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# CYTŪN POLICY BULLETIN

## MARCH/APRIL 2016

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### DRAMATIC END TO THE FOURTH ASSEMBLY

The fourth Assembly came to a dramatic end on Wednesday 16th March when one of the Welsh Government's bills was defeated in its entirety at the last minute. As it was Budget Day in Westminster, these events did not get the media attention they deserved.

Over six hours in plenary began with questions to the Minister for Finance (Jane Hutt AM) and the Minister for Public Services (Leighton Andrews AM). The discussion was good-natured, and in response to Simon Thomas AM (Plaid Cymru), Mr Andrews referred to co-operation between his party and Plaid Cymru to enable the passage of the Local Government (Wales) Act 2015 as "a cheap date". He and Mr Thomas were laughing, although Mr Thomas said "you may regret that in a few weeks".



The Assembly then discussed City Deals, followed by a Stage 4 debate on the [Public Health \(Wales\) Bill](#), a measure that has been controversial due to its provisions to restrict the use of e-cigarettes (nicotine inhaling devices or NIDs) in public spaces in Wales. Under pressure from the opposition parties and some Labour backbenchers, the Government had compromised on its intention to restrict the use of

NIDs in all places where smoking tobacco is prohibited. Instead, NIDs were to be restricted in places where children were likely to be present. The Liberal Democrats and Conservatives opposed, but Plaid Cymru allowed a free vote to its members, meaning that these clauses had been passed on 8th March (by 31-25 votes) with support from Labour and Plaid members. Passing the complete legislation at Stage 4 is usually a matter of form. Mark Drakeford, Minister for Health & Social Services, warned against voting down the whole Bill because of these clauses, remembering the provisions about pharmacies, public toilets, controlling tattoo parlours and so on which were agreed by all parties.

The Assembly went on to appoint a new Standards Commissioner, and discussed the future of the BBC, Wales's energy future and the health service, before Simon Thomas AM began the final debate, about the history of devolution, with the First Minister, Carwyn Jones responding. Then came the voting time, and the Presiding Officer, Rosemary Butler AM, was visibly surprised when she saw the voting on the Public Health Bill – 26 in favour and 26 against (including all the Plaid Cymru AMs who were present). She had no choice under the standing orders other than to use her casting vote against and thus kill the measure. It became clear later that Plaid Cymru AMs had decided to vote against the Bill because they were upset by Mr Andrews' remarks earlier in the day.

Mrs Butler was so surprised that she forgot to call for the closing speeches by members leaving the Senedd for the last time, until she was reminded. They were Gwenda Thomas AM (Labour), William Graham AM (Conservative), Jocelyn Davies AM (Plaid Cymru) – and Peter Black AM (Liberal Democrat), although he is not retiring (speaking instead of Aled Roberts AM). They were all glad to have been part of Wales's first ever democratically elected full legislative parliament. Then the mace was carried from the chamber and the fourth Assembly came to an end.

# ELECTIONS 2016



The screenshot shows the Cytun website with a navigation menu at the top: Home, Contact, Who We Are, Partners, Staff, Our Work, Elections 2016, Faith, Order and Witness, Church and Society, Archive. Below the menu, there are links for Worship Resource, Videos, Briefing Papers, Holding a Hustings?, List of Hustings, and Links. The main content area is titled 'Elections 2016 Videos - Scroll down for download instructions.' It features a video player with the title 'Wales Elections 2016 - Farming and Rural Life' and a play button. Above the video, it says 'Farming and Rural Life: (For more election issues regarding Farming and Rural Life in Wales, see Cytun's Briefing Paper HERE:'. The video thumbnail shows a woman in a grey jacket and sunglasses standing in front of a farm building.

New material is regularly being added to Cytun's election website - [www.cytun.org.uk/elections2016](http://www.cytun.org.uk/elections2016).

As well as a handy guide to the elections and guidance on arranging hustings, there are briefing papers on key policy areas, and two videos of real life stories from church workers in Wales and responses by leading politicians. These videos can be downloaded for use in worship and other meetings. We have this week uploaded some worship material on

election issues, and welcome more from our readers – please send to [ynyr@cytun.org.uk](mailto:ynyr@cytun.org.uk)

You can also follow us on Twitter [@Cytun\\_new](https://twitter.com/Cytun_new) [#CytunElections](https://twitter.com/CytunElections). We will be communicating regularly, especially when the campaign gets into full swing after the Easter holidays.

We encourage local Cytun groups, in partnership with other churches or faith groups where appropriate, to run **hustings** for their local candidates. We would encourage one or two well organised hustings in each constituency, rather than multiplying events. When you have organised your hustings, please let us know by e-mailing [ynyr@cytun.org.uk](mailto:ynyr@cytun.org.uk) so we can advertise the details on our website.



## Making Wales a Welcoming & Prosperous Nation

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April, 7.30pm

The Catrin Finch Centre, Glyndŵr University, Wrexham.

[@HNHWales](https://twitter.com/HNHWales) [@OxfamCymru](https://twitter.com/OxfamCymru) [@TCCWales](https://twitter.com/TCCWales) [@Welshrefcouncil](https://twitter.com/Welshrefcouncil)

TCC (Together Creating Communities), supported by many churches and other organisations in north Wales, is organising a special national event, a chance for communities from across the country to hear how the main political parties are planning to make Wales a welcoming and prosperous nation (details above). The meeting will be tightly and fairly chaired, with questions being posed to the panel on issues such as migration, economic growth, health, education, and equality. For free entry to guarantee your place [please book here](http://www.tcc-wales.org.uk). For more information please visit [www.tcc-wales.org.uk](http://www.tcc-wales.org.uk) or call 01978 262588. Tea & cake from 7pm.

Hustings can come in many forms. For example, Oxfam Cymru is holding **Candidate Café** events in their high street shops. Purposefully organised to be small and intimate, these events will allow time to explore in detail poverty and economic inequality, and for project beneficiaries, who may not feel comfortable participating in a regular hustings environment, to participate. Events still to come include:

**Wednesday 30 March: Abergavenny, 5.30-7.30pm**

**Sunday 3 April: Cardiff, 4.30-6.30pm**

**Thursday 7 April: Carmarthen, 6-8pm**

More details: [hrichards@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:hrichards@oxfam.org.uk)



Churches and other faith communities were well represented at **Citizens Wales's Accountability Assembly** with the leaders of the current four Assembly parties in Tabernacl, Cardiff on 17<sup>th</sup> March where a number of community groups presented their desires for the next Assembly with verve, originality and passion. Speakers



included Archbishop Barry Morgan (pictured left) and Archbishop George Stack (right).

BBC Wales' political programme, **Wales Report**, is inviting people to take part in a special edition about the election. They are aiming to get a good cross section of society in the audience for the event which will take place at St David's Hall, Cardiff, on April 27, and will be broadcast live from 8.30pm. It will be presented by Huw Edwards and will be a debate featuring the leaders of the main political parties in Wales - Labour, Conservative, Lib Dem, Plaid, UKIP and the Greens. You would need to be there by 6pm.

If you are interested please call Chris Hardy on 02920 877859 or on the out of hours mobile - 07398 316805. You can also email him at [chris.harding@walesandco.com](mailto:chris.harding@walesandco.com).

## TWO DRAFT WALES BILLS!

On 28th February the Welsh Affairs Select Committee published a report on its scrutiny of the draft Wales Bill, which identified significant issues with the draft Bill, similar to those previously identified by the National Assembly, Cytûn and other organisations in Wales. In a statement on 29th February the then Secretary of State for Wales, Stephen Crabb, responded by announcing a pause in the development of the Bill and a change in approach to the drafting of some of its key provisions.

On 7th March the First Minister of Wales published the [Government and Laws in Wales Bill](#), in effect an alternative Draft Wales Bill, along with an Explanatory Summary. The alternative bill is a consolidated bill so it re-enacts much of what is in the *Government of Wales Act 2006*, for example in relation to the structure of the Assembly.

The Bill provides for an immediate change from a conferred powers model to a reserved powers model. The Explanatory Summary states that the reservations include those matters essential to the UK's political, economic and social union. It provides for devolution of policing, the administration of justice, criminal law, and family law on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

The alternative bill provides for the immediate creation of a distinct Welsh legal jurisdiction, separating the laws of England from the laws of Wales. The former Secretary of State has reiterated his opposition to a separate Welsh jurisdiction but announced a working group – with the Ministry of Justice, the Lord Chief Justice's office, and the Welsh Government – to consider what arrangements are required to recognise Wales's needs within the England and Wales jurisdiction when the reserved powers model is implemented.

The alternative bill provides for some new restrictions on the powers of the proposed Welsh Parliament, in particular its powers will be exercisable only in relation to Wales. As with Scotland, changes in the law of England consequential upon Acts of the Welsh Parliament made for Wales will be made by the UK Government by regulations.

Cytûn will continue to play a central role in discussions about the devolved future of Wales, with the Wales Office and the Assembly parties, during and after the election period.

## THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACT AND WALES

The Government of Wales Act 2006 includes a specific requirement that the Welsh Government and Assembly must work in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998. The Westminster Government elected in May 2015 has announced its intention to repeal that act and replace it with a *British Bill of Rights and Responsibilities*. Publication of the White Paper has been postponed several times, and Rosemary Butler AM, Assembly Presiding Officer, and Lesley Griffiths AM, the Welsh Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty, have written to Westminster expressing concern that the White Paper might be published during the Welsh election campaign, when it would not be possible to respond fully to it. Michael Gove, the Justice Minister, replied that the Government was still committed to this change, and the White Paper would be published “in due course”. The whole correspondence can be viewed [here](#).

It is part of Cytûn’s workplan for 2016-17 to monitor this matter, as the Act protects (amongst many other things) religious freedom in Wales and in Britain.

### M4 RELIEF ROAD



One of the current Welsh Government’s most controversial plans is that for an M4 relief road south of Newport, between junctions 23 and 29 of the current M4.

On 10 March, a substantial number of documents were published. Ten public exhibitions were also announced.

The Environmental Statement sets out the Welsh Government’s assessment of the main environmental effects and how it intends to mitigate the impact of the road on, for example, ecology and nature conservation. The Environmental Statement

– Non Technical Summary gives a more digestible version of the findings.

A range of other “associated reports” have also been made available, including a scheme assessment report, a sustainable development report, an economic assessment report and a traffic forecasting report. These summarise key non-environmental aspects of the scheme including details of the route, walking and cycling infrastructure, the junctions, bridges and other structures required, and how far the scheme affects connectivity from side roads.

While the First Minister told the Assembly on 12th May 2015 that the relief road would cost “well below £1billion”, the Assembly Research Service says that these documents taken together suggest the total cost will be £1.131 billion. The project would be funded “through a combination of UK Government borrowing and Welsh Government Transport budgets”. It anticipates that three quarters of the project costs will be spent in the Welsh supply chain.

The public is invited to respond to Welsh Government on the draft orders and environmental statement by 4th May 2016. Depending on these responses, the Welsh Ministers will decide whether to hold a Public Local Enquiry. If they do, the Welsh Government anticipates this taking place in autumn/winter 2017 and then, following the inspector’s report, the Welsh Ministers will decide whether to proceed with the scheme. If they do decide to go ahead, and barring any further legal challenge, construction is expected to start in spring 2018, with opening planned for autumn 2021.

## HELPING TO AVERT CLIMATE CHANGE

On 16<sup>th</sup> March, the National Assembly for Wales debated the recent Environment and Sustainability Committee report on a Smarter Energy Future for Wales. The report is the culmination of over 12 months work by the Committee, which started with a fact finding trip to Germany to see how the German *Energiwende* has transformed the energy landscape there. The key messages from the Committee are:

If Wales is to meet its climate change obligation of at least an 80% reduction by 2050 we need to change the way we think about energy; its generation, distribution, storage and conservation. The landmark deal on climate change in Paris last December sets a framework for Wales to accelerate its action in this area, making real strides towards reducing its greenhouse gas emissions and setting the bar high for a new energy model.

Leadership is key to achieving an energy transformation, with a clear and stable policy direction paving the way. This policy must lead Wales to a decarbonised energy system, with the aim of Wales meeting all of its energy needs from renewable sources. Local energy supply to local markets is a cornerstone of this new policy, and, whilst larger-scale inward investment projects will continue to play a part in providing energy security, diffused local solutions must also feature highly in a future renewable, sustainable energy jigsaw.

Energy conservation and demand reduction must be addressed, and are areas where Wales holds the necessary levers and powers to take action now. Both new buildings and existing housing stock present opportunities to improve energy efficiency.

The Climate Change Commission for Wales (CCCW) believes it is critical to engage with the third sector and civil society to achieve a significant impact in tackling climate change. The National Conversation on '[The Wales We Want](#)', in connection with the Well-Being of Future Generations Act, showed that when people were asked what issues are of most concern for the future of Wales - climate change and the natural environment came out at the top. CCCW asks Welsh Government to:

- Recognise, and continue to incentivise, civil society in kick starting local action, education and enterprise initiatives that promote climate friendly living.
- Recognise the key 'trusted messenger' role that third sector organisations play in engaging members and beneficiaries with climate change issues and ensure there is adequate support and resources available for this to continue.

**ECO CHURCH**  
AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT



**Eco Church** is the new, free award scheme for churches in England and Wales who want to demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth. Run by A Rocha UK (recently accepted as Category B members of Cytûn) in partnership with Christian Aid, the Church of England, the Methodist Church, and Tearfund, the scheme invites churches to complete a unique online survey by way of recording what they're doing to promote care for God's earth in their worship and teaching, in the management of their buildings and land, in their

community and global engagement, and in the lifestyles of their members. As churches complete the actions suggested by the survey they earn points towards an Eco Church Award at Bronze, Silver or Gold level.

Find out more, and join the nearly 200 churches that have already registered at [www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk](http://www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk)

## OUT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

During the Conservative Party conference in October 2015, [David Cameron](#) promised that the UK Government would legislate to control “intensive” out of school education, and he referred explicitly to education of a religious nature. The UK Government confirmed its intention to act in this way in its [Counter-Extremism Strategy](#).

Counter-extremism is a policy area reserved to Westminster. The Strategy does not go into detail regarding the implications of devolution – but the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) has set a legislative precedent for Westminster legislating to impose duties on Welsh Ministers (and those of the other devolved nations) to act.

A consultation on how to proceed in England was held between November 2015 and January 2016, and the Welsh Government has now published its [consultation](#). The document is rather unclear regarding the connection between its proposals and the Westminster counter-extremism strategy, and also with regard to what might count as “intensive education” and to what extent education of a religious nature is core to this concept. Cytûn has responded on behalf of its members, but it is suggested that all those involved in out of school educational work should take a look at the consultation and respond by the closing date, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

### A Prayer for the Election

God of truth and wisdom:

We give thanks for the country we live in,  
and for those whose work and sacrifice won us the right to universal suffrage  
and the right to choose our governments.

We pray that we may cast our votes wisely:

That we will see beyond narrow self-interest,  
and recognise that we are all members of one body, one community;  
That we will consider the impact of our decisions on the most vulnerable,  
on our neighbours, and on generations to come;  
And that our choices will promote peace and harmony,  
both at home and in the worldwide family of nations.

This we ask through Jesus Christ, through whom God loved the world so much  
that he came amongst us, to share our human life. Amen.

*Carol Wardman (Church in Wales)*

*More election worship material is available at:*

<http://www.cytun.org.uk/elections2016/worshipresource.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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The next bulletin will be published after the Welsh elections towards the end of May 2016.