

Reform UK Shadow Cabinet

Reform UK Cymru Shadow Cabinet — Announced 19 May 2026

Last updated: 27 May 2026 — Nitter/X social media search added **Source:** X/Twitter — @RUKWales, @RightTrackGB, @ReformDaily_ ; Rhyl Journal / Newsquest Media Group

Twitter/X Discussion

“ Source: Nitter (via Docker on Windows PC), 27 May 2026

Shadow Cabinet Announcement (19 May)

- A detailed X/Twitter thread from a Reform-affiliated account listed the full shadow cabinet including two roles not in earlier coverage: **Gaz Thomas** (Shadow Disabilities, Mental Health & Veterans) and **Claire Archibald** (Shadow Social Care), plus **Adrian Mason** (Shadow Counsel General & Constitution)
- Helen Jenner appointment as Deputy Leader and Shadow Education/Welsh Language was the lead announcement
- **Cai Parry-Jones** notably saying transparency will be central, "won't hide the plush lifestyle enjoyed by politicians for decades" — "Why should politicians not have to work in the same conditions created for teachers and nurses?"
- Some criticism/reaction: "About a week ago, Cai Parry-Jones lambasted the Tories and promised you were going to be (unlike them) serious opposition" — sarcastic tone suggesting initial performance not matching promise

Welsh-Language Controversy

- **Cai Parry-Jones** said on Senedd floor he'd "rather see the Union Jack flying outside the Senedd than the Ukrainian flag" — reported by Welsh-language media (Newyddion S4C)
- This generated significant pushback

Humour & Sarcasm

- "I saw a great picture of Rhun ap Iorwerth in the style of the Obama 'HOPE' poster... In the interest of balance I've created one for Dan Thomas"
- Interspersed comments about Reform MSs "spending a lot of time in the Senedd toilets" — jibe at Reform's level of parliamentary engagement
- Helen Jenner making clear on Radio Wales Breakfast that Reform would "oppose further powers for Cardiff Bay"

Reddit Discussion

“ Reddit search currently blocked by Cloudflare / Reddit bot detection. No r/Wales or r/ukpolitics data available.

Overview

Reform UK Cymru won 34 seats in the May 2026 Senedd election, becoming the official opposition for the first time. Leader **Dan Thomas** announced his shadow cabinet on 19 May 2026, appointing 11 MSs to shadow portfolios, plus a Chief Whip.

Shadow Cabinet

Portfolio	Shadow Minister	Notes
Leader of the Opposition	Dan Thomas	Leader of Reform UK Cymru
Deputy Leader / Education & Welsh Language	Helen Jenner	First major appointment announced
Finance & Government Efficiency	Cai Parry-Jones	Laptop-gate complainant
Chief Whip & Business Manager	Llŷr Powell	Former UKIP/Conservative/Brexit Party
Health, Prevention & Sport	James Evans	Newly elected MS

Portfolio	Shadow Minister	Notes
Food, Farming & Rural Affairs	Laura Anne Jones	Agriculture portfolio
Economy & Transport	Jason O'Connell	Business and infrastructure
Local Government, Housing & Planning	Francesca O'Brien	Housing and planning policy
Children, Young People & Skills	Sarah Cooper-Lesadd	Education and training
Fairness, Families & Communities	Christiana Emsley	Social policy portfolio
	Culture, Tourism & Hospitality	Louise Emery
	Disabilities, Mental Health & Veterans	Gaz Thomas
	Social Care	Claire Archibald
	Shadow Counsel General & Constitution	Adrian Mason

Shadow Cabinet Details

Dan Thomas — Leader of Reform UK Cymru / Leader of the Opposition

- Leader of Reform UK Cymru
- Led the party to a breakthrough 34 seats in the 2026 Senedd election
- Accused Rhun ap Iorwerth of being "distracted by constitutional issues" at first FMQs
- Backed Reform MS who said Senedd shouldn't fly Ukraine flag
- Appointed Corey Edwards (disgraced Nazi-salute candidate) as special adviser

Helen Jenner — Deputy Leader & Shadow Education & Welsh Language

- Appointed Deputy Leader alongside Education & Welsh Language portfolio
- First name announced in the shadow cabinet rollout
- Role covers both Welsh-medium and English-medium education policy

Cai Parry-Jones — Shadow Finance & Government Efficiency

- MS for Pen-y-Bont Bro Morgannwg (one of two Reform MSs for the constituency)
- Previously gained attention for complaining about being issued two laptops by the Senedd ("laptop-gate")
- Shadow Finance portfolio covers budget scrutiny and efficiency savings
- Role explicitly includes "Government Efficiency" — signalling Reform's anti-waste messaging

LI?r Powell — Chief Whip & Business Manager

- MS for Blaenau Gwent Caerffili Rhymini
- Former UKIP, Conservative, Brexit Party member
- Ensures Reform MSs vote along party lines in the Senedd
- Manages Reform's parliamentary timetable and business

James Evans — Shadow Health, Prevention & Sport

- Announced as Shadow Minister for Health, Prevention and Sport
- Covers NHS scrutiny, preventative health policy, and sports funding
- Health is the largest portfolio (55% of Welsh Government budget)

Laura Anne Jones — Shadow Food, Farming & Rural Affairs

- Shadow portfolio covering agriculture, food policy and rural development
- Critical of Welsh Government's agricultural policies including the slurry ban

Jason O'Connell — Shadow Economy & Transport

- Covers business support, economic development, transport infrastructure
- Portfolio includes roads funding, rail devolution, and business rates

Francesca O'Brien — Shadow Local Government, Housing & Planning

- Shadow portfolio for council funding, housing policy, planning reform
- Key issues: council tax, affordable housing, planning permission rules

Sarah Cooper-Lesadd — Shadow Children, Young People & Skills

- Portfolio: children's services, youth policy, skills training and apprenticeships
- Covers early years education, looked-after children, and post-16 training

Christiana Emsley — Shadow Fairness, Families & Communities

- Social policy portfolio covering families, equalities, community cohesion
- Name suggests a "Fairness" framing — Reform's alternative to social justice policy
- Role includes gender equality, community safety, and family support

Louise Emery — Shadow Culture, Tourism & Hospitality

- Clwyd MS, newly elected 2026
- Former Conservative councillor (Conwy County Borough Council, Llandudno Town Council)
- Resigned from Conservatives for Reform UK in July 2025
- "I am so frustrated at how our country is stagnating and declining. We need a shake up"
- Appointed as Shadow Minister for Culture, Tourism and Hospitality
- In her first statement: "The answer is balance, proper support and common sense, evidence-led policy. Not barriers and burdens"
- Challenged the First Minister directly in her first media appearance

Other Reform UK Cymru MSs

Full list of 34 Reform UK Cymru MSs elected in May 2026:

Claire Archibald, Steve Bayliss, Gareth Beer, John Clark, Carmelo Colasanto, Sarah Cooper-Lesadd, Catherine Cullen, Sarah Edwards, Louise Emery, Cristiana Emsley, James Evans, Andrew Griffin, David Hughes, Helen Jenner, Claire Johnson-Wood, Laura Anne Jones, Joshua Kim, Paul Marr, Joseph Martin, Adrian Mason, Iain McIntosh, Benjamin McKenna, David Mills, Thomas Montgomery, Francesca O'Brien, Jason O'Connell, Cai Parry-Jones, Llŷr Powell, Steven Rodaway, Stephen Senior, Dan Thomas (Leader), Gareth Thomas, Nigel Williams, Art Wright.

Key Policies & Positions

- **Smaller government** — pledges to cut Senedd spending and bureaucracy
 - **Opposition to Welsh independence** — Dan Thomas calls it a "distraction"
 - **Slower 20mph rollback** — Reform campaigned on reversing blanket 20mph
 - **Anti-waste messaging** — Government Efficiency framing in Cai Parry-Jones's title
 - **Culture war positioning** — Ukraine flag controversy, Senedd culture issues
 - **Tourism and hospitality focus** — Louise Emery pressing for fewer "barriers and burdens"
-

Sources

- X/Twitter: @RUKWales (official), @RightTrackGB, @ReformDaily_ — shadow cabinet announcements (19 May 2026)
 - Rhyl Journal / Newsquest — "Clwyd MS appointed to Reform UK Wales shadow cabinet" (Louise Emery profile)
 - Senedd Cymru — full list of elected MSs for the 2026 election
-

Revision #3

Created 2026-05-25 14:28:14 UTC by beanfarmer

Updated 2026-05-25 18:32:22 UTC by beanfarmer