-25s. The Grand Départ Trophy visits Caerphilly Cheese Festival on Saturday 29 August. Culture and Sport Minister **Heledd Fychan**: "It's our moment to build on Geraint Thomas's legacy."

☐ *Nation.Cymru* — 24 Aug

Alun Wyn Jones joins Ospreys board Wales and Lions legend **Alun Wyn Jones** has joined the Ospreys board with immediate effect, at a crucial time as the region fights Welsh Rugby Union plans to cut professional men's teams from four to three by 2028 — with Cardiff and the Dragons set to take two licences, leaving the Ospreys and Scarlets competing for the west Wales licence, a decision expected by the end of 2026-27. Jones said he wants to bring together "my experience from rugby, business and life after playing"; the club's first URC fixture at the redeveloped St Helen's is against the Dragons on **24 October**. He has agreed not to provide punditry on Ospreys matches.

☐ *Nation.Cymru (Mark Mansfield)* — 21 Aug (not previously in the Welsh roundup)

? Feel-Good

Ospreys raise chicks for the first time ever on Anglesey Two osprey chicks have hatched and fledged on Anglesey — a first for the island, according to the Friends of the Ospreys group monitoring the private site. The female parent, hatched in 2024, is the **first-ever two-year-old osprey to breed successfully in Wales**; her male partner came from the famous Glaslyn nest near Porthmadog, and she from a nest near Carrbridge in Scotland. The pair are among roughly 300 breeding pairs in the UK (about 20 in Wales). Darren Moore of Friends of the Ospreys called it "a huge milestone" — and there is hope the chicks, now strengthening for their 3,000-mile migration to west Africa, will return.

☐ *BBC Cymru Fyw* — 25 Aug (Welsh-language)

- **Therapy dog Millie:** Jane, 79, of Gwynedd and her Shih Tzu therapy dog Millie — a regular visitor to students at Pontio in Bangor — have been shortlisted for a national award, after a friend from Penygroes dog-training club nominated the pair. (*BBC Cymru Fyw*)

?? Weather

- **Met Office thunderstorm warning:** bands of heavy showers and thunderstorms developing and moving northwards across England and Wales — "sporadic in nature" — with North Wales in scope through the day.

? Quick Summary

Section	Key story
Top Story	WG met Indian arms firm Sagar Defence (IAI partner) at Farnborough; campaigners "horrified"
Politics	Reform branch 'laughing' emoji at journalist's child's cancer; Joe Martin 'court jester' interview; Welsh MPs press on toxic waste; Plaid 100-day childcare challenge
Local	Asbestos school High Court claim; £5m Llangennech lawsuit; Ebbw Vale owl sanctuary closes; Old College paused
Economy	Llanwern workers on light duties as imports flood; Au Vodka £500m deal (first Welsh-file mention)
Environment	Ceredigion woman's well runs dry after 30 years
Culture	Open Doors free September; Conwy civic hall Welsh hub bid
Sport	Tour de France 2027 volunteer call; Alun Wyn Jones joins Ospreys board
Feel-Good	First-ever osprey chicks on Anglesey

Compiled 25 Aug 2026 · Sources: BBC Wales, BBC Cymru Fyw, Nation.Cymru, BBC Sport. SearXNG returned no usable leads (Hungarian forums, XNXX spam, Glasgow bar sites — garbage mode again); all articles fetched via the Playwright-fetch service (localhost:8090). Several Wales one-liners in today's UK roundup were verified as stale repeats and excluded: Bonnie Tyler funeral (17 Aug, covered 20-08), Rodon Leeds deal (19 Aug), Au Vodka sale (17 Aug, included as one-liner), Gorseinon fourth charge (19 Aug, covered 20-08), Porth arson arrests (15 Aug, covered 15-17 Aug), HMP Parc/vapes (14 Aug, UK roundup only). Note: the UK file's "First Minister Adam Price" attribution is an error — Adam Price is Enterprise Minister; First Minister remains Rhun ap Iorwerth.