Welsh Headlines — 9 Oct 2026

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Compiled 09:30 BST, Friday 9 October 2026 • Sources: BBC Wales and BBC Wales Politics indexes, BBC Cymru Fyw, BBC Sport Wales, BBC Weather and warnings, Nation.Cymru (news / sport / culture), GOV.WALES, The Guardian Wales (RSS) — all via the Playwright fetch service (192.168.178.100:8090). Nitter, Phice, Flaresolverr and Reddit skipped (services down).

? Top Story: Drakeford — 'the time has come' to consider scrapping the Wales Office

Former First Minister Mark Drakeford has called for the abolition of the Wales Office, saying Westminster's arrangements need to change after more than a quarter of a century of devolution.

Drakeford told S4C's *Y Byd yn ei Le* that the UK had moved past the need for separate ministers responsible for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. "After a quarter of a century of devolution it's important that things change in Westminster as well," he said. "[In terms of] having people who are responsible specifically for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, we have moved past that point in my opinion."

Asked whether he would be happy to scrap the Wales Office, he said: "Yes, I think the time has come for us to think about that. Of course, Tony Blair thought of this too. This has been part of discussions in Westminster not only now but for more than a decade."

The comments land amid a row inside Labour over devolving policing to Wales. Welsh Secretary **Stephen Kinnock** — in post since July — says he is not yet "entirely convinced" by the policy, which remains Welsh Labour's official position, while PM **Andy Burnham** has said he is "open" to discussing a transfer of powers. Drakeford argued most of the evidence needed is "already there" — the Gordon Brown and Lord Thomas reports — and that a decision "need not take a long time

because the case has already been made". (Nation.Cymru — Mark Mansfield, 9 Oct)

?? Politics & the Senedd

? Minister defends ministerial car use after pledging to travel sustainably

Cabinet minister Dafydd Trystan Davies says he is still committed to only travelling by bike, train, bus or on foot after Nation.Cymru questioned his use of a ministerial car.

In his May victory speech for one of the Senedd's six Caerdydd Ffynnon Taf seats, the keen cyclist and guide runner promised to make "every journey" sustainably — and to publicly document "every single" car journey if he could not travel otherwise. He says the only car journey he has made as an MS was to join St Edeyrn's litter pickers, because there were "no other realistic public transport options". But Nation.Cymru found Welsh Government ministerial car logs for June–September showing several further trips — including Cardiff Bay to Bristol Airport on 23 June (returning the next day), a return trip to Lampeter on 25 June, a shared trip to Neath Abbey with Deputy First Minister **Sioned Williams** in July, and a journey on 5 August. Trystan Davies is cabinet minister for government effectiveness and the constitution. (Nation.Cymru — Emily Price, 8 Oct)

? £10m Transforming Towns funding — Wrexham gets half

A £10m Welsh Government regeneration package has been approved, with Wrexham receiving £5m — the largest single allocation.

In Wrexham the money will improve Henblas Street and Chester Street and redevelop the vacant former Hippodrome cinema site into public and family green space. The rest is shared between Brynmawr, Neath, Monmouth, Bala and Newport, plus a regional programme in south-west Wales. In Gwynedd, £850,000 goes to the first phase of the Bala Lake Railway Trust's Red Dragon Project (extending the line from Penybont into Bala town centre); Monmouthshire gets £357,814 for Monmouth Bus Station; and Blaenau Gwent £757,400 to buy the Stagecoach site in Brynmawr. Local Government Minister **Siân Gwenllian** said the funding was about "reimagining" town centres to create "vibrant places for people to spend time". (GOV.WALES, 8 Oct 23:00 / Nation.Cymru / BBC Cymru Fyw)

?? Newport leader 'flabbergasted' by M4 junction closure plan

Newport City Council's leader has attacked Welsh Government proposals to close M4 junctions to ease congestion, warning they would "penalise" the city.

Ministers are considering shutting Junction 27 at High Cross, along with some slip roads at Junctions 25 and 26 (serving Caerleon and Malpas). The government estimates the closures could be introduced in under two years and cut motorway congestion by around 3%; a report calls them the "fastest and cheapest to deliver" option, though it predicts local opposition without mitigation. Cllr **Dimitri Batrouni** said the plan would "inhibit our growth" and cause "traffic mayhem in key choke points". Deputy transport minister **Mark Hooper** said the government would work closely with the council so local impacts are "properly considered". *(Links to the 7 October report on the Menai/M4 transport plans.)* (Nation.Cymru — Nicholas Thomas, LDR, 8 Oct)

? Communities, Schools & Justice

? Carmarthenshire to consider closing four more primary schools

Carmarthenshire council will debate proposals to close four more primary schools, with officers understood to favour closure.

Consultation documents on the futures of Ysgol Blaenau (Llandybïe) and Ysgolion Bancffosfelen, Pontiets and Carwe in Cwm Gwendraeth go to the council's education scrutiny committee on 13 October. If councillors back the recommendations, consultation would run from 10 November to 22 December, with closure possible on 31 December 2027. The same committee meets the day before full council decides on closing Ysgol Meidrim and Ysgol y Fro in Llangyndeyrn. **Ffred Ffransis** of Cymdeithas yr Iaith called it "the biggest threat to these Welsh-speaking communities in Cwm Gwendraeth since the miners' strike", adding: "After these four there will be another 15 to be closed as well." (BBC Cymru Fyw — Aled Scourfield, Newyddion S4C, 8 Oct, updated today, Welsh-language)

?? Prestatyn murder: Rhyl man, 38, charged

Thomas Matthew Hammond Bell, 38, of Wellington Road, Rhyl, has been charged with murder after a woman's body was found in a burning van in Prestatyn.

Emergency services were called to Gas Works Lane at about 23:30 BST on Sunday 4 October. A Home Office post-mortem confirmed the body was that of a woman. Bell appeared before Llandudno magistrates on Thursday and was remanded in custody, with a Crown Court appearance at Mold expected on Friday. Det Ch Insp **Zoie Dunkerley** (North Wales Police) said the investigation continues and appealed for anyone with information to come forward. *(Update: yesterday's roundup reported the arrest.)* (BBC Cymru Fyw — Nia Tudur / BBC Wales, 8 Oct)

? Barmouth beach death: murder investigation closed

A murder investigation launched after a man died on a beach has been closed, North Wales Police say.

A 34-year-old man died following an incident in the water at Barmouth, Gwynedd, on 25 May. A 24-year-old man arrested in connection with the death has been released with no further action. Det Supt **Chris Bell** said that, after a review of the evidence, "the investigation into the man's death has been closed"; a report is being compiled for the coroner and the family has been informed. (BBC Wales — Maria Cassidy, 8 Oct)

?? Inquest: 92-year-old with dementia died after becoming trapped in barbed wire

A 92-year-old man with dementia died after becoming stuck in a barbed-wire fence while out walking on a mountain, an inquest has heard.

The family of **Malcolm Kitts**, of Cwmdâr, contacted police after he failed to return home from a walk on 21 September; he was found by police on Maerdy mountain. His leg had become caught in a fence with barbed wire and he had hypothermia. He was taken to the University Hospital of Wales but died on 1 October. The inquest at Pontypridd has been adjourned with no date set for the next hearing. (BBC Cymru Fyw — Ifan Ywain, 8 Oct, Welsh-language)

? Toxic-land row: councillors demand own tests at site in Sheen documentary

Two campaigning councillors who appeared in Michael Sheen's *Buried* documentary have urged Caerphilly council to test a lay-by beside the Ty Llwyd quarry in Ynysddu.

The quarry was used in the 1960s–70s as a dump by the now-defunct chemicals firm **Monsanto**. Sampling for the programme found PCB levels at the nearby lay-by 140 times above background. Independent councillors **Janine Reed** and **Jan Jones** say the lay-by — next to a well-used footpath and the entrance to Pantyffynnon Community Woodland — was not sampled in the council's "not

contaminated" assessment, so the findings cannot be compared with council data: "If there is nothing to worry about, surely the answer is simple: test the layby."

Separately, **Wrexham council** has unanimously backed tougher monitoring of historic industrial waste sites despite claims the *Buried* documentary was "scaremongering". A cross-party motion commits the authority to seek free PCB testing for residents, make representations to Welsh Government and NRW for a county-wide approach, and bring a report to full council in December 2026. (Nation.Cymru — Martin Shipton / Alec Doyle, LDR, 9 Oct)

? Complaints to FAW over Bangor City chairman's social media

The FAW has been asked to investigate the chairman of CPD Dinas Bangor City 1876 over social media posts, including one endorsing a far-right activist.

A formal complaint from local resident **Tony Jones** alleges **Nick Pritchard** breached FAW rules on social media conduct, anti-discrimination and bringing the game into disrepute (Rule 4.1.5) — citing a video of a migrant dinghy being slashed in the English Channel that Pritchard shared while praising activist Daniel Thomas ("Danny Tommo"), as well as abusive language and derogatory material on nationality and race. Pritchard is a Bangor businessman and a member of Bangor City Council; the complaint cites the FAW's PAWB equality strategy. (Nation.Cymru — Martin Shipton, 8 Oct)

? Benidorm death: coroner speaks of difficulty getting information from Spain

A coroner has described the difficulty of obtaining information from Spanish authorities about the death of a 30-year-old man in Benidorm.

Nathan Osman's body was found at the foot of a 200m cliff outside the resort in September 2024, less than 24 hours after he arrived in the city for a night out with friends. At a pre-inquest review in Pontypridd, South Wales Police said it had requested information on a number of occasions without success. Toxicology reports showed no drugs in his system; his family believe foul play may have been involved. Area coroner **Patricia Morgan** said her officer would pursue information through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. (BBC Wales — Stephen Fairclough, 8 Oct)

? Cardiff University unfollows 'banter' account over sexual violence content

Cardiff University has unfollowed a student-run "banter" Instagram account after students raised concerns about posts including an anonymous confession describing a

man continuing to have sex with a woman during a seizure.

The Cardiff Uni Banter page — more than 14,000 followers — publishes anonymous student submissions about university life, relationships, sex and nightlife. The university said sexual violence and harassment "would not be tolerated" and that following the account was not "in any way an endorsement"; it says it followed it so it could monitor and report posts, and has now unfollowed in response to concerns. NUS Cymru president **Jennifer Taylor** called the content "dangerous, harmful and... reinforcing a toxic culture on our campuses". Student **Megan Elmer**, who contacted the BBC, said it "contributes to the perpetuation of rape culture"; the campaign group Time To Act urged students to unfollow and report. (BBC Wales, 9 Oct 06:05 / BBC Cymru Fyw)

?? Health & People

? Baby's pub gravy burns prompt warning to parents

A Bangor mother whose eight-month-old daughter was burned by hot gravy in a pub has warned others not to place hot liquids in front of babies and small children.

Catrin Griffiths, 29, from Bangor, Gwynedd, says a waitress "accidentally" placed a gravy boat directly in front of eight-month-old Neli during a roast dinner; Neli dunked her hand into the jug in "a split second" and then knocked it over, burning her left leg. Griffiths fears she will be scarred for life, and says she stripped the baby's gravy-soaked clothes and held her hand under a cold tap for 10 minutes. (BBC Wales — Miriam Barker, 8 Oct / BBC Cymru Fyw)

? 800,000 hours of sewage spills in Wales last year, report claims

Sewage was released into Welsh rivers, lakes and the sea for more than 800,000 hours in 2025, according to figures analysed by the charity Surfers Against Sewage.

The group says there were more than 100,000 discharges from Welsh water companies — one every five minutes — down on the previous year's 970,000-plus hours, though it attributes part of the fall to last summer's dry weather. It logs 992 reports of sickness in Wales linked to sewage since 2019 (215 of them in 2025), linked to more than 2,200 days off work, and says discharges into designated bathing waters totalled 35,669 hours — including 1,614 hours at Llyn Padarn, Gwynedd, despite its "excellent" water-quality classification. NRW said it had strengthened monitoring and oversight of water-company investment. (BBC Wales — Dan Moffat, 8 Oct)

? Welsh actress named a Screen International 'Star of Tomorrow'

A Welsh actress named in a prestigious line-up that has previously featured Benedict Cumberbatch and Florence Pugh says the selection was "so unexpected" that she forgot she had applied.

Leisa Gwenllian, from Llanrug, Gwynedd, plays Effi in the Welsh-language film *Effi o Blaenau*, about a young woman grappling with unemployment in a north Wales town before a night out dramatically alters her life. She joins 10 actors and 10 filmmakers chosen for Screen International's Stars of Tomorrow 2026 from more than 350 applications — a list that has also included Jodie Comer and Paul Mescal. She said she was proud and that Welsh-language cinema was "having a moment". (BBC Wales — Paul Pigott, 8 Oct)

?? Hawk jets resume flying at RAF Valley after Anglesey crash

Hawk T2 jets have resumed flying out of RAF Valley after two pilots ejected and parachuted out moments before their aircraft crashed in Anglesey last month.

The jet came down at Pencarnisiog, narrowly missing homes; the RAF paused Hawk operations while investigations continued, briefly grounding the Red Arrows. RAF Valley said flying restarted on Thursday afternoon after a "thorough review of the information currently available and appropriate safety assurance activity", with the decision taken "at the highest level". (BBC Wales — Maria Cassidy, 8 Oct)

? Money, Housing & Heritage

? First Welsh Chief Cashier — and the first Welsh signature on every UK banknote

Rhys Phillips becomes the Bank of England's Chief Cashier on 19 October — the first Welsh person to hold the role, and so the first whose signature will appear on every UK banknote.

Phillips was born in Neath and grew up in Baglan, near Port Talbot. He joined the Bank in 2012 (after starting at the Financial Services Authority in 2005), was Head of Sterling Markets Division from 2018–2023 and has most recently been principal private secretary to the Governor. Governor

Andrew Bailey announced the appointment in July, saying banknotes are "a shared symbol of our national identity". As Chief Cashier and Director of Notes, Phillips will oversee the next generation of notes, which will feature wildlife instead of historic figures — with nearly 5 billion notes in circulation, worth £91bn. (Nation.Cymru, 9 Oct)

?? £16.7m for 98 affordable homes across south Wales

Housing association Valleys to Coast Group has secured £16.7m in grants for 98 affordable homes across four schemes.

The largest allocation — £6.6m — buys 42 homes at Llanilid, Rhondda Cynon Taf, ready for occupation, with handovers expected between October 2026 and January 2027. A further £3.7m funds 23 homes at City Farm (work from late November or December, completion spring 2028); £3.4m redevelops the Old Drill Hall for 18 homes; and £3m funds the first phase of 15 homes at Ewenny Road. First properties are due this autumn, with construction running to spring 2028. (Nation.Cymru, 9 Oct)

?? Students to learn traditional building skills at Strata Florida

Students will learn stonemasonry, carpentry, slating, plastering and limework while helping to conserve a historic stable block at Strata Florida Abbey, near Tregaron.

The two-year project is a partnership between the Strata Florida Trust and the World Monuments Fund (WMF) Britain, developed with local colleges, universities and tradespeople. WMF Britain projects director **John Darlington** said: "What makes this project different is that the conservation itself is part of the learning... Instead of practising on a wall that will eventually be taken down, they will be able to point to the skills they used." The restored stables will provide flexible spaces for education and cultural activities. (Nation.Cymru, 9 Oct)

? Culture & Sport

? Dolly Parton's Welsh-language Jolene released

The posthumous collaboration between Dolly Parton, her niece Jada Star and Neath-born singer-songwriter Bronwen Lewis — a version of *Jolene* with Welsh and English

lyrics — has been released.

Recorded before Parton's death on 25 August (the star had family links to Machynlleth), the track is her second posthumous single. A teaser showed Parton working through the phonetics of Lewis's Welsh translation at her Nashville studio in early 2025, and on the track she recites that "heartbreak sounds the same in every language". *(Previewed in the 3 October roundup.)* (BBC Wales — Ellie Carter, 9 Oct / Nation.Cymru)

? NFL's New York Giants to take over Cardiff Castle

One of the NFL's most historic teams will take over Cardiff Castle for a one-day-only event on Saturday, part of the league's UK fan push. (Nation.Cymru — Sport)

? Football legend teams up with Penderyn on own whisky

A Wales football great has partnered with Penderyn Distillery to release his own single malt. (Nation.Cymru — Sport)

? Sport shorts

- **Rabbi Matondo** has joined Hibernian until the end of the season.
- **Elfyn Evans** has moved into contention for BBC Sports Personality of the Year after his world title win.

(Nation.Cymru — Sport)

?? Weather

No weather warnings are in force for the UK (BBC Weather, checked 09:30 BST).

Method note: compiled in cron mode. SearXNG (:8086) returned an index-and-aggregator mix (WalesOnline, BBC Wales, ITV Wales, Nation.Cymru, Senedd.wales, Wikipedia/Yahoo) usable only as corroboration — no individual article leads — so the sweep ran through the Playwright fetch service (192.168.178.100:8090, MarkItDown): 11 index/feed pages (BBC Wales, BBC Wales Politics, BBC Cymru Fyw, Nation.Cymru news/home/sport/culture, GOV.WALES main index, Guardian Wales RSS, BBC Weather warnings, WalesOnline homepage) and 26 article pages, all successful. The Nation.Cymru sport/culture cards carried a mixed date span, so items were date-checked per article. De-duplicated against yesterday's 8 October Welsh file, this morning's UK file and folder-

wide keyword greps — which dropped the Welsh Music Prize (Dafydd Owain), the Fury v Joshua 1am ringwalk and minimum alcohol pricing (all already in the UK file) and confirmed the Drakeford/Wales Office call, the Chief Cashier story, the Carmarthenshire school closures and the Cardiff Uni Banter row were genuinely new. Framed as developments rather than re-reports: the Prestatyn charge (arrest covered 8 October), the M4 junction backlash (Menai/M4 plans 7 October) and the Dolly Parton single (previewed 3 October).

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