

Cross-Party Group Women

Annual Report

November 2025

Overview

The Cross-Party Group on Women exists to promote stronger protection of women's rights. Siân Gwenllian MS chairs of the group. WEN Wales offers secretarial support. In 2025, the group has convened three times: 14 March 2025, 16 May 2025, 26 September 2025 (AGM). All meetings were held online via Zoom. A further meeting has been scheduled for 14 November 2025.

The group has used these meetings to focus on a number of issues, including: Progressing equality and diversity within political parties, calls for gender equality and women's rights in the 2026 elections and creating a family-friendly and inclusive Senedd.

Attendance at the meetings over the year has been made up of political representatives, third sector organisations working to end discrimination against women, individuals and academics interested in gender equality and members of Senedd support staff.

1. Group membership and office holders

Office holders:

- Siân Gwenllian MS (Chair)
- Jessica Laimann, WEN Wales (Secretary)

Additional members:

- Jane Dodds MS
- Heledd Fychan MS
- Delyth Jewell MS
- Rt. Hon. Elin Jones MS
- Sarah Murphy MS
- Carolyn Thomas MS
- Joyce Watson MS
- Sioned Williams MS
- Jenny Ramsay, Office of Paul Davies MS
- Jess Blair - Electoral Reform Society Cymru
- Ele Hicks - Diverse Cymru
- Sara Kirkpatrick - Welsh Women's Aid
- Stephanie Grimshaw – Welsh Women's Aid
- Nancy Lidubwi- Bawso
- Dr Rachel Minto - Cardiff University
- Leah Hibbs, Cardiff University
- Debbie Shaffer - Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales
- Abi Thomas - Plaid Cymru
- Natalie Jarvis - Disability Wales
- Hade Turkmen – Oxfam Cymru
- Hannah Griffiths, Wales Women's Budget Group
- Dr Alison Parken - Cardiff University

- Jane-Fenton May- Wales Assembly of Women
- Johanna Robinson- National VAWDASV Advisor
- Tanya Harrington - Stonewall Cymru
- Rhianydd Williams- Wales TUC
- Sarah Thomas- NFWI
- Victoria Vasey- WEN Wales
- Jessica Laimann- WEN Wales
- Inioluwa Longe - WEN Wales
- Jane Croad, Wales Assembly of Women
- Catherine Larkman, Women's Rights Network Wales
- Sarah Thomas, NFWI Wales
- Samsunear Ali, Bawso
- Inioluwa Longe, WEN Wales
- Megan Evans, WEN Wales
- Ali Morris, Merched Cymru
- Prof Uzo Iwobi, RCC

2. Previous Group Meetings

Meeting 1

Topic: Progressing equality and diversity within political parties

Date: 14 March 2025

Attendees:

Sioned Williams MS (Chair), Kaitlin Senk (Speaker), Lina Gálvez MEP (Speaker), Hilde Coffé (Speaker), Jenny Ramsay, Office of Paul Davies MS, Abigail Thomas, Alison Parken, Cardiff University, Rhianydd Williams, TUC Wales, Maria Cristina Garcia, Samsunear Ali, Marta Casares, Jane Fenton-May, Wales Assembly of Women, Almudena Molina, Kirsty Rees, Camlas, Prof Uzo Iwobi, RCC, Hade Turkmen, Oxfam Cymru, Sarah Thomas, NFWI, Debbie Shaffer, FTWW, Jessica Laimann, WEN Wales, Inioluwa Longe, WEN Wales, Victoria Vasey, WEN Wales, Catharine Chatham, WEN Wales

Summary of issues discussed: Lina Gálvez MEP, spoke about the current challenges and success related to equality and diversity within the political landscape. Professor Hilde Coffé and Dr. Kaitlin Senk, both from the University of Bath, presented their research on financial barriers to women's political representation in the UK, focusing on the 2019 UK elections.

Meeting 2

Topic: Wales Women's Rights Manifesto for the 2026 elections

Date: 16 May 2025

Attendees: Sian Gwenllian MS (Chair), Sioned Williams MS, Abigail Thomas, Alison Parken, Cardiff University, Samsunear Ali, Bawso, Kirsty Rees, Camlas, Hade Turkmen, Oxfam Cymru, Sarah Thomas, NFWI, Cathy Larkman, WRN Wales, Debbie Shaffer, FTWW, Bronwen Davies, Ali Morris, Merched Cymru, Zaynub, Jessica Laimann, WEN Wales, Annmarie Brown,

WEN Wales, Inioluwa Longe, WEN Wales, Victoria Vasey, WEN Wales, Catharine Chatham, WEN Wales, Megan Evans, WEN Wales

Summary of issues discussed:

The discussion focused on key calls around women's equality for the 2026 Senedd elections. Jessica Laimann (WEN Wales) presented a manifesto jointly developed by the Gender Network, covering including incorporating CEDAW into Welsh law, tackling economic inequalities, fixing the care crisis, addressing gender-based violence, improving women's health, and making the new Senedd a place for women inclusive.

Meeting 3

Topic: Creating a family-friendly and inclusive Senedd and AGM

Date: 26 September 2025

Attendees: Siân Gwenllian MS (Chair), Sioned Williams MS, Joyce Watson MS, Alison Parken, Cardiff University, Rachel Minto, Cardiff University, Leah Hibbs, Cardiff University, Debbie Shaffer, FTWW, Jane-Fenton May, Wales Assembly of Women, Jane Croad, Wales Assembly of Women Catherine Larkman, Women's Rights Network Wales, Martha Sarah Thomas, NFWI Wales, Ali Morris, Merched Cymru, Hade Turkmen, Oxfam Cymru, Samsunear Ali, Bawso, Victoria Vasey, WEN Wales, Jessica Laimann, WEN Wales, Inioluwa Longe, WEN Wales

Summary of issues discussed:

Joyce Watson MS, chair of the Board for a Family-friendly and Inclusive Parliament Review, highlighted the Senedd's ongoing work to make parliamentary life more inclusive and accessible for members, staff, and candidates. Dr Alison Parken, Dr Rachel Minto, and Dr Leah Hibbs from Cardiff University spoke about the work they will be conducting on behalf of the Senedd Commission. There were discussions on the barriers women face in political careers, including issues around the election process for women. Concerns were raised about increasing levels of online abuse harming representatives' wellbeing and deterring diverse candidates.

3. Professional lobbyists, voluntary organisations and charities with whom the Group has met during the preceding year

As above.

4. Annual Financial Statement

Date: 29 October 2025

Cross Party Group on Women

Chair: Siân Gwenllian MS

Secretary: Jessica Laimann, WEN Wales

Group's Expenses	None	£0.00
Costs of all goods	No goods purchased	£0.00
Benefits received by the group or individual Members from outside bodies.	No benefits received	£0.00
Any secretariat or other support	No financial support received	£0.00
Total cost		£0.00