



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **British-Irish Council Summit in Jersey**

DATE **19 July 2023**

BY **First Minister, Mark Drakeford MS**

I attended the 39th meeting of the British-Irish Council on 15 and 16 June, which was hosted by the Government of Jersey.

The meeting was chaired by the Chief Minister Deputy Kristina Moore on behalf of the Government of Jersey. Other attendees included Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD, Tánaiste Micheál Martin TD, the First Minister of Scotland the Rt Hon Humza Yousaf MSP, the Chief Minister of Guernsey Deputy Peter Ferbrache, the Chief Minister of the Isle of Man Hon Alfred Cannan MHK, the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations, and the Rt Hon Chris Heaton-Harris MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

This was an opportunity to reflect on the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Good Friday Agreement and the importance of the institutions it established, including the British Irish Council itself.

The theme of this summit focused on housing and energy policy. We discussed the efforts underway across BIC member administrations to provide affordable housing and deliver on decarbonisation. I emphasised that modern methods of construction (MMC) go beyond modular building design and can help to address issues surrounding sustainable energy. They also include the incorporation of sustainable urban drainage and can ultimately increase affordability.

The council discussed the latest geo-political developments, including Russia's invasion of Ukraine; the cost-of-living crisis; climate change; and the UK's relationship with the EU. This included an update on political developments in Northern Ireland, centred around the Windsor Framework. In contributing to this discussion, I highlighted the fundamental importance of re-establishing a Northern Ireland Executive and the significance of the Windsor Framework, which is a first step in re-establishing relationships between the UK and the EU. The Welsh Government wants to see these relationships deepen, including, for example, in relation to student exchanges, research programmes and Creative Europe.

A joint Communiqué was issued after the meeting, which is available here: [39th British-Irish Council Summit, Government of Jersey 16 June 2023 Communiqué](#)

The next Council Summit will be hosted by the Government of Ireland.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns I would be happy to do so.