

Reform UK Wales — Daily News Digest

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13 July 2026

? Top Stories

1. Reform UK Would Lose 85% of Funding Under Proposed Donation Cap

Source: The Guardian (12 Jul 2026) **Headline:** "Reform UK would lose 85% of funding under proposed donation cap, analysis shows"

Friends of the Earth analysis using Electoral Commission data reveals Reform UK would have raised just **£4.1m** between April 2025 and March 2026 instead of the **£26.7m** it actually received if a £100,000 annual donation limit had been in force.

Key figures:

- Reform's registered average donation: **£137,496** — almost **6x Labour's £23,406** or the Tories' £23,173, and **30x the Lib Dems' £4,496**
- Two billionaire donors — **Christopher Harborne (£15m)** and **Ben Delo** — accounted for **71% of Reform's registered donation income** over the last year
- Reform received **£20.4m from donors who each contributed at least £1m** during the period (vs £3.1m for Tories, £2.6m for Labour)
- Under the cap, Labour would retain ~75% of donations (£8.1m), Tories ~53% (£8.3m), Lib Dems ~90% (£5.2m), Greens entirely unaffected (£468k)

- Reform would **no longer be Britain's best-funded party** — Labour, Tories and Lib Dems would all have raised more

Context: The revelation comes before the report stage of the Representation of the People Bill, where Labour MP Stella Creasy is expected to table a £100,000 cap amendment. Harborne has told the Telegraph he would challenge any cap in court and did not rule out returning to the UK to bypass restrictions.

Reform spokesperson: *"Reform UK complies fully with UK electoral law and the suggestion that legitimate donations from successful individuals are somehow less valid than funding from trade unions, for example, is absurd."*

📄 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2026/jul/12/reform-uk-donations-proposed-10000-cap-analysis>

2. Council By-Election Results Suggest Reform UK's Allure Is Waning

Source: Nation.Cymru (10 Jul 2026) **Headline:** *"Council by-election results suggest Reform UK's allure is waning"*

Martin Shipton reports on **9 July by-elections** across Wales showing a **mixed but broadly modest performance** for Reform:

Results:

Ward	Reform candidate	Position	Vote Share	Winner
Baruc, Barry (Vale of Glamorgan)	Sarah Roderick	2nd	23.9%	Plaid Cymru (47.7%)
Trebanos, Neath Port Talbot	Graeme Kerrison	2nd	20.0%	Plaid Cymru (51.0%)
Llanrug, Gwynedd	Terry Temple	3rd	2.5%	Independent (57.4%)
Splott, Cardiff	David Cook	3rd	15.0%	Labour (40.0%)
Flintshire (Lib Dem held seat)	Angela Hughes	2nd	31.7%	Lib Dems (39.8%)
Connah's Quay Central, Flintshire	Dave Vernon	1st	48.1%	Reform UK GAIN

Key takeaways:

- Reform **won** in Connah's Quay Central (Flintshire) where Dave Vernon took 48.1%, beating Labour's 19%

- But **failed to take** another Flintshire seat that the Lib Dems held (Angela Hughes got 31.7% vs Lib Dem 39.8%)
- In **Splott** — a working-class Cardiff ward where Reform would expect to compete — they came **third with just 15%**, well behind the Greens on 36%
- In **Baruc**, the Conservative vote collapsed (down 8.2pp since 2022) but Reform couldn't capitalise — Plaid's vote was up 11.2pp
- Former Tory group leader Andrew RT Davies had targeted Baruc with attacks on Plaid "separatists" — a strategy that evidently backfired

Comments: Readers on Nation.Cymru were broadly celebratory: *"The bubble is slowly deflating for Reform UK. They are a party of frauds embroiled in corruption and soon will go the way of UKIP & Brexit party. Into the political dumpster."*

📄 <https://nation.cymru/news/council-by-election-results-suggest-reform-uks-allure-is-waning/>

3. Reform Comes Fourth in Pembrokeshire By-Election

Source: Nation.Cymru (10 Jul 2026) **Headline:** *"Reform comes fourth in Pembrokeshire by-election"*

Reform UK suffered an **embarrassing fourth-place finish** in the Pembroke Dock: Market ward by-election on 9 July — a working-class ward the party believed it could win.

Results:

- **Jamie Street (Conservative):** 143 votes (36%) — **WON**
- Claire Francis-Boswell (Independent): 100 (25%)
- Chloe Richards (Plaid Cymru): 79 (20%)
- **Ryan Morgan (Reform UK): 48 (12%) — 4TH**
- Paul Dowson (Independent): 11
- Lee Herring (Lib Dem): 9
- Hayley Wood (Independent): 7

No Labour candidate stood.

Damage report: Cllr Aled Thomas, chair of the Pembrokeshire Ceredigion Conservative Federation, delivered a devastating verdict:

- Reform made a **"strategic error" fixating on small boat migrants** — local voters care about "bread and butter issues like getting roads maintained and bin collections"
- **"Reform believes that people are not as switched on as they are. Most people realise that there is absolutely nothing that Pembrokeshire County Council can do about small boats."**

- Reform "**doesn't have many local activists**" — with 60 seats to fight in 2027 county elections, "I don't think they're going to manage that easily"
- **All the revelations about Farage's donations** are "having an impact, I have no doubt"
- If Farage left Reform, it would likely suffer a "**significant drop in support**"

📄 <https://nation.cymru/news/reform-comes-fourth-in-pembrokeshire-by-election/>

4. Reform MS Cai Parry-Jones Owns >£38,000 in Oil Company Shares

Source: The Will Hayward Newsletter (12 Jul 2026) **Headline:** "*Reform MS owns shares in an oil company*"

Cai Parry-Jones — Reform's shadow cabinet Minister for Finance and Government Efficiency — owns more than **£38,190 worth of shares in Phillips 66**, an American multinational oil company with 13 refineries producing 2.2 million barrels of crude oil per day.

The hypocrisy gap:

- Parry-Jones has repeatedly **derided people "crying about global warming"**
- He called for **climate-focused roles in the Welsh Government to be scrapped** — roles that plan for heatwaves, coastal erosion, and help farmers prepare for global heating
- He has decried the "**high regulation**" and "**red tape**" that emissions reductions would cause
- Yet his **personal financial interest** is in the very industry driving the climate crisis

Broader context: According to DeSmog, Reform UK has received **£24 million from oil and gas interests** — accounting for more than **two thirds of its total income**.

Parry-Jones did not respond to requests for comment.

📄 <https://willhaywardwales.substack.com/p/burnhams-plan-for-wales>

5. Reform MS Cristiana Emsley Received £220k Settlement from Police

Source: The Will Hayward Newsletter (31 May 2026) **Headline:** "*Reform MS received £220k settlement after suspension from police role*"

Cristiana Emsley MS — Reform's shadow Minister for Fairness, Families and Communities — received a **£220,000 settlement** from Cleveland Police following a misconduct investigation.

Timeline:

- **2020:** Emsley, then civilian head of standards and ethics at Cleveland Police, was **suspended amid a misconduct investigation**
- **2022:** Cleveland Police confirmed she was **still suspended** and remained the subject of the investigation
- **2024:** Received a **£220,000 settlement** — the only six-figure settlement Cleveland Police issued between 2020-2026
- **2026:** Elected to the Senedd for Fflint Wrecsam, appointed to Reform's shadow cabinet

Reform UK claims Emsley's suspension was "*as a result of her activities as a whistleblower within the organisation*" — but Cleveland Police, Reform UK and Emsley herself are all **declining to provide any detail** about the circumstances that led to her departure or the basis for the settlement.

Why this matters: Emsley now holds a shadow cabinet portfolio covering fairness, families and communities — roles that inherently involve accountability and transparency. The lack of disclosure raises legitimate questions about vetting and standards within Reform's Senedd group.

🔗 <https://willhaywardwales.substack.com/p/why-did-a-reform-ms-get-a-220k-settlement>

6. Dan Thomas Refused to Condemn Arron Banks' Racist Post

Source: Yahoo News / WalesOnline (29 Apr 2026) **Headline:** "*Reform leader Dan Thomas refuses to condemn 'outright racism'*"

During the BBC Wales' Your Voice leaders' debate ahead of the 7 May Senedd election, Reform Wales leader **Dan Thomas repeatedly refused to condemn** a post by Arron Banks (Reform member and Leave.EU co-founder) that called a black Plaid Cymru supporter "**Welsh lad?**".

Despite repeated questioning from host Bethan Rhys Roberts, and with Plaid leader Rhun ap Iorwerth calling it "**outright racism**", Thomas deflected — demanding instead that Plaid condemn its own candidates and playing the victim over his Welsh identity being questioned.

Plaid Cymru Westminster leader Liz Saville-Roberts: "*Reform's 2025 candidate for the West of England mayoral election thinks black people can't be Welsh. Racism is rife within Reform. We must stop them from being the largest party in the Senedd.*"

🔗 <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/reform-leader-dan-thomas-refuses-113236530.html>

7. Met Police Investigate £500k Reform UK Donation

Source: MSN / AOL (approx 10 Jul 2026) **Headline:** "Met Police investigate £500k Reform UK donation in latest scandal"

The Metropolitan Police are investigating a £500,000 donation to Reform UK — the latest in a string of funding controversies to hit Nigel Farage's party. Details remain sparse but the investigation adds to growing scrutiny of Reform's donation practices, coming alongside the donation cap debate and the ongoing Harborne (£15m) and Delo revelations.

🔗 <https://www.aol.co.uk/news/met-police-investigate-500k-reform-092957177.html>

? Ongoing Controversies & Discourse

Dan Thomas Properties Controversy

Nitter/X discourse highlights a fresh line of attack: **Reform UK Wales leader Dan Thomas has declared that he and his wife jointly own four rental properties in England and a holiday home in Sardinia.** This has been seized on by critics who question how a party claiming to represent working-class voters can be led by a multiple-property-owning landlord with a holiday villa abroad — alongside the existing controversy that he was appointed by Farage rather than elected by members, and lists addresses outside Wales.

Blow for Reform Clacton By-Election

Will Hayward reports the odds have "**shorted on Nigel Farage losing to a man with a bin on his head**" — referencing the Clacton by-election where Farage faces Count Binface. The by-election is forcing Reform to divert activists and resources from Welsh council elections, and the prospect of Farage losing to a novelty candidate would be a devastating blow for the party's morale and brand nationally.

Reform Advert Doesn't Mention Wales

Will Hayward reported that a Reform advert in Wales **doesn't mention 'Wales' once** but mentions **'London' seven times** — underlining the criticism that Reform Wales is a London-imposed operation with little local connection.

Nathan Gill — Persistent Legacy

The **convicted Russian asset and former Reform Wales leader** continues to haunt the party. On Bluesky, Peter Jukes (102 likes, 21 reposts): *"Who was Farage's closest aide in Strasbourg and who he appointed to head Reform UK Wales. Yes, that Nathan Gill."* A Nitter comment adds: *"Nathan Gill, the former leader of Reform UK in Wales and a former MEP, was sentenced to 10 and a half years in prison at the Old Bailey in November 2025 for accepting around £40,000 in bribes to conduct a pro-Russia influence campaign."*

? Bluesky Discourse (10–12 Jul 2026)

User	Date	Content	Engagement
@nation.cymru	10 Jul	"Reform UK came fourth in a working-class ward by-election in west Wales that it thought it could win 👉Martin Shipton"	26 likes, 8 reposts
@peterjukes.bsky.social	11 Jul	"Who was Farage's closest aide in Strasbourg and who he appointed to head Reform UK Wales. Yes, that Nathan Gill"	102 likes, 21 reposts
@reformexposed.bsky.social	11 Jul	"Council by-election results suggest Reform UK's allure is waning"	79 likes, 17 reposts
@klopplife	11 Jul	"Well done Pembrokeshire. Keep them racists gits at arms length"	—
@dailyherald.bsky.social	11 Jul	"Council by-election results suggest Reform UK's allure is waning"	6 likes
@imissnormal.bsky.social	12 Jul	"There have been so many everyone seems to have forgotten about Reform Wales Russian cash bungs and the long, long line of other 'irregularities' that flow like a river of shite through UK politics"	32 likes, 7 reposts
@jacky3344.bsky.social	12 Jul	"Reform will literally have to go out and tell their supporters that they need them because their leader is at risk of losing to a bin" (on Clacton by-election)	20 likes

User	Date	Content	Engagement
@stephenbaker.bsky.social	12 Jul	"Mark Drakeford, the former Labour FM of Wales, contemplate independence in the event of a Reform government and a more assertive Englishness"	—

? Quick Stats (Updated 13 Jul 2026)

Metric	Figure
Reform Senedd seats	34 / 96
Vote share (2026)	29%
By-election record (Jul 2026)	1 win (Connah's Quay Central), 1 loss (4th in Pembrokeshire)
Funding cap impact	Would lose 85% of donations under proposed £100k limit
Donor concentration	2 billionaires = 71% of income (Harborne + Delo)
Oil & gas funding	£24m — two thirds of total income (DeSmog)
Average donation	£137,496 (6x Labour, 30x Lib Dems)
Nadolig approval rating	~27% (lowest since Apr 2025)
Internal controversies active	Settlement scandal (Emsley), shares scandal (Parry-Jones), racist post (Banks/Thomas), Russian asset legacy (Gill)

? Sources

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2026/jul/12/reform-uk-donations-proposed-10000-cap-analysis>
2. <https://nation.cymru/news/council-by-election-results-suggest-reform-uks-allure-is-waning/>
3. <https://nation.cymru/news/reform-comes-fourth-in-pembrokeshire-by-election/>
4. <https://willhaywardwales.substack.com/p/burnhams-plan-for-wales>
5. <https://willhaywardwales.substack.com/p/why-did-a-reform-ms-get-a-220k-settlement>
6. <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/reform-leader-dan-thomas-refuses-113236530.html>
7. <https://nation.cymru/news/reform-wales-faces-data-breach-questions-after-tory-members-receive-party-emails/>
8. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2026/jun/28/reform-uk-makes-dramatic-first-impression-in-senedd-opposition-role>
9. <https://www.aol.co.uk/news/met-police-investigate-500k-reform-092957177.html>
10. <https://willhaywardwales.substack.com/p/secret-recording-from-inside-reform>

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