

# **STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

**TITLE**     **The Legislative Programme**  
**DATE**     **17 July 2018**  
**BY**        **Rt. Hon. Carwyn Jones, the First Minister**

Llywydd, it is with pleasure that I can today announce the Bills which this government will bring forward over the next 12 months.

The year ahead will be one of the busiest in legislative terms since Wales gained primary law-making powers. As the UK prepares to leave the European Union, there will be a significant amount of work for this Assembly to undertake between now and March if we are to have a fully-functioning statute book at the point of exit.

This will be a challenging time and the legislative workload associated with leaving the EU should not be underestimated.

The Assembly will need to deal with a substantial programme of correcting regulations under the EU (Withdrawal) Act between October and March. We will continue to keep under review the need for Brexit-related Bills over the coming 12 months and it is likely that a number of UK Brexit Bills will require the consent of this Assembly.

As far as possible, we must not allow this Brexit workload to limit our legislative ambitions. But we must be flexible and be ready to adapt our legislative programme, should the need arise.

Llywydd, the Welsh Government has taken the lead in protecting children's rights. We have enshrined the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in the landmark Rights of Children and Young Persons Measure.

We will continue to act to protect children and children's rights and will introduce a Bill to remove the defence of reasonable punishment.

This legislation will support children's rights by prohibiting the use of physical punishment. We have consulted widely and the responses from the public, parents and young people will help to shape our proposals.

Llywydd, this government believes that Welsh law should be clear and accessible; not just now but in the long term. We have started a programme to consolidate and codify Welsh law but this will be a long journey.

Achieving a clear, available and well-organised statute book will take many years – we must ensure we make steady and enduring progress.

We will therefore bring forward a Bill that commits the government to improve the accessibility of Welsh law and make provision about how Welsh legislation is to be interpreted.

Llywydd, I announced last year that we would bring forward a local government Bill. This Bill will be introduced in the coming year and will include the reform of local authority electoral arrangements, including extending the franchise to 16 and 17-year-olds.

It will also include legislation related to the outcome of our recent local government Green Paper consultation. The Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services will make a detailed statement about this and the Bill later this afternoon.

Llywydd, this government wants to ensure that quality is at the heart of our NHS. In the rare event that something goes wrong – and unfortunately in a system which relies on people working under intense pressure occasionally things will go wrong – we want a health service which is open and transparent and able to learn from its mistakes.

We will therefore bring forward legislation to establish a duty of quality for the NHS in Wales and a duty of candour for health and social care.

A duty of candour would place statutory obligations on all health organisations in Wales to be open and transparent, set out a process which must be followed when things go wrong and people suffer harm.

This Bill will also establish a new independent body to represent the citizens' voice, ensuring people have a stronger, voice that reflects their experiences of health and social care services. It will also include proposals to require NHS trust boards to appoint a vice chair.

Finally Llywydd, we will bring forward a Bill to ban the use of wild animals in travelling circuses.

Animal welfare is a priority for this government and the way we treat animals is an important reflection of the values of our society. Circuses are legitimate businesses and it is not our intention to outlaw all forms of circus entertainment in Wales.

But the use of wild animals in this context is outdated and ethically unacceptable. We will prohibit their use in travelling circuses in Wales.

Llywydd, I delivered my first legislative statement as First Minister a little over eight years ago. This statement will be my last. I trust you will allow me to reflect on what this government has achieved in that time.

Housing has been – and continues to be – a priority for the Welsh Government. We have taken measures to protect tenants and prevent homelessness. We have ended the right to buy in Wales, protecting our stock of social and council housing.

The Renting Homes (Fees) Bill, which is currently being scrutinised by the Assembly, will, if passed, ban letting agents from charging fees to tenants, removing barriers to entering and moving within the private rented sector.

We have undertaken major reforms of the social care system in Wales. We have legislated to drive up hygiene standards by making it compulsory for food businesses to display their scores on their doors, and the Active Travel Act will reform how we plan and build infrastructure for walking and cycling in Wales.

Wales has a long and proud tradition of radical action in public health – this institution was the first in the UK to vote to ban smoking in public places and we were the first to ban smoking in cars when children are present.

Llywydd, I'm proud of what we have achieved by working together in this Assembly to protect public health in Wales – improvements in the provision of public toilets; a licensing regime for tattooing and piercing; a ban on intimate piercing for under 18s; a ban on unmanned sunbeds and a minimum unit price for alcohol.

The Human Transplantation Act was truly groundbreaking and is saving lives. It's another example of how Wales has led the way in the UK, changing the system of consent for organ donation to increase the number of organs available for transplantation.

But this is not the only new ground we have broken. The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act is improving protection and support for victims.

And the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act is driving public bodies, including government, to plan and deliver in a sustainable way to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales.

Llywydd, when necessary we have used our legislative powers to protect devolution.

Through the Agricultural Sector Act, the Trade Union Act, and most recently the Law Derived from the European Union Act – this government has ensured that when the interests of Wales are threatened by the actions of the UK Government, we have deployed the tools at our disposal to stand up for Wales.

During my time as First Minister our devolution settlement has not stood still. Using our legislative programme, we have we have delivered our new Welsh taxes – the first for almost 800 years – and the Welsh Revenue Authority.

Llywydd, there are many more Acts that I could mention, but what is clear is how much has been achieved in that time. All the Acts I have mentioned may have been proposed and introduced by government but they have been shaped by stakeholders and improved by the scrutiny of this Assembly.

We have always worked across this Chamber to ensure our legislation is the best it can be and to ensure it improves the lives of the people of Wales. We will continue to do that on the government Bills currently before the Assembly, and those I have announced today.

This may be my last legislative statement but a full legislative programme delivering on this government's commitments, including a Bill in relation to the Welsh language, will be announced next year,

Llywydd, I commend this legislative programme to the National Assembly.