

# Shaping Wales:

## Making Laws for 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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# Making laws for Wales

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**Members of the Senedd discuss, check and make laws that shape life in Wales.**

Laws are rules that make sure you receive equal treatment and respect. They protect those who need it and provide ways of settling disagreements when they happen.

The UK Parliament makes laws that apply to all parts of the UK. However, since 2007, the Senedd has made laws in many areas that only apply to Wales.



**You can find out more about the laws we make in Wales by visiting [senedd.wales/legislation](https://senedd.wales/legislation)**

# Representing your interests

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The Members who represent you in the Senedd have the power to make decisions that affect everyone in Wales.

The Senedd makes laws for Wales. Welsh laws look at the situation in Wales, which might be different to other parts of the UK.

However, some areas are still the responsibility of the UK Parliament and UK Government.



You can find out more by visiting [senedd.wales/powers](https://senedd.wales/powers)

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## Wales can make its own laws and policies about:



Agriculture and Food



Education



Communities and Housing



Health and Care Services



Welsh Language



Environment

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## The UK Government and UK Parliament make laws and policies about:



Air Transport



Nuclear Energy



Outer Space



Foreign Affairs



Defence



Policing

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## Devolution

Devolution means the power to make laws and policies for Wales has been transferred from the UK Government and UK Parliament to the Welsh Government and the Welsh Parliament – the Senedd.

# Where does a new law come from?

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Every new law starts as an idea to change how something works or to make something better.

Laws are the rules that help make sure everyone receives equal treatment and respect. They offer protection to those who need it and provide ways of resolving disagreements when they happen.

When a law starts its journey, it's called a Bill – it's a draft version of the law.

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A Bill can be put forward by:



## **The Welsh Government**

The Welsh Government can suggest new laws to support their decisions, changing the way some things work in Wales.



## **The Senedd Commission**

The Senedd Commission can suggest its own ideas for laws that changes how the Senedd does its work.



## **A Senedd committee**

A committee can suggest new laws on the subjects they look at.



## **A Member of the Senedd**

Members of the Senedd, who are not part of the Welsh Government, can suggest new laws by entering their idea into a ballot.

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## **What is the Senedd Commission?**

The corporate body for the Senedd is known as the Senedd Commission.

The Senedd Commission consists of the Presiding Officer, and four other Members nominated by the main political parties.

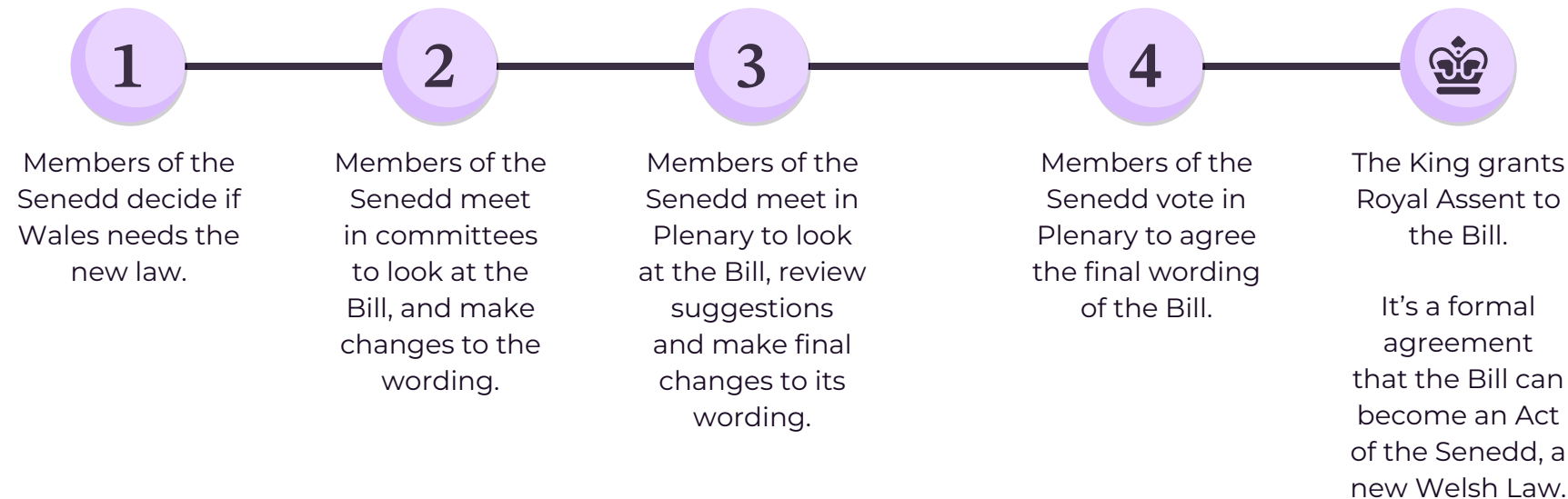
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## **What is a committee?**

A committee is a small group of Members who look at specific subject areas.

# How does a Bill become an Act?

A Bill must pass through four stages at the Senedd and receive Royal Assent if it's going to become an 'Act of Senedd Cymru' – a new Welsh law.



## What is a Bill?

A Bill is a draft law.

Once a Bill has been considered and passed by the Senedd, and given Royal Assent by the monarch, it becomes an 'Act of Senedd Cymru'.

# The journey of a Bill: Stage 1

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## The Members of the Senedd decide if Wales needs the new law.

The Bill starts its journey with a committee. It's possible that more than one committee will work on the Bill before it gets to Plenary.

The committee looking at the Bill meet with subject experts, who help shape the Bill. The committee might run a public consultation, where you could give your opinion.

Stage 1 lets the committee collect evidence from everyone they speak to, and write it all into a report. This report will say if the committee agrees with the main aims of the Bill. It might also suggest changes to its wording.

Finally, Members of the Senedd meet in Plenary to discuss all the reports written about the Bill. They vote to decide if Wales needs this new law. If a majority of Members vote 'no', the Bill stops at this stage.

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## Stage 1

Members of the Senedd look at the basics: they meet and decide if Wales needs the new law.

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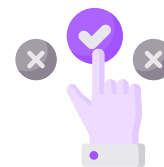
One or more committees look at the Bill and write Stage 1 reports.

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Members of the Senedd debate in Plenary all reports written about the Bill.

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Members of the Senedd vote in Plenary to decide if Wales need the new Law.

### What is a committee?

A committee is a small group of Members who look at specific subject areas.

### What is Plenary?

Plenary is a meeting with all Members of the Senedd in the Siambr, the debating chamber.

# The journey of a Bill: Stage 2

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**Members of the Senedd meet in committee. They look at the Bill, and make changes to the wording.**

Every Member can review the Bill, and suggest changes. They might think it would be better if it also did something else or that it does too much and needs to be more specific.

**Every change they suggest is an amendment.**

The committee working on the Bill looks at all the amendments suggested by Members of the Senedd. They meet and discuss what the amendments would do to the Bill, and vote to decide if they should be included. An amendment is only included if a majority of the committee's members agree.

The committee write into the Bill each suggestion they agree with and produce an amended version of the Bill. Once the committee has debated and voted on the final amendment, the Bill continues on its journey.

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## Stage 2

Members of the Senedd shape the Bill: a small group of Members meet as a committee and look at suggestions to amend the Bill.

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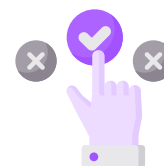
All Members of the Senedd can suggest an amendment to the Bill.

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The committee working on the Bill looks at what each amendment will do to the Bill.

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The committee members vote on which amendments should be included in the Bill.

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## What is an amendment?

Amendments are proposals to add or remove words or changing the wording of the Bill.

These amendments will change what the new law can do.

# The journey of a Bill: Stage 3

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**Members of the Senedd meet in Plenary. They look at the Bill, review suggestions and make final changes to its wording.**

All Members of the Senedd can review the Bill, and suggest amendments. During Plenary, every Member who suggested an amendment can explain their amendment, and give their reasons for suggesting it.

**It's important that every Member who wants to speak in Plenary is able to have their say.**

Once every Member in Plenary has debated and voted on the final amendment, the wording of the Bill is completed. The Bill now has its final wording and is ready to move to its final stage at the Senedd.

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## Stage 3

Members of the Senedd refine the Bill: the Bill returns to the Siambwr for Members of the Senedd to make final changes.

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All Members of the Senedd can suggest an amendment to discuss and debate in Plenary.



Any Member who proposed an amendment can explain why they suggested it.



Members of the Senedd vote on which amendments should be included in the final Bill.

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## Optional extras

There is an option for the Bill to have further amendments debated and voted on.

We call these extra stages Further Stage 3, Report Stage and Further Report Stage.

It's rare for Bills to go through these stages.

# The journey of a Bill: Stage 4

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## Members of the Senedd vote in Plenary to agree the final wording of the Bill.

Once the Bill has reached Stage 4, its wording is final. Members of the Senedd can't amend the Bill any further.

During the Stage 4 debate, Members look at the final text of the Bill, and decide if it should become a new law. After the debate, they vote – 'should this Bill become an Act, a new Welsh Law?'

If a majority of Members vote against passing the Bill, the Bill falls. Nothing further can happen with the Bill once it has fallen.

If a majority of Members vote in favour of passing the Bill, then it has successfully made its way through the Senedd. It can go on to its final stop to become a new law – as long as there is no legal challenge to it.

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## Stage 4

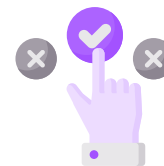
Members of the Senedd cast a final vote on the Bill: a successful Bill completes its journey through the Senedd.

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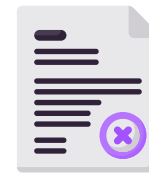
Members of the Senedd debate the final wording of the Bill.

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A final vote takes place to agree the final wording of the Bill.

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If the Bill doesn't pass this stage, it falls.

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## ▶ Passing a new law

If a majority of Members vote in favour of passing the Bill, and there are no legal challenges, it can become a new Welsh law.

# The journey of a Bill: Royal Assent

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**The King grants Royal Assent to the Bill. It's a formal agreement that the Bill can become an Act of Senedd Cymru.**

To get to this stage, Members of the Senedd have written, scrutinised, amended and voted on the Bill. They have spoken to experts on the subject, and you may have had your own say by responding to a committee consultation.

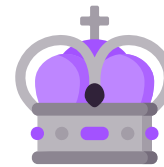
The King grants Royal Assent to all Bills that successfully make it through all four stages at the Senedd. Royal Assent is a formal agreement the Bill can become an Act of Senedd Cymru.

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## Royal Assent

The final stop on the journey where the Bill becomes an Act of Senedd Cymru – a new Welsh law.

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The King grants Royal Assent to the Bill.



The Bill becomes an Act of Senedd Cymru.

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### Did you know?

All primary laws made by all the Parliaments and Assemblies of the UK must receive Royal Assent.

# Contact us

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## Do you have a question about the Senedd?

There are many ways you can get in touch to find out more about how the Senedd works and how you can have your say.

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



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



[contact@senedd.wales](mailto:contact@senedd.wales)



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