



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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# Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales: progress report - October 2023

Progress report submitted to the First Minister, Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution, and the Leader of Plaid Cymru.

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# Background

The Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales has been established by the Welsh Government with two broad objectives:

1. To consider and develop options for fundamental reform of the constitutional structures of the United Kingdom, in which Wales remains an integral part.
2. To consider and develop all progressive principal options to strengthen Welsh democracy and deliver improvements for the people of Wales.

The Commission membership comprises:

- Co-chair: Laura McAllister
- Co-chair: Rowan Williams
- Anwen Elias
- Miguela Gonzalez
- Michael Marmot
- Lauren McEvatt
- Albert Owen
- Philip Rycroft
- Shavanah Taj
- Kirsty Williams
- Leanne Wood

The Commission is supported by an Expert Panel, which provides advice on a range of specialisms:

- Chair: Gareth Williams, former Special Adviser to the Welsh Government on European Transition
- Jess Blair, Director of the Electoral Reform Society Cymru
- Professor Emyr Lewis, Head of Department of Law and Criminology at Aberystwyth University

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- Auriol Miller, Director of the Institute of Welsh Affairs
- Akash Paun, Head of Institute for Government's devolution programme
- Dr Hugh Rawlings, former Director of Constitutional affairs at the Welsh Government
- Professor Mairi Spowage, Professor of Practice and Director of the Fraser of Allander Institute
- Professor Diana Stirbu, Professor of Policy and Governance at London Met University

## Progress

Since the previous progress report, the Commission has held three evidence sessions, and a roundtable on federalism. Evidence sessions have also been held by the Commission's Subgroups on Broadcasting and Energy.

In evidence meetings, the Commission has received oral evidence from:

- Rt Hon Mark Drakeford MS, First Minister of Wales
- Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations
- Dyfed Alsop, Chief Executive, Welsh Revenue Authority
- Gwern Gwynfil, Chief Executive, Yes Cymru
- Professor David Phinnemore, Queen's University Belfast
- Dr Lisa Claire Whitten, Queen's University Belfast

The contributors to the roundtable on federalism were:

- Professor Erin Delaney, Distinguished Visiting Professor at UCL Faculty of Laws
- David Melding CBE
- Professor Nicola McEwen, Professor of Public Policy, University of Glasgow.

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The Subgroup on Broadcasting has received evidence from the Co-chairs of the Welsh Government's Broadcasting Expert Panel, Mel Doel and Professor Elin Haf Gruffydd Jones.

The Subgroup on Energy has considered written evidence from the Institute for Welsh Affairs and has sought evidence from the Crown Estate.

## Engagement

The Commission's programme of engagement events to hear people's views was completed on 1 October.

Commissioners met members of the Welsh Youth Parliament and twice met representatives of the Wales Federation of Young Farmers Clubs (Wales YFC), during which they discussed the work of the Commission and how Youth MSs and Wales YFC could encourage their networks to share their views with the Commission.

Commissioners and representatives also met Urdd Youth Theatre members to hear their views and partnered with Aberystwyth University to engage students and the wider public at the Eisteddfod Genedlaethol.

The summer roadshow continued throughout the summer and into September to visit communities across Wales.

(Events were held in Aberdare, Abergavenny, Aberystwyth, Bangor, Barry, Blackwood, Boduan, Butetown, Bridgend, Builth Wells, Carmarthen, Conwy, Cwmbran, Ebbw Vale, Gabalfa, Haverfordwest, Holyhead, Merthyr Tydfil, Mold, Neath, Newport, Newtown, Prestatyn, Swansea and Wrexham.)

In total, the engagement roadshow visited 25 locations across the 22 local authority areas, engaging over 3,500 people. Over 2,200 people completed a

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short survey. Almost 600 people provided an email address for further information and subsequently received links to the engagement platform.

The engagement platform, UseYourVoice, received over 15,000 visits since it was launched in spring 2023. Over 1,000 people completed the online survey, sharing their views on the future of Wales. UseYourVoice contains short explainers and blogs on a range of constitutional and political matters which will remain accessible to offer useful information to citizens.

Survey responses are being analysed and views will be included in the final report.

## Reporting

The Commission expects to complete its work by the end of December 2023, in line with the broad objectives set by the Welsh Government. The Commission's final report, including recommendations, will be launched in the Senedd on 18 January 2024.

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