

CYTŪN POLICY BULLETIN

JUNE - JULY 2024



PROMOTING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP IN THE SCHOOLS CURRICULUM IN WALES

Primary schools in Wales are being invited to join a new scheme which aims to help pupils develop their global citizenship. Christian Aid and the Church in Wales have come together to launch [Global Neighbours Cymru](#).



The accreditation scheme, which is open to all primary schools in Wales, has three levels - Bronze, Silver and Gold - and criteria that encourage learners to develop their reflection and actions.

Rebecca Elliott, Youth and Education Officer for Christian Aid Wales, said that the plan promotes the organisation's values of dignity, justice, equality and love for all, as well as the

Christian belief that everyone should have the opportunity to experience life in all its fullness. She explained: "We believe that children have an innate sense of social justice and a strong concern for the Earth, our common home. Global Neighbours encourages pupils to explore how decisions and actions affect them and wider society."

As well as learning about issues such as climate justice and what it means to be anti-racist, learners will take part in actions in their school and in the local community which will contribute to a better world near and far. An important part of the project is having the opportunity to invite their community, including community leaders, to see their work in order to be able to share their concerns and aspirations.

The resource that the schools will use includes a foreword by the Archbishop of Wales, the Most Reverend Andy John, in which he says: "As global injustices increase year on year, as the gap between rich and poor becomes ever wider, and the threats to the beauty, even existence, of our natural world grow, we are duty bound to engage the children and young people in our schools in



discussion around the issues that challenge so many, as well as model behaviours that show them they too can be agents of change."

Rebecca added: "The aim is to empower young people to be informed, ethical citizens who play their part in challenging global injustice. We hope that they will become more aware of their role and their voice in their

community, Wales and the wider world We know that schools in Wales are already doing great work in global citizenship and we are excited to see what will happen as they embark on their Global Neighbours journey wide."

For more information and to register, visit <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/schools/global-neighbours-cymru-scheme> .

Pictures: pupils at Wick and Marcross Church in Wales School, Vale of Glamorgan (Christian Aid)

SUPPORTING TRANS AND NON-BINARY CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS

For some time, Cytûn, along with other religious representatives, has been meeting with Welsh Government officials who are developing guidance for schools about supporting transgender and non-binary children. Cytûn's contribution throughout has been to convey the wide range of opinion that exists among Cytûn member churches on these issues. Representatives of the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church have met with Government separately on behalf of their schools.

It was expected that a public consultation would be launched after Easter, but on May 1 the Welsh Government [announced](#) that it had decided to postpone that consultation in order to take into account the findings of the [Cass Review](#) of gender identity services for children and young people which had been published on April 10. That report was commissioned by NHS England, but young people in Wales are referred to services in England, so the conclusions will apply to Wales as well. On May 1, there was a [debate](#) in the Senedd organised by the Welsh Conservatives, and at the end of the debate, the following amended motion was unanimously agreed:

To propose that the Senedd:

- 1. Notes the publication of the Cass review.*
- 2. Notes that NHS Wales commissions gender identity services for children and young people 17 and under from NHS England.*
- 3. Notes that NHS England has concluded there is not enough evidence to support the safety or clinical effectiveness of puberty suppressing hormones for the treatment of gender dysphoria in children and young people at this time.*
- 4. Notes the Welsh Government will continue to develop the transgender guidance for schools taking account of the Cass review and stakeholder views.*

Some Cytûn member churches have published statements about transgender and non-binary identity. The latest is a [Pastoral Reflection on Gender](#) by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, published on April 24. Previous statements include the [Epistle of the Society of Friends \(Quakers\) Annual Meeting](#) about welcoming transgender and non-binary people in 2021 and [Young, trans, non-binary and Methodist](#) (2023), amongst others.

Cytûn will continue to play its part in the discussions with the Welsh Government on this sensitive issue by representing the views of all our member churches.

Strengthening Civil Society Impact on Westminster in the Years Ahead

Over 90 leading civil society experts from across the UK – including three representing Cytûn and its member churches and Bishop Rowan Williams as a speaker - gathered in Cardiff Bay on 21-22 March to identify key shared priorities in the run up to the General Election and beyond. Funded



by the Legal Education Foundation, this high-profile event was hosted by WCVA and the Wales Governance Centre, in partnership with the UK Civil Society Alliance (CSA) and the Human Rights Consortia in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Cytûn is a member of both the CSA and WCVA.

In a keynote address, the [Secretary of State for Wales, David TC Davies](#) MP (pictured), spoke of the valued role civil society has to play in UK policy making and in connecting communities to decision makers. Former First Minister for Wales Mark Drakeford MS shared his six suggestions for influencing success: “Be authentic -

Be authoritative - Be local - Be there (where decisions are made) - Be vocal - Be bold.”

Academics, campaigners and charity leaders from Scotland, Northern Ireland, England and Wales provided their insight into the challenges and opportunities of bringing community voices from each of the four parts of the UK to debate developments at Westminster. Topics included the operation of devolution, how charities engage with devolved and central decision makers, and debates and developments around constitutional reform.

Picture: Civil Society Alliance

DEVOLUTION'S 25TH ANIVERSARY AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

May 7 was the exact 25th anniversary of the announcement of the results of the first election to the National Assembly for Wales (as it was at the time). The occasion was marked in the Siambwr by a [statement](#) from the First Minister, Vaughan Gething MS, with all four of the parties currently represented in the Senedd taking part in the subsequent discussion.



Mr Gething said, *Far from the talking shop that many feared, devolution has delivered progressive politics and helped to nurture a confident, modern and outward-looking Wales. Whatever side people were on in the referendum, and whatever your views on the policies of the Welsh Government, today devolution belongs to all the parties in this Chamber and to all the people of Wales.* The leaders of the opposition parties, Andrew RT Davies MS (Welsh Conservatives) and Rhun ap Iorwerth MS (Plaid Cymru) were keen to point out the distinction between the Welsh Government and the Senedd, and to highlight what they saw as failures over the quarter century being those of the Government rather than devolution as such. Although the discussion continued for over an hour, it was noticeable - as the photo above shows - that there were a number of empty seats in the Siambwr during the discussion.

But the following, all members took part in the final vote on the [Senedd Cymru \(Members and Elections\) Bill](#), which was passed by the required majority of over two-thirds. This Bill will increase the size of the Senedd from 60 to 96 members following the next election in May 2026. It also changes the voting system. Instead of voting for an individual to represent their constituency and also for a party list for their region, each voter will have only one vote, and that for a party list only for a constituency that will be more than twice the size of the current constituency. There was considerable criticism of this change within the Senedd and beyond, with the Bishop of St Asaph, the Rt Revd Gregory Cameron, saying in his [St David's Day ad clerum](#) this year, *The party, not the voters, gets to choose who represents us. This is bad news, because it severs the link between local representation and individual Senedd members' performance. An individual who may be loathed by the electorate can still be elected because they are loved by the party. It promotes "company men" (and women) over locally accountable politicians.* However, none of Cytûn's churches have formally objected to the new system, which will now be introduced.

A further bill about the electoral system, the [Senedd Cymru \(Electoral Candidate Lists\) Bill](#), is being debated by the Senedd. The intention is to ensure equal representation between women and those who are "not a woman" (to use the terminology of the Bill). The [Llywydd of the Senedd](#) and the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) have stated that they do not believe that this change is within the Senedd's powers, and therefore even if passed it is not certain that it would become law and be implemented. No member church of Cytûn has expressed an opinion about this Bill so far.

LACK OF STATISTICS ABOUT RELIGION AND BELIEF IN WALES

The Third Sector Statistics User Panel for Wales (TSSUP) was established by the Welsh Government in 2016 to draw together representatives of the third sector to help understand their needs for statistical information, inform them about developments in statistical information available about Wales and to consult with them about developments in relation to statistics. [Information about the Panel and the Terms of Reference are available on the Welsh Government website](#). Meetings take place twice a year and are chaired by the Welsh Government's Chief Statistician, Stephanie Howarth.

Carys Moseley represents Cytûn on the group. At a recent meeting, Carys found herself concerned about the lack of sufficiently detailed statistics about the background of refugees in Wales, including Christian refugees who might be attending our churches. The Equality and Human Rights Commission in its report [Is Wales Fairer](#) expressed concern that there is a lack of statistics about religious and belief affiliation in Wales. Without evidence about the numbers of people from a specific background, unfounded myths can be peddled (e.g. that all asylum seekers are Muslim), meaning that people's religious and cultural needs are not responded to appropriately. The 2021 Census statistics about religion are already out of date, and Cytûn is aware that SACs (Statutory Advisory Councils that advise local authorities about Religion, Values and Ethics and collective worship in their schools) are finding it difficult to find the information they need to fulfil their legal duty to ensure a proportionate representation of the religions in their area.

There is a short questionnaire on the Stats Cymru website which gives an opportunity to submit feedback about issues like this, and Carys wants to encourage readers to submit comments - [Stats Wales user feedback survey \(smartsurvey.co.uk\)](#) The questionnaire asks for comment on specific statistics on the website, but if you have not accessed the website for any other reason you can refer to religion - the few statistics about religion that are available can be accessed here: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Religion/annual-population-survey>

GENERAL ELECTION 2024



Churches and Christian organizations across the United Kingdom are preparing to ensure there are Christian voices in the General Election campaign, which will take place - almost certainly - before the end of 2024.

Bilingual material adapted for Wales will be available on the Cytûn website - <https://www.cytun.co.uk/en/election-2024/> (and there will also be a link from the front page of the website). Already there is information about the new rules around needing identification documents in order to vote, and a detailed guide to arranging a meeting with the

candidates in your constituency - whether in a traditional public meeting, online, or in a number of more interactive formats. Local Cytûn groups and other groups of churches are encouraged to work together to organize these meetings, which can contribute a great deal to a balanced discussion during the campaign.

It is intended to add briefing papers about policy areas from some of our member churches, and also links to the websites of other churches and organisations which may be useful, so be sure to return regularly to the website to see what is new there. Our colleagues at Churches Together in Britain and Ireland organize a similar website, with material from all over the United Kingdom (in English only) - <https://www.churcheselection.org.uk/>

Among the member churches of Cytûn who have already started publishing material for the election are the [Society of Friends](#) and the [joint public issues team of the Methodist Church, the United Reformed Church and the Baptist Union of Great Britain](#). Some of our member denominations and organisations are members of wider coalitions such as [Let's End Poverty](#), campaigning to raise awareness of poverty at home and abroad during the election period.

POLICY BRIEFS

Faith and work

The [Industrial Christian Fellowship](#) is holding a meeting to explore issues of faith and work on **Tuesday 2nd July** at Bethel Baptist Church, Penlline Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff, CF14 2AA. Refreshments will be served from 7pm, with a presentation and discussion from 7.30-9.30.

The meeting will introduce a set of videos which pull together the themes of books by Phil Jump (Team Leader for the North West Baptist Association) *Love:Work* and *Love@Work* and a set of group studies by John Weaver (former Principal of South Wales Baptist College, Cardiff) called *Faith, Work and Christian Discipleship*. The videos will be available for use by churches and other organisations. A one minute taster can be found on [You Tube](#), and all are welcome to attend.

Holocaust Memorial Day 2025

2025 will mark the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust has launched the theme for Holocaust Memorial Day 2025 - 'For a Better Future.' Read the theme vision [here](#) to learn about the different ways the theme can be incorporated into your HMD 2025 activities.

To mark this significant anniversary, the HMD Trust has launched a nationwide arts and education project – *80 Candles for 80 Years* – to create a digital exhibition of 80 bespoke candleholders that will be designed and created by communities across the UK that showcase the life of an individual or a community persecuted by the Nazis. They want communities from across the UK to apply, whether you're a school or university, a faith community or a workplace, a local authority or a museum, a sporting community or a gallery, the project is open to anyone.

Click [here](#) to find out more about the project and how you can get involved.

Oppression of Christians around the world

A recent meeting of Cytûn's Racial Justice Network Cytûn heard from two of its members horrifying accounts of the persecution of Christians in Pakistan last year. As a result, the Network wrote to the UK Foreign Secretary, Lord Cameron, and received a response which read (in part): *The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) was appalled to see the attacks against the Christian community in Jaranwala, Punjab. The UK stands in absolute solidarity with Christians, and other marginalised religious groups, in Pakistan. We echo former Prime Minister Kakar's call for a high-level investigation into the attack and welcome the caretaker government's commitment to financially reimburse victims and repair damaged churches. The FCDO Minister responsible for South Asia, Lord Ahmad, publicly condemned the violence and called for those responsible to be brought to justice. This shocking violence has once again highlighted the ongoing persecution faced by religious minorities in Pakistan. We would like to reassure you that we continue to engage at a senior level on this serious issue. ... The British High Commission in Islamabad continues to engage with Pakistan on the crucial need to ensure the safety of the Christian community.*

Open Doors has published its 2024 World Watch List: Top 50 handbook in Welsh and English. The Welsh version can be ordered at [Rhestr Gwyllo'r Byd Cymraeg 2024: y 50 uchaf - Open Doors UK & Ireland](#) and the English version at <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/products/product/wwl24-top-50> or (in both cases) from Jim Stewart (jims@opendoorsuk.org).

Medical Examiners

Following the unexpected delay in introducing Medical Examiners as part of the death registration process in Wales, as reported in the Policy Bulletin Easter 2024, Welsh Government has now laid the necessary [regulations](#) before the Senedd, and the new statutory procedure will come into force on 9 September 2024. This means that there will be a statutory independent review of every death in Wales from that date; in the mean time the current non-statutory scheme will continue.

CYTŪN'S NEW GENERAL SECRETARY



Cynan Llwyd has been appointed General Secretary of Cytûn. He will start work on 1st July. He succeeds the Revd Siôn Brynach, who is now a full-time priest with the Church in Wales.

Cynan is a native of Aberystwyth but now lives in Grangetown in Cardiff. He is a deacon at Ebeneser Welsh Independent Church, Cardiff, and one of the leaders of Angor Grangetown, one of the pioneering initiatives of the Welsh Independent Union. Following academic studies, he worked as a pastoral assistant at St Michael's and St Mary's churches, Aberystwyth before being appointed Children and Young People's Officer for Welsh Literature. He worked for Christian Aid as a Regional Coordinator and then Acting Head and is currently the Head of Tearfund Cymru. Gwasg Y Lolfa has published two of his novels for young people and his third novel is about to be published by Llyfrau Broga.

Cynan said, "It is an honour and a privilege to be appointed General Secretary of Cytûn. I look forward to working together with the churches in Wales as we seek God's will together, for us to "be one as we are one" (John 17:22). It is an exciting and challenging time for us as churches and I pray that we will grow closer to God and to each other over the period to come."

CYTŪN AT THIS SUMMER'S EVENTS

A meeting will be held at St Catherine's Church in Pontypridd on **Monday evening, June 10th at 7.00** in order to finalise arrangements for the Cytûn tent and the churches' witness at this year's **National Eisteddfod in Ynysangharad Park, Pontypridd, between 3-10 August**. This year it will not be possible to have a large stand on the Eisteddfod field, which is much smaller than usual. Therefore we will also be using St Catherine's church in the town centre as an additional venue to offer refreshments, worship and events, together with a number of exhibitions and stalls. We will need around 200 volunteers for the week to prepare tea and coffee and welcome visitors. A warm welcome to all.



Cytûn and its member churches and organizations will have a pavilion as usual at the **Urdd National Eisteddfod in Meifod (May 27 - June 1)** and at the **Royal Welsh Agricultural Show in Llanelwedd (July 22-25)**, with activities for all ages, refreshments and an opportunity to learn more about the work of Cytûn and our members. We look forward to welcoming you there!

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Hapus i gyfathrebu yn Gymraeg ac yn Saesneg.

Happy to communicate in Welsh and English



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