

Senedd Women's Caucus

The Sixth Senedd

February 2026

The Senedd's Women's Caucus was officially launched in June 2023, and is chaired by Joyce Watson MS. A steering group for the Caucus is made up of representatives from each group. All women Members of the Senedd are, by default, members of the Caucus, and secretarial support is provided by the Llywydd's Private Office, where appropriate.

Our vision

A gender equal and fully inclusive Wales, where:

- everyone is empowered to engage with politics (as citizens and as elected representatives) regardless of their gender and other protected characteristics, including socio-economic status, and
- policies, laws, programmes and budgets are designed to be sensitive to the diverse needs and experiences of the population.

Our mission

To bring together women Members of the Senedd from across the political parties to:

- work purposefully, promoting and supporting women's participation in politics and identifying current barriers within our parliamentary system.



- develop and advocate policy and practice initiatives that address issues affecting our women parliamentarians and society.
- advance the agreed agenda of the Caucus within political parties and other spheres of Senedd influence.

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1. Chair's Reflections

Having only been established in this current parliamentary term, it is remarkable how the Senedd Women's Caucus has established itself as a forum for peer support and engagement with women MSs, as well as developing and advancing its own priorities. I'm proud of the work that the Caucus has done in such a short space of time, how we have engaged with external partners and Senedd officials, and come together as elected women to support each other.

The Caucus has proved that there is value in making space for women's voices and I'm pleased that we have met formally together 11 times in this 6th Senedd to discuss a range of issues from international engagement to legislation. It has also allowed space for true cross-party working, allowing members to come together across the political divide and agree ways forward and, notably, cross-party motions on important issues such as International Women's Day last year. A true memorable moment for me was partnering with Elect-Her for our International Women's Day Event, We Belong Here, in 2024 where the Senedd welcomed women from all backgrounds starting on their political journey. It spoke to our mission to support women's participation in politics and made me hopeful for the future of politics in Wales.

In establishing the Women's Caucus, I wanted to ensure elected women in this Senedd had a space to meet, to talk, to be honest with one another. First and foremost, the Caucus has proved itself as a safe and welcoming forum and the support we have been able to provide each other has been, in my view, invaluable.

I'm proud to have chaired the Caucus in its inaugural term and look forward to following its work in the 7th Senedd. It is due to the commitment of our membership that we have been so successful, and I hope future members of this Senedd will continue to support a future Women's Caucus in the same manner. With thanks to you all for your continued support and contributions,

Joyce Watson.

2. Meetings and Activity

Meetings, Governance and Support

- 1.** The Caucus is chaired by Joyce Watson MS and a steering group made up of representatives from each of the political groups. This steering group was selected from members already involved in another women's parliamentary network, the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP).
- 2.** Before its official launch, the Caucus agreed a terms of reference and a mission statement to shape its work going forward. In its terms of reference, the Caucus committed to publishing an annual report to reflect on its activities. As well as taking part in events and visits, the Caucus also meets privately to provide peer support and to share updates and opportunities arising. The personal commitment of Members to the Caucus has ensured that its meetings and events have been well-attended and supported across political parties.
- 3.** Secretarial support is provided by the Llywydd's Private Office, however on more political or policy-focused activities (such as providing evidence to Committees) the Chair and other members have received support from their groups.
- 4.** The secretariat, as well as convening the Caucus for meetings and events, collates and circulates opportunities and resources to the Caucus including learning resources, relevant literature, and opportunities to engage with stakeholders.
- 5.** Since its inception, the Caucus has met formally 11 times. In 2025-26 it met formally 7 times, with a number of these meetings focussing on social media activity and the proposal of a monitoring scheme for Members of the Senedd. These meetings in particular included stakeholders from Police Forces and Senedd Officials to discuss feasibility and plans for a monitoring scheme. As of March 2026 a trial scheme is underway.
- 6.** Informal gatherings have also been held, with the Caucus inviting guest speakers to address members over dinner.
- 7.** Members of the Caucus have undertaken international engagement and attended events in the Senedd over the course of this Senedd term. Contributions to the Commonwealth Women's Parliamentary Conferences and events hosted by other Parliamentary Caucuses have been well received.

Contributions to outreach events in the Senedd have also raised the Caucuses profile and enabled members to engage with women across Wales.

Overview of Activity

2022-2024

8. Before its official launch in 2023, meetings of the Caucus were held to agree its vision, mission, and terms of reference.

9. In its inaugural year, the Caucus participated in and hosted a number of successful events on the Senedd estate. These included roundtables with local schools to mark International Women's Day and the flagship We Belong Here event hosted alongside WEN Wales which saw the Senedd and the Siambr filled with aspiring women politicians.

10. 2024 also saw the Caucus give evidence to the Senedd's Reform Bill Committee as part of the Committee's scrutiny of the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill.

11. The Caucus also invited the First Minister, Trefnydd, and their officials to present proposed plans for diversity and inclusion guidance for registered political parties in Wales. Members were able to present their own and their parties views at this meeting on the proposed timings and content of the guidance. The Caucus were then invited to a technical briefing on the proposed guidance ahead of the Government's consultation.

2025

12. January The Caucus Chair, Joyce Watson MS, spoke at a virtual event hosted by Elect-Her for prospective or interested women candidates at all levels of democracy.

13. February Women's Caucus Meeting to discuss specific concerns faced as elected women and women in public life. Meeting was attended by Director of Senedd Resources, the Senedd Security Team and Member Learning and Engagement.



14. March International Women's Day – Inspire Her event with Elect Her.

Inspire Her was a session in the Senedd providing support and encouragement for women interested in politics, to inspire them to become decision-makers of the future. The event welcomed young women to the Senedd and gave them the opportunity to participate in a bespoke multi-partisan speed-networking event, giving them the opportunity to connect with current women MSs 1:1 (or in small groups), share their own views on topics important to them, hear insights on standing for elected office and being in political office.



15. June Jo Cox Foundation presentation of the Civility Commission report that aims to address the problem of violence, abuse and intimidation of elected representative, as part of the Foundations work on developing recommendations for devolved legislatures. Input from this meeting fed into the publication of the Jo Cox Foundation's Civility Commission Report, 'A Renewed Call for Devolved Legislatures'.

16. July Cacus meeting held to discuss matters raised by members of the Caucus of an increase of social media/online abuse. The Director of Senedd Resources, Senedd Security, Director of Communications and Engagement and the Police Unit were in attendance. Questions raised about the reporting process, and how reporting was joined up amongst different departments in the Commission and the police forces.

17. Joyce Watson MS wrote to the Llywydd to ask whether the Commission would consider implementing a similar scheme for monitoring members social media feeds for abuse and hateful language. Request was made for this issue to be discussed as AOB at next Commission meeting.

18. September Social Media Monitoring trial presented by Senedd Security. Security Advice: Public Engagement and Surgery Guidance document shared with members of Caucus. Superintendent of South Wales Police guided members on how to and threshold for reporting to the police. Trial is now underway and due to come to a close at dissolution of the 6th Senedd.

19. November Women's Caucus dinner with guest speaker Ruth Dodsworth OBE.



2026

20. January Women's Caucus meeting hosting Dr Alison Parker, Dr Rachel Minto and Leah Hibbs of Cardiff University, the Academic Research Team commissioned by the Family Friendly Inclusive Parliament Review Board. Focus group discussion to better understand the ways in which the Senedd supports the consideration of gender equality in law-making, including the barriers/challenges and opportunities open to Senedd Members who seek to advance gender equality in their work.

21. February Members of the Senedd Caucus attended Northern Ireland Assembly Women's Caucus event for International Women's Day. The event focused on the theme of Supporting Women in Public Life. Joyce Watson MS, Sian Gwenllian MS, Julie Morgan MS, Rhianon Passmore MS and Jenny Rathbone MS were all in attendance.

22. March Caucus Chair invited to attend the launch of Jersey's State's Assembly Parliamentary Women's Caucus and reflect on experiences from Wales.

3. International Engagement

- 23.** CWP Conference, Malta March 2024 – Attended by Rhianon Passmore MS and Janet Finch-Saunders MS.
- 24.** Caucus met with visiting delegations from the Canadian Federal Parliament and the Assemblée Nationale du Quebec as part of their official visits to the Senedd.
- 25.** CWP Workshop, Nassau, April 2025 – attended by Sioned Williams MS
- 26.** CWP Conference, Edinburgh, March 2025 – attended by Natasha Asghar MS, Rhianon Passmore MS, and Sioned Williams MS
- 27.** CWP Conference, Edinburgh, February 2026 - Rhianon Passmore MS and Sioned Williams MS attended.
- 28.** Northern Ireland Assembly Women's Caucus event, Belfast, February 2026 - Joyce Watson MS, Sian Gwenllian MS, Julie Morgan MS, Rhianon Passmore MS and Jenny Rathbone MS attended event to mark International Women's Day. The theme of the event was on Supporting Women in Public Life.



4. Looking ahead

The current iteration of the Women's Caucus is supportive of a Caucus being formed in the 7th Senedd in order to continue with the work undertaken in this parliamentary term. In their last meeting, members agreed on some considerations for the 7th Senedd. A Women's Caucus of the 7th Senedd may wish to:

- Monitor developments for an onsite creche provision
- Monitor developments on the Social Media Monitoring scheme for Members
- Mark International Women's Day (8 March) and The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November)
- Consider any developments on the recommendations of the Senedd Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament Review
- Advocate for sufficient resources to support the Caucus and its activities