

Welsh Headlines — 28 Aug 2026

??????? Welsh News Headlines — 28 August 2026

? Top Story: Burnham open to devolving policing to Wales — a marked shift in tone

Prime Minister **Andy Burnham** said he is "open to the conversation" about handing the Welsh Government control of policing, a marked change from the previous UK government's position. Speaking at **Port Talbot steelworks** on his first official visit to Wales since entering No 10, Burnham said he could not promise anything today, but with "wider policing reform" under way "it seems a good time to have a look at those issues". He played down any prospect of reviewing the **Barnett Formula** funding Welsh public services, but said Wales and Scotland should consider following England's model of giving more powers to cities and regions, and that policing could be discussed at the **October summit** with the Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish first ministers. **Plaid Cymru's Deputy First Minister Sioned Williams**, who met Burnham in Port Talbot on Thursday (FM Rhun ap Iorwerth is on leave), welcomed the comments — Plaid had made further devolution a key election pledge. One Labour MP told BBC Wales most Westminster colleagues would oppose policing devolution; Reform criticised the proposal. The Press Association reported Wales' appeals over the **Crown Estate** would get a "fair hearing" at the October summit. *(Follows yesterday's coverage of the summit announcement — the policing shift is the new development.)*

North Wales PCC backs devolution — but warns against Cardiff control: Andy Dunbobbin, North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner, said he is "in principle, supportive" of devolving policing and criminal justice, arguing joining it up with devolved health, social care and local government "makes sense" for early intervention. But he warned: "Devolving powers from London cannot result in resources and decision-making being drawn disproportionately towards South Wales. North Wales must receive its fair share of funding." He also stressed protecting cross-border cooperation with forces in Cheshire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Lancashire on serious and organised crime. His intervention follows Cabinet Minister **Dafydd Iwan Davies** saying this

week he hoped progress could be made on policing, rail funding and the Crown Estate after "constructive" talks with Burnham.

☐ BBC Wales (David Deans), Nation.Cymru (Mark Mansfield), PA — 27-28 Aug

?? Politics & Senedd

Judge rejects legal challenge to Caerphilly library closures Ten of Caerphilly council's libraries are set to close after a High Court judge dismissed a legal challenge from campaigners. Libraries in **Aberbargoed, Abercarn, Abertridwr, Bedwas, Deri, Llanbradach, Machen, Nelson, Oakdale and Pengam** will close under the Labour-run council's plan to concentrate services in seven larger multi-service community hubs, which argued the reorganisation was needed amid a **£29m budget gap** over three years. Campaigners warned smaller communities would be hardest hit, saying the closures risked sending them "back to Victorian times". Plaid MS **Lindsay Whittle** urged the council to review the decision: "A librarian is a skilled role — it's not about just stamping books." The council said it will await any appeal before considering next steps, and will speak to local groups interested in taking over some buildings.

☐ BBC Wales (Mark Palmer) — 27 Aug, 18:03 BST

Lib Dems accuse Reform of "extraordinary naivety" in hospital beds row The Liberal Democrats have accused Reform UK Senedd Members of being "extraordinarily naïve" for accepting **Powys Teaching Health Board's** assurance that no final proposals on community hospital beds have been agreed. Reform MSs **James Evans, Iain McIntosh and David Mills** met PTHB managers this week and issued a statement noting the health board says no final decisions are expected before spring 2027, with formal consultation not yet begun. Lib Dem MP **David Chadwick** and Welsh Lib Dem leader **Jane Dodds MS** hit back: "Reform appear to have swallowed the health board's assurances wholesale without any critical thinking... They should be challenging these plans, not acting as the health board's cheerleaders." They noted every GP practice in Powys has written to the health board with concerns, more than **7,000 people** have signed the party's petition and over **1,200 residents** turned up at public meetings this week — and warned of "closure by stealth" as beds are stripped out over time. (*Follow-up to the 20 Aug Ystradgynlais meeting coverage.*)

☐ Nation.Cymru (Martin Shipton) — 28 Aug

Llywydd under fire over 20mph "blanket" description The Senedd's Llywydd **Huw Irranca-Davies** is under fire after refusing to confirm whether politicians can once again use the term "blanket" to describe Wales' 20mph default speed limit. Reform's Senedd group has used the word on social media — with its Welsh leader **Dan Thomas** calling it the "bonkers blanket 20mph speed limit" — after the Welsh Conservatives were previously forced to stop using the term following standards rulings that it brought the parliament into disrepute. Standards Commissioner **Douglas Bain** ruled in 2024 that "blanket" was inaccurate, censuring Tory MS Natasha Asghar for continuing to use it. Reform's new group in the Senedd supported Irranca-Davies' election as Llywydd after May's election.

? Economy & Business

Wales leads UK as solar installations rise by more than 18% Solar installations in Wales grew faster than anywhere else in the UK over the past year — up **more than 18%** between July 2025 and July 2026, against around 15% in England, 14% in Scotland and 11% in Northern Ireland. Official DESNZ data shows Wales had **144,888 installations** by the end of July, up from 122,317 a year earlier, in a record-breaking year for solar across the UK (nearly 172,000 completed since January). Rooftop solar drove the increase, with more than 19,800 installations in July. **Ceredigion Preseli** leads Welsh constituencies with 8,064 installations (36.6MW), followed by Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr (6,739) and Caerfyrddin (6,371); Cardiff's four constituencies cluster near the bottom, with **Cardiff North lowest at 1,998**.

📰 *Nation.Cymru (Mark Mansfield)* — 28 Aug

£41.8m housing development approved on former Revlon factory site The former Revlon cosmetics factory on **Ewenny Road, Maesteg** — vacant for more than 12 years — will be transformed into **192 homes** after a **£41.8m** redevelopment was given planning permission. Developer **Sylfaen** (a subsidiary of Bridgend housing association Valleys to Coast, with Tai Derw/Edenstone Group) will deliver 35 homes for social rent, 19 at affordable rent, 54 shared ownership and 84 for open-market sale. Work begins in October, with first homes due by April 2027 and completion in 2031. The site was prepared with **£3.5m** remediation funding from Bridgend council and Cardiff Capital Region; residents are being invited to suggest names reflecting the site's industrial heritage.

📰 *Nation.Cymru (Mark Mansfield)* — 27 Aug

Controversial 250-home Bryncoch plans submitted despite 209 objections Outline plans for a new **250-home estate at Leiros Parc, Bryncoch** (north of Neath, near Caewern) have been submitted to Neath Port Talbot council by the **Codi Group**, despite a pre-application consultation that drew 211 responses — **209 of them objections**. The 11.79-hectare site includes a former farmyard partially used as allotments. Residents raised fears over the loss of scenic landscape and traffic on rural roads; developers said a transport assessment concluded movements could be accommodated. One third of the homes would be affordable. The outline application was submitted in July 2026, following a withdrawn 200-home application in 2020-21.

📰 *Nation.Cymru (Lewis Smith, LDR)* — 28 Aug

£8m riverside cycle and walking route gets green light Swansea Council has been given the go-ahead for the first phase of a **1.3km riverside cycle and footpath on the west bank of the River Tawe** — a 325m section linking the Tawe bridges area to the True Student complex, with a future phase extending to White Rock Bridge, connecting the city with the former Hafod-Morfa Copperworks site and Swansea.com Stadium. The project, budgeted at **£8.2m over three years** including piling and retaining wall work, will feature low-level lighting, native planting and

upgraded substandard path sections. One objection raised moped use and anti-social behaviour; the council acknowledged misuse is largely an enforcement matter.

📰 *Nation.Cymru* (Richard Youle, LDR) — 28 Aug

? Crime & Justice

Family welcomes review of law after driver who killed daughter ruled unfit to stand trial

The family of **Sophie Brimble, 20**, who died when her boyfriend **Jay Bayliss** crashed into a lamp-post in **Brynmawr** in July 2017 while racing at almost three times the 30mph limit, says it is a "relief" that the government is considering changing the law on defendants unfit to stand trial. Bayliss — too badly injured to stand trial — was found responsible for her death at a trial of facts, but the judge could impose no prison term or driving ban, giving him an absolute discharge; the court was powerless to take his licence. The Ministry of Justice said it "agrees the law needs updating and is considering reforms". Sister **Aimee Coombes** said: "When we walked out of court, it just felt like Sophie's life didn't matter... she should have had the justice she deserved." The family's petition has more than 10,000 signatures; the Law Commission says the current unfit-to-plead rules date from 1836.

📰 *BBC Wales* (Emilia Belli) — 27 Aug

Dangerous driver admits killing passenger and injuring two after M4 crash Aadil Sabir, 31, of Pentre Gardens, Grangetown, **Cardiff**, pleaded guilty at the Old Bailey to causing the death of **William Bailey** by dangerous driving and causing serious injury to two other passengers after his Mercedes flipped over on the M4 near Heathrow Airport on 29 October 2023. Bailey, aged in his 20s and a rear passenger, died at the scene; two other men suffered life-threatening injuries. Judge Simon Mayo warned Sabir he faces a "lengthy custodial sentence" and fixed sentencing for 23 November, granting conditional bail with an interim driving disqualification.

📰 *BBC Wales* (Antonia Matthews) — 27 Aug

Former police officer in court charged with raping woman while on duty Ex-South Wales Police constable **Rikki Hall, 33**, from Swansea, attended Bristol Magistrates' Court on Thursday charged with two counts of rape and one of intentional strangulation of a woman in February 2024. He faces two charges of misconduct in public office — including alleged sexual activity with a member of the public met during welfare and safeguarding checks — plus a charge of arranging appointments with sex workers while on duty, and a firearms charge over possession of Pava spray. No pleas were entered; the case was sent to Bristol Crown Court (next hearing 28 September) and Hall was released on conditional bail. *(Follow-up to yesterday's coverage of the IOPC charges — court appearance is the new development.)*

📰 *BBC Wales* (Catriona Aitken) — 27 Aug

Man in court after taxi driven wrong way on A55 Darragh O'Grady, 31, from Dublin, appeared in court charged with causing serious injury to a cyclist by dangerous driving after police

stopped a taxi travelling on the wrong side of the **A55 on Anglesey** on Monday night. The cyclist was injured in a collision on London Road, **Holyhead**. O'Grady, arrested after North Wales Police received a report the taxi had been stolen, also faces charges of driving without insurance, failing to provide a sample, theft from a person and fraud by false representation. He will enter formal pleas at Caernarfon Crown Court on 18 September and was remanded in custody after no bail application.

📺 *BBC Cymru Fyw — 27 Aug (Welsh-language)*

Girl dragged under van in "worst nightmare" crash raises £65,000 for rescuers Gracie Kinnear, 7, from Carmarthen, who was left "fighting for life" in a coma for five days after being dragged under a van while riding her bike aged four, has been recognised with national awards for helping raise **£65,000 for Wales Air Ambulance**. In February 2023, a van driver crashed into Gracie — who is autistic — in a cul-de-sac; her mother Emma said the driver "took Gracie right under the vehicle on her bike" and she dented the van pounding on it. Gracie suffered a collapsed lung, broken pelvis, shattered right kidney, lacerated liver and head injuries, and spent two years learning to walk again. Wales Air Ambulance gave her two blood transfusions and ventilated her during transfer to Cardiff. The driver was jailed for 10 months in September 2025. "If it wasn't for them, my daughter most likely would not be here today," said Emma.

📺 *BBC Wales (Catriona Aitken) — 27 Aug*

? Culture & Community

Calon: new Urdd musical a "tribute to all Caryl Parry Jones' work" More than 100 young people from across Wales took to the stage at Cardiff's **Wales Millennium Centre** on Thursday for the first performance of **Calon**, the new Urdd Youth Theatre musical based on the iconic songs of **Caryl Parry Jones** — spanning more than 40 years of hits including "Calon" and songs from Eden. Caryl collaborated with cousin and singer **Non Parry**, her daughters **Elan Isaac** (movement director/choreographer) and **Miriam Isaac** (actor, singer and presenter). Cast member **Efan Williams** (frontman of band Dadleoli) called it "a tribute to all her work over the years, from the sketches to the songs". The show is the largest from the relaunched Urdd Theatre Company since 2022.

📺 *BBC Cymru Fyw — 28 Aug (Welsh-language)*

Welsh Britain's Got Talent star lands role in hit hockey romance Heated Rivalry Swansea-born actor **Shaheen Jafargholi** — who shot to fame aged 12 on Britain's Got Talent in 2009 — has been cast as **Fabian Salah** in season two of *Heated Rivalry*, the hit hockey romance series based on Rachel Reid's Game Changers novels, appearing alongside Daniel Diemer. Jafargholi, who went from Welsh stage schools (Mark Jermin Stage School) to EastEnders (Shakil Kazemi, 2016-18) and Casualty (nurse Marty Kirkby, 2018-23), said the role is a "very different kind of spotlight". Season two premieres April 2027.

📺 *Nation.Cymru (Amelia Jones) — 28 Aug*

BRIT award-winning pop star announces Cardiff show next year **Holly Humberstone** — BBC Sound of 2021 runner-up and BRITs Rising Star Award winner in 2022 — will perform at **The Great Hall, Cardiff University Students' Union** on Saturday 16 January 2027, as she tours her second album *Cruel World*. Tickets go on sale 4 September.

☐ *Nation.Cymru (Amelia Jones) — 28 Aug*

Yma: public asked to share their memories of Wales on interactive digital map An interactive map of Wales, **Yma** (yma.madeincymru.com), has launched inviting people from Wales and across the world to pin one-paragraph memories of places that shaped them. Created by **Mike Gwynne**, founder of Llandudno-based Welsh identity clothing brand Made in Cymru, the map filled with eight memories on its first day. "Every Welsh person has a place... Yma is where those places go," said Gwynne.

☐ *Nation.Cymru (Stephen Price) — 27 Aug*

? Sport

Josh Tarling withdraws from Vuelta a España after six stages **Josh Tarling, 22**, has pulled out of the Vuelta a España after six stages, his team **Netcompany-Ineos** said — ending the "brave" campaign he began days after his brother **Finlay, 19**, died in a crash at the Volta a Portugal on 14 August. Tarling finished third on the opening stage in Monaco, but with 14 stages remaining he has decided to end his ride. His team said they "could not be prouder of him". *(Follow-up to 21 Aug coverage of his decision to ride.)*

☐ *BBC Cymru Fyw — 28 Aug (Welsh-language)*

Wrexham seal Issa Kabore signing Wrexham have completed the permanent signing of Burkina Faso international **Issa Kabore** from Manchester City for up to **£4.75m** — a three-year deal with City retaining a 20% sell-on clause. The 25-year-old wing-back made 32 appearances on loan last season, registering eight league assists (more than any other Wrexham player). "Everybody knows our ambition is to get to the Premier League, and I'm here to fight for that promotion," said Kabore. He is Wrexham's fourth summer signing; Angers left-back Jacques Ekomie remains reportedly close. *(Follow-up to yesterday's "close in on deals" line — now confirmed.)*

☐ *Nation.Cymru — 27 Aug*

Ospreys swoop for Wallabies star Marika Koroibete The Ospreys have signed Australia international wing **Marika Koroibete, 34**, ahead of the new United Rugby Championship season. The 63-cap Wallaby, twice winner of the John Eales Medal (2019, 2022), becomes the fourth international — and third Australian — to join the Welsh region this summer. Head coach **Mark Jones** said the signing "will get our supporters up out of their seats", and Koroibete will also mentor younger players. Koroibete said it was "a real privilege" to follow Ospreys greats like Jerry Collins and Justin Marshall.

?? Weather & Environment

Welsh university races to measure wildfire damage to UK soils Scientists at **Bangor University** are racing to measure the hidden damage this summer's wildfires have done to UK soils before the signals disappear. Led by **Professor Davey Jones**, the team is using a paired-plot approach comparing burnt land with adjacent unburnt land, with sites identified using NASA satellite data. Initial field observations at **Sychnant Pass near Conwy** and the **Rhinogydd near Harlech** suggest the Sychnant fire consumed an estimated **12-17 tonnes of carbon per hectare** from vegetation. "Soil is often called the UK's forgotten ecosystem, but it does an enormous amount of work for us below our feet," said Prof Jones. More than 500 fires were recorded across the UK in July alone.

Nation.Cymru (Emily Price) — 28 Aug

Warning we may "pay more for worse produce" after extreme summer At the end of one of the driest summers on record, food historians and farmers warn of higher prices and lower-quality produce — with one agency reporting **10% fewer animals** coming to market over the summer. Food historian **Carwyn Graves** said: "We're seeing three things happen — prices will rise again, there will be shortages of some things like fruit and vegetables... we'll be paying more for lower-quality produce." **Paul Williams** of NFU Cymru, who farms near Llanrwst, said Welsh farmers may be better placed to adapt: "Who knows, up here in Eryri I might be growing wheat very soon" — as crops shift west. Earlier this year Pembrokeshire potato farmers called it their most challenging summer "in living memory".

BBC Cymru Fyw (Nia Cerys Gwynn) — 27 Aug (Welsh-language)

? Quick Summary

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Economy	Solar installations +18% (UK-leading); £41.8m Maesteg housing; Bryncoch 250 homes; £8m Tawe path
Crime	Law-review relief for Sophie Brimble family; M4 death-driver admits guilt; Rikki Hall court; Gracie's £65k air ambulance
Culture	Calon Urdd musical premiere; Jafargholi in Heated Rivalry; Humberstone Cardiff; Yma map

Section	Key story
🏏 Sport	Tarling out of Vuelta; Wrexham sign Kabore; Ospreys sign Koroibete
🌿 Environment	Bangor wildfire soil study; "paying more for worse produce" warning

Compiled 28 Aug 2026 by Emrys (Hermes cron) · Sources: BBC Wales, BBC Cymru Fyw, Nation.Cymru, Herald.Wales, Welsh Government (GOV.WALES), PA. SearXNG returned no usable leads (all three queries in garbage/stale mode); all articles fetched via the Playwright-fetch service (192.168.178.100:8090). Skipped as repeats/covered: renewables targets shift (22-08), Rhyl grooming convictions + inquiry (05-08/13-08), Ammanford child rapist 21 years (26-08), Rikki Hall charges (26-08, court follow-up only), Swansea Airport suspension (27-08 UK), Tinder fraudster (week-old), WNO double bill & castle rave & car production (28-08 UK file), Plaid 100-days (26-08), Burnham summit announcement (27-08).

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