
CYTŪN POLICY BULLETIN

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2024



NEW PRIORITIES AND NEW CABINET FOR WELSH GOVERNMENT



Photo: Senedd.tv (c) Senedd Commission

Following a troubled period for the Welsh Government, the new First Minister, Eluned Morgan MS, came before the Senedd on September 17 to [present her priorities for government](#) and to introduce her new Cabinet which will implement those priorities.

She said that those priorities were shaped by conversations she had with the public throughout Wales over the summer. It was not surprising to hear that pressure on the Health Service, educational standards in schools and transport on the railways and roads were clear priorities. She also emphasised the need for economic growth through the creation of "green jobs". Ms Morgan said that the Cabinet would meet monthly for a focussed discussion about cross-government action on those priorities, and Julie James MS was designated as 'Minister for Delivery' to lead on ensuring progress in these areas. Although the First Minister suggested several times that prioritising these issues means de-prioritising some others, there has been no indication to date of what might be omitted from the government's work programme. A further statement is expected during the autumn.

Responding to questions from members, the First Minister said that the legislative programme announced in July by her predecessor (see [Summer 2024 Policy Bulletin](#)) would be implemented, with two changes. Firstly, on September 24 the Senedd voted in favour of not pursuing further the [Senedd Cymru \(Electoral Candidate Lists\) Bill](#), which would have ensured that at least half of those elected to the next Senedd in May 2026 were women. This follows the opinion of the Llywydd and the Equality and Human Rights Commission that the measure was not within the legislative competence of the Senedd.

Secondly, the First Minister said that there would be "minor changes" to the proposed Bill to register holiday accommodation in Wales. This is a matter of considerable importance for churches, as the Bill would affect retreat centres, pilgrimage churches and religious communities that offer accommodation to visitors. This accommodation is often simple, basic and affordable. It could also affect the charitable provision of holiday accommodation for poor families. The impact of a number of aspects of increased regulation by Welsh Government on the life of churches in Wales was an issue raised by Cytûn when we wrote to congratulate the First Minister - who herself has a church background - on her appointment.

The First Minister had already announced the new Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers in the Government would be. Following all the recent changes, here is the complete list as it stands now:

- Eluned Morgan MS – First Minister, with specific responsibility for international relations, including with Europe, and for possible civil emergencies.
- Huw Irranca-Davies MS - Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs
- Jeremy Miles MS - Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care
 - Sarah Murphy MS - Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing
 - Dawn Bowden MS - Minister for Children and Social Care
- Mark Drakeford MS - Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Welsh Language
- Rebecca Evans MS - Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, Energy and Planning
- Jayne Bryant MS - Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Housing
- Lynne Neagle MS - Cabinet Secretary for Education
 - Vikki Howells MS - Minister for Further and Higher Education
- Ken Skates MS - Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales
- Jane Hutt MS - Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Organizer and Chief Whip (which includes responsibility for the voluntary sector, including faith communities)
 - Jack Sargeant MS - Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership
- Julie James MS - General Counsel and Minister for Delivery

The full responsibilities of each Cabinet Secretary and Minister, and how to contact them, can be found on the [Welsh Government website](#).

Homelessness Sunday – 6th October 2024

Cytûn member organisation Housing Justice organise Homelessness Sunday on the Sunday before World Homeless Day each year, and this year's Homelessness Sunday falls on 6th October. The theme is 'Homelessness ends with Communities' as the role that churches and communities play in ending local homelessness is vital.

[Here](#) you will find a range of resources to use if you are planning a Homelessness Sunday Service either on 6th October or on another date of your choosing. These resources include pre-recorded prayers, hymns, homilies, Junior Church resources, information about homelessness in Wales and more. Please let Housing Justice know what you are planning by emailing Joanna Whitney [here](#).

Calling all Parents – Parenting Week photo competition

‘What makes your family special/unique/different?’

To celebrate Parenting Week 2024, we are launching a photo competition.

All you have to do is take a photo showing us ‘What makes your family/special/unique/different?’ and you will be entered into a prize draw to win a £50 Amazon voucher.

Please supply a short caption or title for the photo.

Please send in your photos to: parentsconnect@childreininwales.org.uk

Entries from any parent/ guardian/carer of a child under 18 years old living in the UK.

Closing date: Friday October 4th

Parenting Week runs between **Monday 21st October - Friday 25th October 2024**. The theme for this year is **For Every Family** and this celebrates and recognises all the different types of families and parents.

Parents Connect Wales, of whose Professional Forum Cytûn is part on behalf of our member churches, is running a photo competition to celebrate Parenting Week. You can find details of the competition in the poster on the left. Entries are invited from a diverse range of parents across the whole of Wales, and Cytûn would encourage parents of faith to enter and perhaps send a photo which shows an aspect of parenting and faith.

The photos will be presented at a [webinar on Wednesday 23rd October](#) at 10.00- 11.30am entitled **Parents’ Voice Across the Four**

Nations, in collaboration with parenting projects from Scotland, England and Northern Ireland.

Cytûn supports Hapus Partnership



Public Health Wales has launched a National Conversation on Mental Wellbeing, and Cytûn has signed up as a Hapus supporter. Hapus is on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [X](#). The [Hapus website](#) includes short blog posts by many different people in

Wales about what helps their mental wellbeing. We are keen to encourage blogposts from people of faith about their positive experiences. If you would be interested in contributing, please email: HI-Programme.Support@wales.nhs.uk indicating that you are part of the Cytûn community.

Safe Families and Home for Good merge

Cytûn member organisations Safe Families and Home for Good have [announced their merger](#), with a bold vision to see families thrive. Home for Good has worked with the church to find nurturing homes for children who cannot stay with their birth families. At the same time, Safe Families has brought belonging around isolated families, providing them with community and support. Together, the two charities believe that by merging, they will see more churches equipped, more volunteers empowered and trained, more local authorities served, more families supported, less children entering care and for those that do, well-matched homes found.

In August, Home for Good and Safe Families enjoyed a presence for the whole week as part of Cytûn's contribution to the National Eisteddfod in Pontypridd. Arfon Jones spoke inspirationally on his own family's great and challenging adoption story at the Friday lunchtime service. Home for Good launched its growing bank of Welsh Language resources. You can find online three stories from Wales, available in both Welsh and English: [Heulwen's story](#) ('Heirs'), [Catherine's story](#) and [Dan's story](#). Home for Good's 38,000 video is available in both a [Welsh language version](#) and a [Welsh accent \(English\) version](#).



Picture: Neil Davies of Home for Good at St Catherine's Church, Pontypridd during the National Eisteddfod.

Could Wales reach Net Zero by 2035?

In 2022, Welsh Government and (under the then co-operation agreement) Plaid Cymru established a [Net Zero 2035 Challenge Group](#), to see whether the current target for Wales to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050 could be brought forward to 2035, in a way that was just and fair for all. On September 16, the Group published a [series of reports](#) covering Education, Jobs and Work; Food; Heating and building homes and workplaces; Energy; and Connecting people (digitally and in terms of transport).

The conclusion of the reports is that such a swift transition would be challenging, but is possible given the political will, and could provide many benefits for society beyond the environmental imperative of slowing climate change. Cytûn has contributed to discussions with the Challenge Group as part of its membership of Climate Cymru, and hope that these reports will help to inform the actions of the current Welsh Government and manifestos for the Senedd election in 2026, and challenge wider society – including churches – to continue to take action in the buildings and communities where they have a presence.

Preparing the Warm Welcome Campaign for this winter

Many churches in Wales hosted Warm Hubs (under various names) in recent winters. With fuel prices rising again, and the winter fuel allowance for many pensioners abolished, many member churches will wish to host such spaces again. Cytûn encourages churches who wish to do so to register with the [Warm Welcome campaign](#), which seeks to co-ordinate hubs across communities. The [online launch](#) of the campaign for 2024-25 will be held at **6.30-7.30pm on Thursday 3rd October** – please register using the link above. The webinar will include the launch of the 100% Pledge, aiming to ensure everyone has access to a Warm Welcome Space within a 30-minute walk of their home.



Christian Aid encourages breaking bread with your MP

As newly elected MPs settle in to their seats, Cytûn member Christian Aid is calling on people to forge relations and start conversations with their UK Parliamentary representatives. By inviting a newly elected MP to break bread you could spark a connection which could last for years.

Jesus frequently shared bread with those he encountered and befriended – and as the central act of the Last Supper, the breaking of bread is imbued with special significance for Christians. It's a symbol of welcome, hospitality, care, openness, and peace. Even the humblest of meals - or a cup of tea and biscuits - can help make and build relationships.

To help churches, Christian Aid has put together a guide to [Breaking Bread](#) with an MP (launched also in Welsh at the National Eisteddfod at the beginning of August). In addition, there are resources which explain what Christian Aid is asking of the UK Government - from putting peace first, and funding climate justice, to cancelling the debts of low income countries. See these [crib sheets](#) (available in Welsh too). There is also the '[Act on Poverty](#)' course ('Taclu Tlodi', available in Welsh) created with UK partners to help Christians gain a deeper understanding of poverty and get equipped to talk to political representatives about it.

Visit the [Christian Aid website](#) and sign up to get the resource in English or Welsh.

Open Call for Artists: competition and exhibition

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales invite artists to submit artworks that explore faith and divinity while provoking the viewer to think differently about how these have traditionally been portrayed.

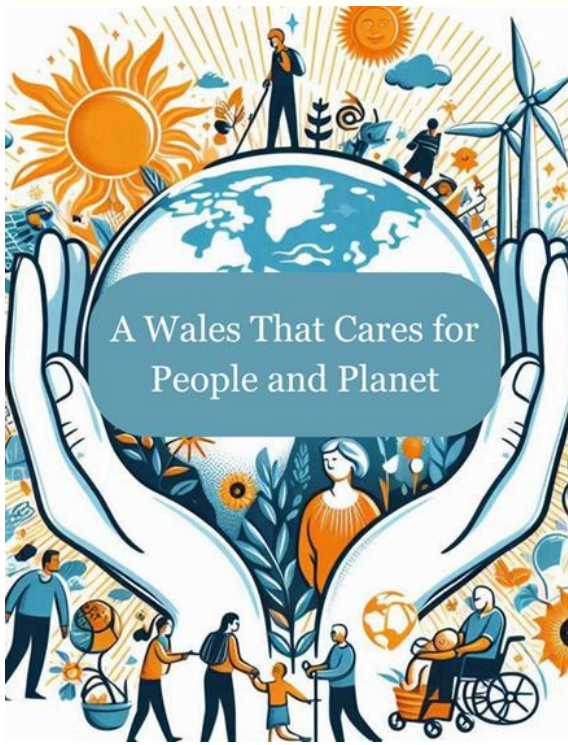
Using the title *Cloud of Witnesses*, and working ecumenically and across faiths, St John's Waterloo and the Catholic Bishops' Conference, advised by Art + Christianity, are seeking to raise awareness, understanding and mutual respect of our collective witness in the UK. They aspire to create a richer dialogue about how we see and understand faith and divinity and the value of creativity based on different faiths, cultures and experiences.

Artworks must be two dimensional and either representative of, or alluding to, persons or deities from any religion and from any era. A panel of judges, chaired by Bishop of Wrexham, Peter Brignall and advised by multifaith and art experts, will award three prizes and select artworks for an exhibition at St John's Waterloo on 4th March – 27th April 2025. All work will be judged on the integrity to the exhibition theme, the innovation of style and technique as well as the creative skill in responding to an inter-faith or racial justice narrative.

Photos of artwork should be submitted by 11:59pm on Monday 11th November 2024. There will be three small cash prizes awarded: 1st prize of £1,000, 2nd prize of £750 and 3rd prize of £500. For more information and criteria, click here: [Cloud of Witnesses: Open Call | St Johns Waterloo](#)

Cloud of Witnesses is funded and supported by Art + Christianity; God who Speaks; St John's Church, Waterloo; The Catholic Bishops' Conference; and Culham St Gabriel Trust. For more information, please contact Fleur Dorrell – fleur.dorrell@cbcew.org.uk

Guest column: A globally responsible Wales in a fractured world



For the first time in 25 years, extreme poverty and inequality are on the rise. Hardship and hunger are a daily reality for many people worldwide, including here in Wales, where over a fifth of the population are living in poverty. At [current rates](#), it will take 230 years to end global poverty, but we could have our first trillionaire in just a decade. Meanwhile global temperatures are rising, with climate change wreaking havoc around the world, destroying lives and livelihoods.

Yet Oxfam Cymru and the Institute of Welsh Affairs' new report, [A Wales That Cares for People and Planet](#), looks at how a greener, more equal, peaceful world is possible. One where the air is clean, because renewable energy is powering our communities the world over. One where lives are no longer routinely upended by violence, crop failures or floods, because when disasters strike everyone has access to protection and a right to safety. One where international laws are not just words on statute books, but protect all people from oppression. And where no one is forced to choose between heating

or eating, because everyone has a right to live without poverty.

In Wales, global challenges manifest locally in distinct ways. Coastal erosion endangers our beautiful landscapes and communities. Job insecurity and low wages plague our economy, particularly in post-industrial areas. Public services are stretched thin, unable to adequately support those in need. Meanwhile, the undervaluation of paid and unpaid care work, which is often carried out by women, provides a huge invisible subsidy to the Welsh economy while carers themselves are pushed to the brink, both financially and emotionally.

These challenges are not isolated; they are deeply interwoven, demanding a comprehensive and coordinated response. The report argues that the Welsh Government must recognise that national success isn't just about money, but about thriving communities and a healthy environment. It argues that it's the perfect opportunity for our new First Minister to pursue new ways of growing our economy that value caring for each other, protecting our climate, and making sure everyone has an equal shot at a good life.

The report argues that, as being a globally responsible nation is one of the goals of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, Wales has the opportunity to be at the forefront of this drive to reimagine our societies and economies, emerging as a beacon of hope for others to follow while demonstrating how a small nation can tackle big challenges.

Rebecca Lozza | Oxfam Media and Communications Adviser, Scotland and Wales

Church action on banking and fossil fuels

Cytûn's sister organisation, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), is as part of advocacy for the Season of Creation, supporting and helping to promote an appeal to the major UK banks involved in fossil fuel financing, together with Just Money Movement, Make My Money Matter, Christian Climate Action and Bank Better. This builds on the ongoing work of CTBI's Environmental Issues Network (of which Cytûn and several member churches are members) and a [webinar for churches on Banking and the Climate Crisis](#), held earlier in the year. It is supported by the World Council of Churches as part of their global engagement with issues of climate justice.

You can access information about the statement and how to sign up on behalf of an organisation at: <https://justmoney.org.uk/church-action-on-banking/>. Signatures can be added until October 11.

IMPORTANT: Government survey of activities for children in Wales



The Welsh Government has launched a survey for providers of childcare, play and activities for children under 12 who are not registered with the Care Inspectorate for Wales as a Childminder or Daycare provider under the [Child Minding and Daycare \(Wales\) Regulations 2010](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/child-minding-and-daycare-wales-regulations-2010). This would include Sunday Schools, after school clubs, holiday clubs and almost all the children's activities of every religious denomination in Wales.

Cytûn is part of the Welsh Government's Advisory Group on this matter, and is aware that there is considerable pressure on the Government to insist on registration and tighter regulation of such services, including those provided by churches. It is therefore important that churches respond to show the scope, importance and safety of our activities for children under 12 years of age.

If you are responsible for a local Christian activity for children, we would encourage you to take part in the survey: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/EANZAY/> and to draw the attention of others within your local church who are also responsible. The survey will end on 8 November.

Picture: Welsh Government

War in Israel and Gaza – a year on



As the Middle East approaches the grim milestone of a year since the start of the most recent conflict, Christian Aid is asking supporters to give, act and pray – with the relaunch of its emergency appeal, an online vigil and monthly prayer meetings.

Christian Aid invites signatures on its [petition](#) to the UK Government calling for a just peace, and also [contacting MPs](#), urging them to back a ceasefire. On the first anniversary of the current conflict, Christian Aid is holding an online Gathered Vigil at **8am on Monday, October 7**. Register via the [website](#).

Head of Christian Aid Wales Mari McNeill explained: “Our supporters have been amazing as always, raising more than £2.2 million so far which has helped us reach more than 800,000 people in Gaza through our local partners with cash to displaced families; medical support through mobile health clinics; basic needs like food, water, blankets and mattresses and shelter, including setting up an accessible Internally Displaced Person’s camp for people with disabilities.

“Christian Aid has also been working with an Israeli civil society organisation based in Tel Aviv, supporting them to provide safe spaces to gather following the trauma of October 7 last year. But the need is vast and there is more we can do which is why we are relaunching our [Gaza Appeal](#). With the support and prayers of our supporters, Christian Aid can and will reach more people with the assistance they need.”

CONTACTING CYTÛN’S 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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