

Cross-Party Group Annual Report

Cross Party Group Details

Cross Party Group Title:

Children in Our Care

Group membership and office holders

Name of Group Chair:

Jane Dodds MS

Names of other Members of the Senedd:

Heledd Fychan MS

Mike Hedges MS

Mark Isherwood MS

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS

Jenny Rathbone MS

Sioned Williams MS

Name of Secretary and Organisation:

Helen Mary Jones, Voices from Care Wales

Names of other external members and organisations represented:

Rhodri ab Owen, Camlas

Linda Hawkins, Virtual School Headteacher, RCT

Rachel Thomas, Head of Policy and Public Affairs, Children's Commissioner for Wales

Ash Lister, Action for Children

Sharon Lovell, NYAS

Elizabeth Bryan, Fostering Network

Bethan Price, Social Care Wales

Sarah Durrant, TGP Cymru

Lisa Roberts, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

Sarah Williamson, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

Tom Davies, Children's Society

Caroline Walters, Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists

Cecle Gwilym, NSPCC

Naila Noori, Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists

Amy Bainton, Barnardos

Sarah Thomas, Fostering Network

Natalie Williams, Fostering Network

Davina Carey-Evans, Family Fund

Bryan Elliot, Starfish

Deboarh Smith, Kinship

Leo Holmes, Early Years Wales

Rebekah Burns, Adoption UK

Singeta Kalhan, British Association of Social Workers (BASW)

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Other meetings of the Group since the last AGM

Meeting 1

Date of Meeting:

12th November 2024

Attendees:

Jane Dodds - MS; Helen Mary Jones - Voices from Care Cymru; Tomos Roberts-Young - MSS
Jane Dodds - MS; Ieuan Pary - MSS Jane Dodds - MS; Amy Bainton - Barnardo's Cymru; Mark
Carter - Barnardo's Cymru; Johanna Robinson - ECWL - Communities & Tackling Poverty -
Cohesive Communities Division; Sarah Williamson - RCPCH; Sarah Thomas - Fostering Network;
Rhian Croke - Swansea University, Children's Legal Centre Wales; Sean O'Neil - Children in
Wales; Rachel Beddoe - Children in Wales; Tamzin Covell - Fostering Network; Mike Greenaway
- Play Wales; Rhiannon Beaumont Walkes - TGP Cymru; Helen Perry - NYAS; Sharon Lovell -
NYAS; Catrin Glyn - Carers Trust Wales; Cath Lewis - Guide Dogs Cymru; Katie Jacobs - Social
Care Wales

Summary of the issues discussed:

Joint Cross-Party Group Meeting workshop on building a new Children's Act for Wales with
Children and Families CPG. Both groups looking at what they would consider to be essential
legislation and/or guidance that would create a new Act.

Both groups will work on this together to be able to present ideas to all political parties ahead
of the 2026 election.

Meeting 2

Date of Meeting:

22nd January 2025

Attendees:

Jane Dodds - MS; Helen Mary Jones- Voices from Care Cymru; Sioned Williams - MS; Tomos Roberts-Young – MSS; Rhiannon Beaumont-Walker – TGP Cymru; Cath Lewis – Guide Dogs Cymru; Leo Holmes – Early Years Wales; Amy Bainton – Barnardo’s Cymru; Daljit Kaur-Morris – NYAS; Suzanne Griffiths – Adoption UK; Mark Carter – Barnardo’s’ Cymru; Elizabeth Bryan – Fostering Network UK; Samantha Baron – BASWSO; Cherrie Bija – Faith in Families; Neil Davies – Home for Good; Katie Jacobs – Social Care Wales; Tamzin Covell – Forsterng.net; Sarah Whitcombe-Hayes – NSPCC; Rachel Beddoe – Children in Wales; Manel Tippett – British Psychological Society; Davina Carey-Evans - Family Fund; Rachel Thomas – Children’s commissioner’s Office; Rhian Croke – Swansea University; Sharon Lovell – NYAS Cymru; Sarah Williamson - RCPH; Sophie Carter

Summary of the issues discussed:

Joint Cross-Party Group Meeting workshop on building a new Children’s Act for Wales with Children and Families CPG, working on the proposals.

Meeting 3

Date of Meeting:

25th March 2025

Attendees:

Jane Dodds – MS; Helen Mary Jones - Voices from Care Cymru; Sian Thomas - Senedd Research; Phoebe Jenkins – MSS; Janine Benner – Llamau; Prof. Euan Hails MBE – Adferiad;; Amy Bainton – Barnardos Cymru; Elizabeth Bryan - Fostering Network; Leo Holmes - Early Years Wales; Janine Bennett – Llamau; Charis Harrington – Llamau; Tamzin Covell - Fostering Network; Tammi Owen - The Cube Barry; Anna Gwozdz – NSPCC; Cherri Bija - Faith in Families; Zuzanna Gwozdz – NSPCC; Rachel Beddoe - Children in Wales; Sioned Williams – MS; Davina Carey-Evans - Family Fund; Suzanne Griffiths - Adopt Cymru; Isata Kanneh - Bevan Foundation; Katie Jacobs - Social Care Wales; Neil Davies - Home for Good; Sharon Lovell – NYAS; Tamzin Covell - Fostering Network

Summary of the issues discussed:

Joint Cross-Party Group Meeting workshop on building a new Children’s Act for Wales with Children and Families CPG, working on the proposals.

Meeting 4

Date of Meeting:

30th April 2025

Attendees:

Jane Dodds - MS; Helen Mary Jones - Voices from Care; Sean O’Neil - Children in Wales; Tomos Roberts-Young – MSS; Phoebe Jenkins – MSS; Mark Carter – Barnardos; Leo Holmes- Early Years Wales; Sharon Lovell – NYAS; Mike Greenaway - Play Wales; Cherri Bija - Faith in Families; Suzanne Griffiths - Adopt Cymru; Rhiannon Beaumont - TGP Cymru; Sophie Carter - Justice Innovation; Tammi Owen – CUBE; Leo Holmes - Early Years Wales; Cath Lewis - Guide Dogs; Ash Lister - Action for Children; Davina Carey-Evans - Family Fund; Kerrie Gemmel – Scouts; Catherine Rees - Save the Children Wales

Summary of the issues discussed:

Joint Cross-Party Group Meeting workshop on building a new Children’s Act for Wales with Children and Families CPG, finalising the legislative proposal.

Meeting 5

Date of Meeting:

4th June 2025

Attendees:

Mark Isherwood- MS; Helen Mary Jones – Voices from Care; Sean O’Neil – Children in Wales; Elizabeth Byran – Fostering Network; Sian Thomas – Senedd Research; Mike Hedges – MS; Buffy Williams – MS; Sioned Willams – MS; Joel Jones – MS; Andrew Bettridge – MS; Tammi Owen – CUBE; Sharon Lovell – NYAS; Cath Lewis – Guide Dogs; Laura Jones – MS; Mike Greenaway – Play Wales; Hugh Russell – Children in Wales; Linda Hawkins – Virtual Headteacher; Katie Jacobs – Social Care Wales; Rhiannon Beaumont- Walker – TGP Cymru; Rhiannon Passmore – MS; Nadia Lovell – NYAS; Sarah Williamson – RCPH; Kerrie Gemmill – Scouts; Sarah Thomas –

Fostering Wales; Joanna Robinson – Welsh Government; Ash Lister – Action For Children; Rhian Croke – Swansea University; Rachel Thomas – Children’s Commissioner’s Office; Mark Carter – Barnardos; Isata Kanneh – Bevan Foundation; Ruth Bowden – Nyas; Neil Davies – Home for Good; Eurgain Haf – Save the Children; Elinor Matthey – Bevan Foundation; David Godger – Early Years Wales; Cherrie Bija – Faith in Families; Cecile Gwilym – NSPCC; Katie Jacobs – Ty Hafan

Summary of the issues discussed:

Members of the Cross-Party Groups (CPGs) on Children and Families and Children in Our Care gathered at the Senedd to the launch *Bil Pob Plentyn*. There was a discussion on the scope and limitations of the proposed legislation. Jane Dood, MS, confirmed her intention to present the proposal at the Welsh Liberal Democrats’ conference, seeking a commitment to include it in the party’s 2026 Senedd Election manifesto. Sioned Williams MS echoed this commitment, stating she would bring the proposal to Plaid Cymru with the aim of securing its inclusion in their 2026 manifesto. Lived experience and expert insights were received from Brendan Roberts, speaking from personal experience as a care-experienced person. Helen Mary Jones provided expert commentary, addressing technical questions and offering insight into the legislative framework.

Meeting 6

Date of Meeting:

9th July 2025

Attendees:

Jane Dodds - MS; Phoebe Jenkins - MS Support Staff; Rachel Beddoe – Children in Wales; Sean O’Neill – Children in Wales; Sharon Lovell – NYAS; Ash Lister – Action for Children; Steve Crane-Jenkins – BASW; Nadia Lovell – NYAS; Amy Bainton – Barnardos Cymru; Suzanne Griffiths – Foster Wales; Tammi Owen – The Cube Centre; Leo Holmes – Early Years Wales; Euan Hails – ABUHB; Eurgain Haf – Save the Children; Cherrie Bija – Faith in Families; Kerrie Gemmill – Scouts Cymru; Elizabeth Bryan – Fostering.net; Cecile Gwilym – NSPCC; Zuzanna Gwordz – NSPCC;

Helen Mary Jones – Voices for Care; Hugh Russell – Children in Wales; Rhian Croke – Swansea University; Davina Carey-Evans – Family Fund; Darren Griffiths – RCPCH; Catherine Rees – Save the Children; Tamzin Covell – Fostering Network

Summary of the issues discussed:

Joint Cross-Party Group Meeting looking at how the launch went, and finalising the last steps of pushing forward with Bil Pob Plentyn.

Meeting 6

Date of Meeting:

8th October 2025

Attendees:

Jane Dodds MS; Tomos Roberts-Young – MSS Jane Dodds MS; Rachel Beddoe, Children in Wales; Christine Gentry, Law Commission; Lisa Webley, Commissioner Professor Law Commission; Akola Munyiri, Law Commission; Sioned Williams, MS; Mark Isherwood MS; Ryland Doyle, MSS Mike Hedges MS; Sarah Taylor, MSS John Griffiths MS; Elizabeth Bryan, Fostering Network; Charlotte Maddox, Fostering Network; Elly Jones, NYAS; Cherri Bija, Faith in Families; Euan Hails, Aneurin Bevan Health Board; Helen Mary Jones, Voices from Care Cymru; Cllr Ash Lister, Action for Children; Manel Tippett, British Psychological Society; Melanie Thomas-Wilcox, TGP Cymru; Samantha Frith-Jones, AFKA Cymru; Sandie Bailey, Kinship Care; Sean O’Neil, Children in Wales; Singeta Kalhan-Gregory, BASW; Cath Lewis, Guide Dogs Cymru; Davinna Carey-Evans, Family Fund; Suzanne Griffiths, National Adoption Service ; Mark Carter, Barnardos

Summary of the issues discussed:

Joint Cross-Party Group Meeting, hearing from the Law Commission Project on Kinship Care followed by a question and answer session between members of the CPG and the Law Commission.

Meeting 7

Date of Meeting:

22nd October 2025

Attendees:

Jane Dodds MS; Helen Mary Jones Voices from Care Cymru; Mark Isherwood MS; Sioned Williams MS; Leo Holmes Early Years Wales; Rachel Thomas Children's Commissioners Office; Tomos Roberts-Young MSS

Summary of the issues discussed:

The AGM was held and the Chair was nominated as Jane Dodds MS and passed, and the Secretariat was nominated as Helen Mary Jones Voices from Care Cymru and passed. Discussion was held around the work of Bil Pob Plentyn and it becoming a legacy report, with the intention of inviting the Minister to the next meeting. Dates for the following year to be confirmed.

Professional lobbyists, voluntary organisations and charities the Group have met during the previous year.

[names of lobbyists/organisations/charities should be included as follows, e.g.]

Name of Organisation:

Law Commission

Kinship Care Project from the Law Commission

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Annual Financial Statement

Cross Party Group Title:

Children in Our Care

Date:

01/10/25

Name of Chair:

Jane Dodds MS

Name of Secretary and Organisation:

Helen Mary Jones, Voices from Care Cymru

| Title | Description | Amount |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Group's Expenses | Various financial donations from members within the group towards the cost of the launch of Bil Pob Plentyn on 4 th June, shared with Children and Families CPG | Total cost = £755.94 |
| Costs of all goods | Costs were spent on artwork and printing for the leaflet, a banner for the day, translation services and catering | Donations were as follows: Children in Wales –£240 (artwork) The Fostering Network –£40 (printing) Early Years Wales -£51.84 (banner) Voices from Care Cymru £220 (translation services) Play Wales –£40 (printing) TGP Cymru - £114.11 (catering) Cath Lewis personal donation, Guide Dogs Cymru - £51.49 (catering) |

| | | |
|---|--------------|----------------|
| Benefits received by the group or individuals members from external bodies | None | None |
| Any financial support or other support. | Listed above | Listed above |
| Total | | £593.34 |

Services provided to the Group, such as hospitality.

All hospitality paid for by donations received.

| Date | Name and description of provider | Costs |
|---|---|---|
| Click or tap here to enter text. | ESS Compass, Cardiff Bay Catering | £164.10 |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Costs were divided into two payments: Cath Lewis, personal, £51.49 (catering) TGP Cymru, £114.11 (catering) |
| Total | | £165.60 |