

Welsh Parliament
Visit and Learn

Your Senedd is changing:

What you need to know



[senedd.wales](https://www.senedd.wales)

The Welsh Parliament is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people.

Commonly known as the Senedd, it makes laws for Wales, agrees Welsh taxes and holds the Welsh Government to account.

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Your Senedd is changing

The election on 7 May 2026 will mark the biggest change to the Senedd for 25 years.

This booklet explores some of the changes in more detail, but here are the five key things you need to know:



96 Members: From the election in May 2026, the Senedd will have 96 Members, representing communities across Wales.



New voting system: Everyone aged 16 and over will now have one vote, to choose a political party or independent candidate.



New constituencies: Wales will be split into 16 new constituencies. Each constituency will elect six Members.



New rules: Anyone standing for election must live in Wales.



More frequent elections: Senedd elections will take place every four years.

Why is this important?

Wales has its own parliament – the Senedd. So it is the Senedd, not the UK Parliament, which passes laws about all sorts of things which affect your daily life in Wales.

Welsh laws take account of circumstances in Wales, which might be different to other parts of the UK.

So the Members of the Senedd you elect in May 2026 have the power to make decisions that impact everyone in Wales.



• Scan me •

You can find out more about what the Senedd is responsible for, and what is reserved by the UK Parliament and UK Government, by visiting [senedd.wales/powers](https://www.senedd.wales/powers).

The Senedd can make laws in areas including:



hospitals and GPs



schools



roads



rail transport



farming and animals



the environment



the Welsh language

▼ Did you know?

Wales was the first country in the UK to introduce charges for carrier bags 2011.

Other laws passed by the Senedd which only apply to Wales include the 20mph speed limit, and presumed consent for organ donation.

How many Members will the Senedd have?

From May 2026, the Senedd will have 96 Members.

Since it was set up 25 years ago, the Senedd has had the same number of Members although its powers have grown significantly.

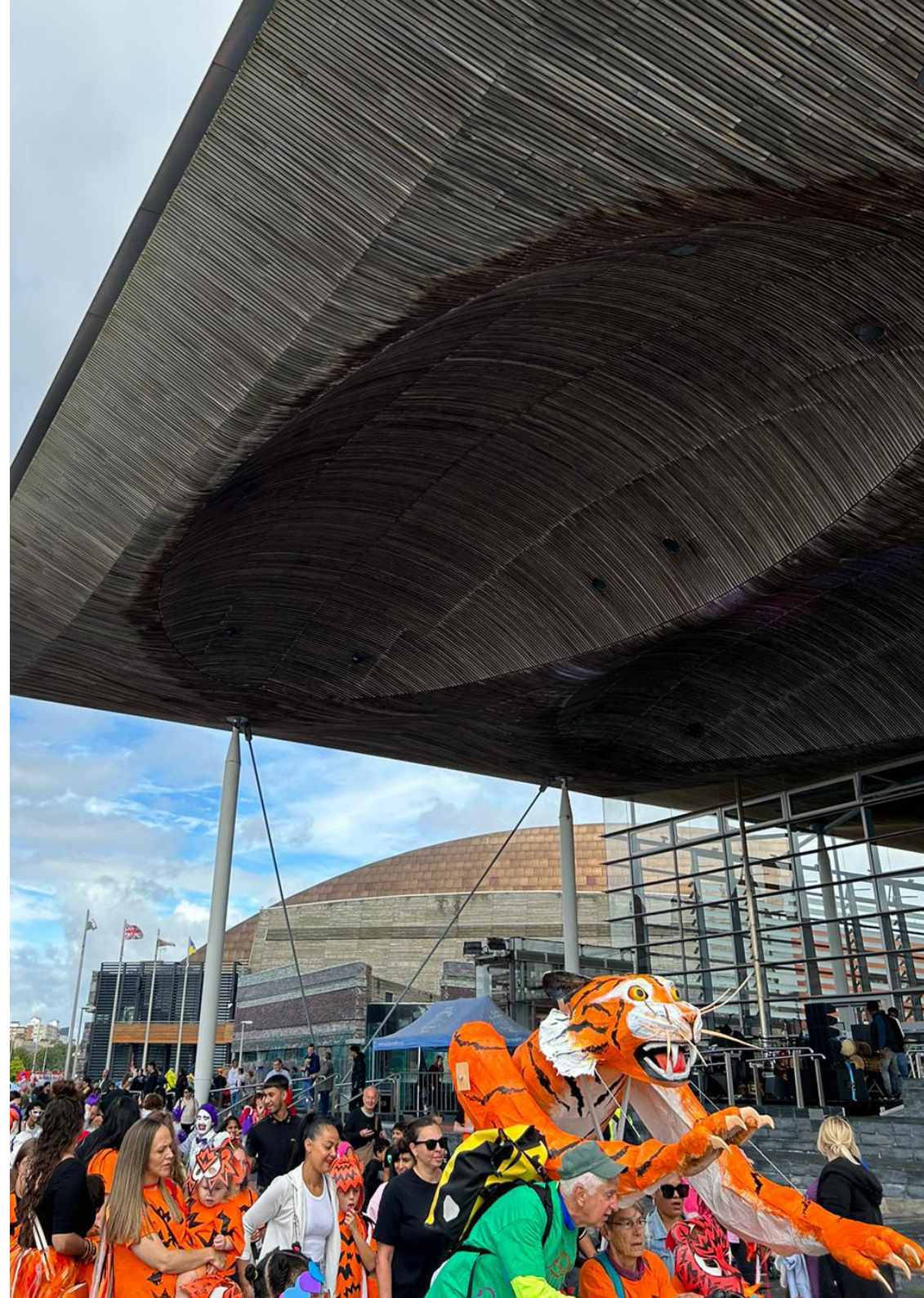
It can now make laws and raise taxes – decisions which affect the lives of every single person in Wales.

Having more Members will give the Senedd greater ability to look at and challenge the Welsh Government's plans and spending on important issues like **hospitals**, **schools**, and **transport**.

This will give your community a stronger voice in these decisions.

Having 96 Members will also bring the Senedd in line with other countries of a similar size to Wales, like Scotland which has 129 Members and Northern Ireland which has 90.

This will mean stronger representation for you, your family and your community.



How is the voting system changing?

If you're aged 16 or over and live in Wales, you can vote in the 2026 Senedd Election.

In 2026, Wales will be the first parliament in Great Britain to use proportional representation to elect all its Members. Under this system the number of seats a party or independent candidate wins will more closely reflect their share of the vote.

So almost every vote from every part of Wales will contribute towards the final make-up of the Senedd. This will result in a Senedd that better represents voters' views and choices across Wales.

Seats are allocated based on the share of votes each party or independent candidate gets.

The new system means that your vote is more likely to help decide the overall result, because seats in the Senedd will be allocated based on the total share of the vote.

The change will make your vote stronger than ever.

How it works



Wales will be divided into 16 areas for the 2026 election, called **constituencies**.



Each constituency will have **six 'seats' in the Senedd**, which means six Members will be elected in each one.



Political parties will prepare a list of up to **eight candidates** for each constituency. Independent candidates can also stand for election.



On election day you will be given a ballot paper and will have **one vote** for the party or independent candidate you want to represent you in the Senedd.



Your ballot paper will show the **full list of candidates** in your constituency, so you can see who is standing for each party.



If a party wins enough votes, they will win one or more seats in the Senedd. So, if a party wins three seats in a constituency, the top three people on their list will be elected to those seats



If an independent candidate wins enough votes, they will also win a seat in the Senedd.

How are constituencies changing?

At the 2026 Senedd election, Wales will be divided into 16 constituencies.

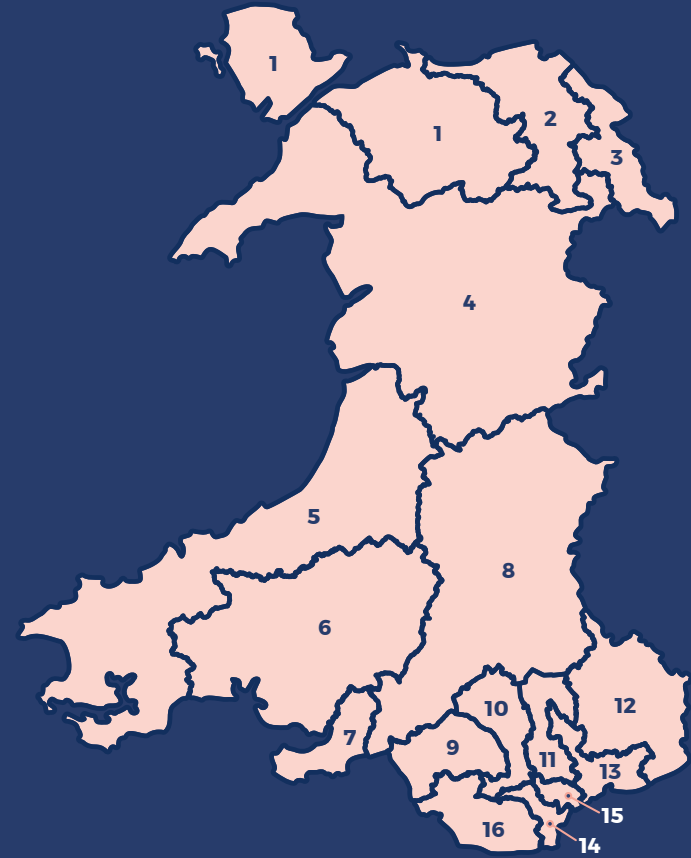
Each of the new constituencies will have six Members, making a total of 96 Members elected to the Senedd.

How were the new constituencies created?

The Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru created the new areas by pairing the 32 UK Parliament constituencies into 16 new Senedd constituencies. They also considered factors including:

- Existing local government boundaries
- Road and transport links
- Geographical features such as rivers and mountains
- Local ties (including use of the Welsh language)

The Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru ran two public consultations on the plans, and made changes based on the feedback they received. The final boundaries were published in March 2025.



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|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Bangor Conwy Môn | 10. Pontypridd Cynon Merthyr |
| 2. Clwyd | 11. Blaenau Gwent Caerffili Rhymni |
| 3. Fflint Wrecsam | 12. Sir Fynwy Torfaen |
| 4. Gwynedd Maldwyn | 13. Casnewydd Islwyn |
| 5. Ceredigion Penfro | 14. Caerdydd Penarth |
| 6. Sir Gaerfyrddin | 15. Caerdydd Ffynnon Taf |
| 7. Gŵyr Abertawe | 16. Pen-y-bont Bro Morgannwg |
| 8. Brycheiniog Tawe Nedd | |
| 9. Afan Ogwr Rhondda | |

Contact us

Do you have any questions, or want to find out more about our work?

Get in touch using the details below, or visit us in Cardiff Bay to speak to someone in person.



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