
CYTÛN POLICY BULLETIN

MARCH 2018



CHURCHES CONCERNED AS HUNGER STALKS WALES

A growing number of Christian churches and charities in Wales are reporting that they are seeing growing numbers of children and adults who are suffering from hunger, as the effects of austerity, welfare reform and the phasing out of Communities First programmes begin to bite.

St Asaph Diocese of the Church in Wales has been tackling school holiday hunger in partnership with local play provision. Volunteers use the church buildings to make packed lunches (a large filled roll, fruit and a healthy snack) and then deliver them to the play providers. The play staff ensure those most at risk of holiday hunger receive a packed lunch. One of the play providers told us about a young boy of six. “Over the holidays his behaviour used



to deteriorate to such a degree that staff on occasions had to enforce a period of restricting him from the setting unless accompanied by an adult. During these periods the young person would regularly be seen wandering the streets alone. Staff saw that when the youngster had a packed lunch his behaviour was less aggressive, he was happier and engaged, and contributed to the activities. His relationships with his peers were less chaotic and as a result he became more sociable and able to develop friendships. The availability of the food significantly improved his summer holidays.”

The volunteers are determined to provide packed lunches over the Easter holidays, although the play providers – previously largely funded by Communities First – do not know if their work will continue beyond the end of March, as the local authority has not yet allocated the Communities First legacy funding it has received from Welsh Government.



Many congregations who are part of Cytûn member Churches host or contribute to local Foodbanks. Our picture shows Revd Nesta Davies and the treasurer of the Trussell Trust, the largest provider of foodbanks in Wales at the Foodbank established by local Cytûn in Denbigh and Rhuthun. 80% of the volunteers come from the churches as do the donations which keep it going. Some of the volunteers prepared over a hundred Christmas hampers which were distributed by the Social Services and Samaritans locally.

Tony Graham, Wales Director of the Trussell Trust, says, “Our society believes in making sure people aren’t left destitute. But in Wales, as in the rest of the UK, more and more people are in need of foodbanks and finding themselves locked in poverty, restrained by low or insecure incomes. Our benefits system could prevent this, but holes in the safety net mean it is pushing people into poverty. Foodbanks do all they can to help, providing food, support,



Universal Credit Rollout dates for Wales

Universal Credit 'full service' is gradually being rolled out to Jobcentres across Wales in 2017 and 2018

2017



2018



*1 = Alex House, 2 = Charles Street

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

seneddresearch.blog National Assembly for Wales Research Service

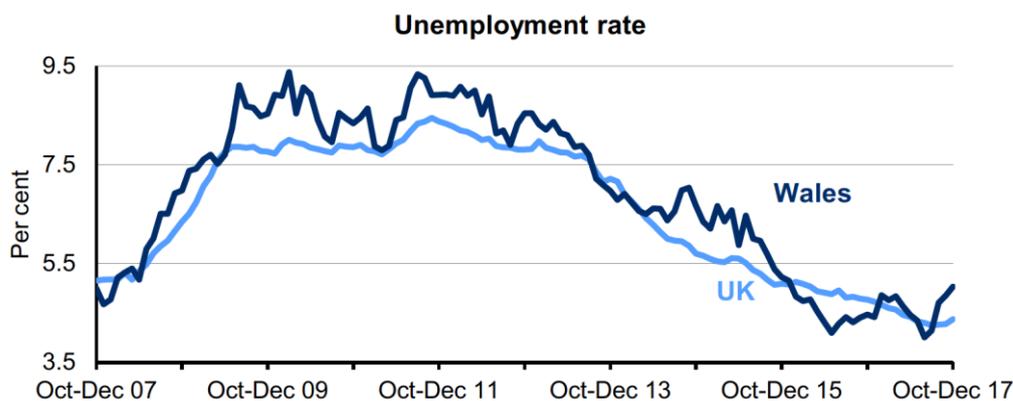
and any additional extras they can, but it cannot be left to voluntary organisations to solve hunger and poverty. Tackling benefit issues, the main reason why people need foodbanks, such as reducing delays for payments, and offering more financial support to people in crisis, particularly disabled people and lone parents, will go a long way to make sure people aren't left needing a foodbank referral."

During 2018, Universal Credit (UC) will be rolled out by the UK Government across most of Wales. This simplifies the benefits system, but the first payment after a claim usually takes five weeks to arrive, and all payments are made monthly in arrears. Many charities report that this leads to a slide into debt – especially rent arrears – from which it can be very difficult to recover.

New analysis of Trussell Trust foodbanks elsewhere in the UK in areas of full Universal Credit rollout shows that foodbanks in areas of full rollout for six months or more have seen a 30% average increase six months after rollout compared to a year before. Foodbanks not in full UC rollout areas showed an average increase of 12%.

Trussell Trust data reveal that an issue with a benefit payment remains the biggest cause of referral to a foodbank in Wales, accounting for 43 percent of all referrals. New analysis of UK foodbank data also shows that of people referred due to a benefit delay, 45% of referrals made due to a wait for a first payment were related to Universal Credit and 36% of referrals made because a new claim had not yet been awarded were related to Universal Credit. Of people referred due to a benefit change, 38% of referrals made due to a change to a different benefit were related to Universal Credit.

Low income, which refers to anyone in work or on benefits struggling to get by on their income, accounts for 27 percent of all referrals – suggesting that certain pay and benefit levels are not protecting people from falling into crisis. At the same time, unemployment in the UK is rising, with the highest rate in the UK being in Wales (see graph opposite) and homelessness is



Source: Welsh Government analysis of Labour Force Survey

also rising. Sharon Lee, Director of Cytûn member [Housing Justice Cymru](#), said “[Welsh rough sleeping stats](#) released in February show a 10% increase across Wales, with increase in 13 out of 22 Local Authorities. We have to move from the camp of crisis management to walking the road of prevention and recovery with people.”

Across the UK, a coalition called [End Hunger UK](#) is seeking to tackle the UK-wide issues.



Its members include Church Action on Poverty; the Church of England; the Church of Scotland; Baptists Together (of which Cytûn member the South Wales Baptist Association is part); Cytûn members the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church; Quaker Peace and Social Witness (linked to Cytûn member the Society of Friends); and the Trussell Trust.

The campaign has initially focussed on measures to end holiday hunger, including supporting a private members’ Bill in the UK Parliament to provide holiday meals for children who in school term are entitled to free school meals. This has already been achieved in many parts of Wales by the Welsh Government’s [Food and Fun Clubs](#) (officially known as the School Holidays Enrichment Programme or SHEP). This scheme does not normally fund third sector schemes such as those referred to in page 1. The campaign, however, covers a whole 9 item [Menu to End Hunger](#), including tackling many of the issues referred to in this article. Local churches and individuals are able to sign up to show their support.

PETITION FOR A WALES ACCESS CERTIFICATE

A current petition from members of Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People to the National Assembly is calling for premises in Wales to be awarded an Access Certificate similar to the Food Hygiene Certificate with premises displaying a score from 0 to 5 depending how accessible and disabled friendly they are. A high score would be about not just wheelchair access, but also hearing loops, braille menus, staff using sign language and trained in disability, equality and autism awareness,

The idea came and has already picked up over 2,000 online signatures and more on paper. The Coalition believes that this would encourage premises to improve services to all disabled customers. The idea has already been discussed in the Assembly after Suzy Davies AM tabled a [short debate](#). The petition can be seen at:



<https://www.assembly.wales/en/gethome/e-petitions/Pages/petitiondetail.aspx?PetitionID=1273>. The last date for signatures is 31 March 2018.

PRAYER AND SUPPORT NETWORK FOR LOCAL COUNCILLORS

Helen Harrison, who is a local councillor in Thornbury, near Bristol, and attends Thornbury Baptist Church, has taken on a role for Christians in Politics as their Councillor Network Coordinator. This grows out of her desire to see councillors, of any party or none, being able to access prayer support. Initially this will be done by prayer emails sent out every other month. If you would like to take part, please email Helen@christiansinpolitics.org.uk.

REASONABLE PUNISHMENT? OR AN UNREASONABLE BAN?

The Welsh Government is consulting on new legislation making it illegal for parents to physically chastise their children. Members of the public and organisations are invited to comment on the proposals – either via the online questionnaire, or by sending in comments. The consultation documents– including an easy-read version – are available here: <https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/legislative-proposal-remove-defence-reasonable-punishment>. The consultation deadline is April 2 2018.

The law of ‘common assault’ already makes it an offence to hit or seriously threaten another person, including members of your own family. But currently in the UK, parents – uniquely – can claim a legal defence of ‘reasonable punishment’ (or ‘reasonable chastisement’) for smacking their own child. Serious harm is covered by legislation on child cruelty or neglect, and in 2007 it was ruled illegal for parents to strike a child hard enough to leave anything other than a transitory mark on the skin. The current plan to legislate to remove the ‘reasonable punishment’ defence in Wales would provide under-16s in the care of their parents with the same legal protection as everybody else. Corporal punishment has been outlawed for many years in schools, children’s homes, childcare facilities, penal institutions, or as a criminal punishment. It is also illegal in foster homes. Removing the defence of ‘reasonable punishment’ would apply to anyone else looking after a child on behalf of parents – such as grandparents, neighbours, or babysitters.

The law of common assault refers to ‘intentional or reckless’ action, and the permissible defence is for ‘punishment’. Restraining a child from running into the road, or strapping a protesting child into a car seat, or carrying a child away from a trigger-point of bad behaviour (such as the sweet counter in the supermarket), are not affected – unless they are done so harshly or carelessly as to hurt the child, which is illegal already.

In 2011, the [Rights of Children and Young People \(Wales\) Measure](#) was passed, requiring all Welsh Ministers to have regard for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child [UNCRC]. Allowing the physical punishment of children by their parents directly contravenes Article 19 of UNCRC, and the UK has been criticised for failing to uphold this provision. Different legal systems across the world give different degrees of protection and category of offence, but around 50 countries ban all corporal punishment including in the home, and it is a growing trend. The stated aim of Welsh Government in promoting this change is to bring about a change in attitude, rather than to increase the number of prosecutions. Because assaulting children is already illegal, if a smacking incident is reported – to a teacher, social worker, health professional, police or whatever – there is already a duty to investigate.

There is a campaign opposing the proposals: <http://www.bereasonable.wales> The strapline of the coalition “The First Minister plans to turn good parents into criminals” indicates that the main argument is not about the rights and wrongs of physical discipline, but the danger of excessive Government interference in family life. The [Evangelical Alliance Wales](#), while not taking a formal stance, has said that the proposals “give the government greater power to intervene in the life of any and every family in Wales.” *The Treasury*, the monthly journal of Cytûn member the Presbyterian Church of Wales, featured the Be Reasonable campaign on its [front page in October 2017](#) in an article by the Director of the Christian Institute, which is also [campaigning against the change](#).

On the other hand, several churches and cathedrals of the Church in Wales have hosted services for the [Children Are Unbeatable](#) campaign. The Children’s Society is a member of the ‘Children Are Unbeatable’ alliance, along with the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, and all three are members of Cytûn. Because of the variety of Christian opinion, Cytûn is encouraging debate on the proposal and its implications, but takes no stance.

A REVOLUTION FROM WITHIN

The [Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Care in Wales](#) reported in January under this dramatic title. The review makes ten 'high level' recommendations – that is, they do not address which hospitals are to offer which services, or how social care is to be organised in each area. Rather, they set out the principles according to which such decisions should be made. The following summarise the ten principles.

1: One seamless system for Wales. Care should be organised around the individual and their family as close to home as possible, be preventative with easy access and high quality. Care and support should be seamless, without artificial barriers between physical and mental health, primary and secondary care, or health and social care. The public, voluntary and independent sectors all have a role to meet the needs of the population.

2: The Quadruple Aim for all: Health and care staff, volunteers and citizens should work together to deliver: (a) clear outcomes, (b) improved health and wellbeing, (c) a cared for work force, and (d) better value for money.

3: Bold new models of seamless care – national principles, local delivery: Three broad shifts, towards (a) seamless care close to home in localities; (b) proactive improvement of population health and wellbeing; and (c) reoriented specialised care.

4: Put the people in control: Strengthen individual and community voice and control in health and care. The public should have much better information about health and care, shared decision making in treatment, choice of care and setting, and peer support.

5: A great place to work: Staff should be well trained, supported and engaged. This must involve better workforce planning, including making use of staff's Welsh language skills.

6: A Health & Care System that's always learning: Develop and implement a strategy for quality improvement and continuous learning for health and care, enhancing the leadership and infrastructure required to support it.

7: Harness innovation, and accelerate technology and infrastructure developments

8: Align system design to achieve results: Focus on designing a more effective blend of incentives, regulation, planning, targets and performance management. This involves reviewing Welsh Government contracts with GPs, community pharmacists, etc.

9: Capacity to transform, dynamic leadership, unprecedented cooperation, including joint commissioning of services between the NHS and social care. However, full merger of the two systems is not proposed.

10: Accountability, progress & pace: Publish progress against the vision, Quadruple Aim and new models in one year, three years and five years, and benchmark progress against the other three countries in the UK, and internationally.

The Review says, *To achieve this vision, we advocate the creation of a time limited, staffed and resourced national Transformation Programme to implement the recommendations and supporting actions laid out in this report. This should be informed by an independent evaluation process to track progress and suggest adjustments. Wales needs to transform not just how much is done, but what and how it is delivered to meet the future care and support needs for the people of Wales.* (p. 10).

There is no mention of chaplaincy or spiritual care. Some may feel that it is unfortunate that this bold vision is swathed in so much managerial jargon. Apart from commending the integrated health and care of Canterbury in New Zealand, there are few specific examples either of existing good practice or of what is intended for the future. Only time will tell how these 'high level' aspirations can be translated into better care for people in Wales.

Cabinet Secretary Vaughan Gething has announced a [£100 million fund](#) to implement the Review and that a [new long term plan will be announced](#) in the spring.



Y camau nesaf tu allan i'r UE:
*Cyfarfod cyhoeddus i edrych ymlaen i'r
dyfodol trwy wrando ar ein gilydd*

Next steps outside the EU:
*A public meeting to look to the future
as we listen to each other*

Cyfarfod agored dwyieithog dan nawdd nifer o eglwysi Llanbedr Pont Steffan
mewn partneriaeth â Cytûn – Eglwysi Ynghyd yng Nghymru

A bilingual open meeting sponsored by local churches in Lampeter
in partnership with Cytûn – Churches Together in Wales

Cadeirydd / Chair: Dylan Iorwerth

Ysgol Bro Pedr, Peterwell Terrace,
Llanbedr Pont Steffan/Lampeter SA48 7BX

Nos Fawrth 13 Mawrth 2018, 7-9yh
Tuesday 13 March 2018, 7-9pm

Croeso i bawb – All welcome



YM MHA FATH O BRYDAIN YDYM NI AM FYW?
*Cyfarfod cyhoeddus i edrych ymlaen i'r
dyfodol y tu allan i'r Undeb Ewropeaidd
trwy wrando ar ein gilydd*

WHAT SORT OF BRITAIN DO WE WANT TO LIVE IN?
*A public meeting to look to the future
outside the European Union
as we listen to each other*

Cyfarfod agored dan nawdd grwpiau Cytûn (Eglwysi Ynghyd)
Llandudno a Bae Colwyn

An open meeting sponsored by Cytûn (Churches Together)
Llandudno and Colwyn Bay

Eglwys Fethodistaidd St Ioan
St. John's Methodist Church
Mostyn St, Llandudno LL30 2NN

Nos Fawrth 24 Ebrill 2018, 7-9yh
Tuesday 24 April 2018, 7-9pm

Croeso i bawb – All welcome

Cytûn's Wales and Europe Working Party is holding a series of public meetings in which people will be invited to come along and listen to one another in a conducive environment. The meetings will not involve speeches by politicians or by 'experts', but will rather be a chance for people with a variety of hopes, fears, concerns and visions to share them with one another. Each meeting will be organised in partnership with local churches, and they will be open to everyone. The first two are advertised above, with others to follow later in the year. We would still like to hear from other areas interested in hosting such an occasion.

The Working Party is also continuing its work of responding to Welsh and UK Government and parliamentary consultations relating to Brexit, and monitoring legislative developments. The Working Party's publications can be found at:
<http://www.cytun.cymru/waleseurope/index.html>

CONTACTING THE CYTÛN POLICY OFFICER



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Hapus i gyfathrebu yn Gymraeg ac yn Saesneg. Happy to communicate in Welsh and English

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