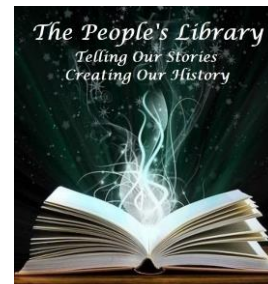
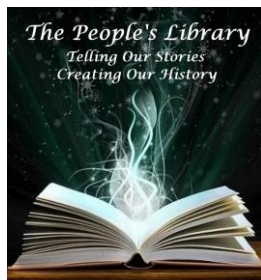


The People's Library Newsletter – November 2025



FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHT TO CARE

There's good and bad news for the adult social care sector. The real news is that *you* can shape what happens next.

YOUR COUNTRY, YOUR CHOICE

With elections that will shape Wales's governance for the remainder of the decade just six months away, where do this country's major parties stand on the issues that matter to you?

A VERY NICE HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY

Llwyn Country House is the party venue you've been looking for

CHIPS AND CHALLENGES

This month, as always, Oriel Science delivers education and inspiration to young people. Find out how you can make your own microchip!

TAKING CARE OF YOU

It's self-care week, and a good time to remind ourselves that if we don't look after number one, we can't do our best for anyone else

SOMETHING WORTH BUILDING ON

Pobl are going the extra mile for social housing residents. They think you're worth it.

CITIZENSHIP – MORE THAN JUST A WORD

What does it mean to be welcomed as a citizen of Swansea, Wales, and the United Kingdom?



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Citizenship – more than just a word

On Tuesday, October 21st, the High Sheriff of West Glamorgan, Diana Stroia, represented the Home Office at a Citizenship Ceremony at Swansea Registry Office. These ceremonies take place at regular intervals and for Diana, who has personally navigated the journey to British citizenship since arriving in this country from her native Romania, they are particularly meaningful.

The people being awarded citizenship have already demonstrated their value to our way of life. When we welcomed them into our communities, we opened the door to them becoming community leaders. The October 21st ceremony was also attended by Shaz Abedean, a Welsh-Bangladeshi Muslim who has been a beacon of public service and community cohesion for many years, and who was appointed as a Deputy to the Lord Lieutenant for West Glamorgan earlier this year. Together, Diana and Shaz have made, and are making, a major contribution to Swansea's cultural life.

The High Sheriff's representation of the Home Office on October 21st was entirely positive. For many of us, the Home Office's representation of itself in the weeks that followed has been more problematic. Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood has announced sweeping changes to the way Britain will treat new arrivals. Permanent protection for refugees is to be brought to an end, with the intention of reducing asylum claims. Under these new plans, people granted asylum will only be allowed to stay in the country temporarily, with their status reviewed every 30 months, and they will be returned to their home country when it is deemed safe. The government plans to start exploring forced returns to countries which people have not routinely been removed to in recent years.

Refugees will now need to be resident in the UK for 20 years before they can apply for permanent residence or indefinite leave to remain – a dramatic rise from the current five years. When the measures were announced, the BBC reported that:

“The Home Secretary believes that unless Labour takes these decisions then “darker forces” could thrive in the UK.”

The People's Library believes that in taking these decisions, the government is giving in to those darker forces. We also believe that the people shouting loudest about Britain's “immigration crisis” and seeking to demonise asylum seekers and refugees are the people whose actions over the past decade have done the most to destabilise the immigration system in this country.

Cast your mind back to 2016 and the Brexit referendum. Many promises were made of the riches and opportunities that awaited a newly-free Britain, unshackled from the EU and its tyranny of red tape. You can judge for yourself how many of those promises have been kept, but here are some of the effects Brexit has had on unlawful immigration.

- As an EU member, the UK was part of the Dublin III regulation, allowing us to request that fellow EU countries take back asylum seekers who had previously entered or claimed asylum there. Since we ripped up this agreement on January 1st 2021 and failed to negotiate a replacement, it's far more difficult to return migrants to the EU.
- With no returns agreement, migrants know that if they reach the UK, they are less likely to be sent back to the EU. This has made the UK a more appealing final destination.

- When we left the EU, we lost access to the Eurodac fingerprint database, which enables swift and accurate checks on whether an asylum seeker has already made a claim in another EU country. Without this efficiency and accuracy, asylum claims are harder to process and eligibility is harder to prove or disprove.

The people who shouted loudest for Brexit are, coincidentally the people now shouting loudest against its consequences. And how much of an immigration crisis do we really have?

In 2024, 36,816 people arrived in this country on small boats. The average cost of housing and feeding a person in this country today has been estimated at £8,593 (£7,260 for housing and £1,333 for food). So if every person arriving on a small boat had been welcomed, housed and fed, the annual cost would have been £316,359,888. That's a lot of money, but does it represent as big a problem as the £18.6 billion that Britain lost in unpaid corporate tax in 2023-24? Or the £30 billion lost through Conservative Prime Minister Liz Truss's disastrous mini-budget of September 2022? Or the £32 billion that the Conservative government's own analysts calculated Brexit would cost the country every year?

If **3.7 million** asylum seekers arrived in this country, and each of them was housed and fed at the state's expense, then the annual cost would still be lower than the amount of money that leaving the EU costs the British economy every year. The actual number of small boat arrivals is less than 1% of that. So perhaps talk of an immigration crisis is misdirection? And if it is, why pander to it?

We can sympathise with a government that sees opponents surging in the polls and wants to regain popularity, but there are more honest, more humane and more effective ways to do it.

You **don't** defeat a bully by slapping their victims instead of punching them.

You **don't** guard your home against a storm by knocking down a wall.

You **don't** outflank an opponent you deplore by cosplaying in their ugly clothes.

At the risk of stating the obvious, the word refugee derives from the word refuge. Sometimes we all need shelter from the storm. Even those of us lucky enough to have been born in a country that's relatively wealthy and relatively peaceful.



The act of offering shelter, of being a good citizen, is a worthwhile end in itself. If we're looking for other tangible outcomes, there's solid economic data to draw on. A 2023 report found that 39% of the UK's 100 fastest-growing companies have a foreign-born founder. British natives who've spent the past decade babbling about wanting to take their country back are intent on taking it back from the very people whose hard work and initiative have been driving our collective prosperity.

When we close our doors to new arrivals seeking shelter, we're sending away the people most likely to help us protect ourselves when the storm comes our way.

That's not good citizenship. It's not good sense. It's not good.

It's time to do better.

Chips and Challenges

Oriel Science, the Swansea University education initiative that's sharing the pleasure of learning and discovery with the next generation of science leaders, will continue to stimulate young minds for the remainder of 2025 and into 2026.

With this month's **Future Technologies** sessions, young people can not only discover the ways in which microchip technology is shaping our world but also design their own chips in a series of fun, free, interactive sessions.

Oriel Science is now a registered charity, and is worthy of your support.

To make a donation, [click here](#)



Saturday November 22 nd	10am – 4pm
Sunday November 23 rd	10am – 4pm
Saturday November 29 th	10am – 4pm
Sunday November 30 th	10am – 4pm
Saturday December 6 th	10am – 4pm
Sunday December 7 th	10am – 4pm

Oriel Science 21 Castle St, Swansea SA1 5AE

<https://www.orielscience.co.uk/>

Fight For Your Right to Care

There's good news, there's bad news and there's real news

So the good news is that this summer, the UK Government announced its intention to establish a Fair Pay Agreement, targeted to give workers in the adult social care sector the long-overdue recognition they deserve. The proposed agreement will establish minimum pay standards for care workers, introduce collective bargaining between employers and worker representatives, and afford new rights to trade unions operating in social care workplaces. The Employment Rights Bill, first published in October 2024, has laid the groundwork for this positive move.

The bad news is that the Fair Pay Agreement will apply to England and not to Wales. That's mitigated by the fact that the Employment Rights Bill's proposals include creating a social care negotiating body for Wales, which could lead to a Fair Pay Agreement being established. And the current Welsh Government has expressed support for the bill and for enhanced rights and recognition for care workers. If the sector is adequately funded – and that may become a big if – then Welsh women and men working in adult social care may well get the recognition they deserve. The “big if” gets bigger when we contemplate next May's Senedd elections. Please excuse a statement of the obvious, but if Welsh voters put power in the hands of people who understand the value of adult social care and respect the professionals who provide it, the chances of the sector's workforce being properly remunerated and protected are dramatically increased.

The real news is that there's a will in this country to recognise the value of care workers. To recognise the value of professionals who routinely shoulder responsibility, make decisions and improve lives with skill and resilience that put far better paid, far less capable people in other walks of life to shame.

There's a will among a population that was left reeling by COVID-19 at the dawn of the 2020s and was safeguarded by care workers who put themselves in harm's way to offer protection and compassion when it mattered most.

There's a will among the politicians **who actually live here**, put down roots here and care about what happens to their friends and neighbours.

What happens next is up to you.

Because you have a voice.

You can speak up for your right to care and be cared for

And now is the time to do it.

The People's Library is organising a series of social care forums in 2026 that will give you a platform to speak up for the things you believe and the things you want, and to challenge the people who claim they'll deliver those things for you.

You live in a democracy, and your leaders are answerable to you.

Let's give them some questions to answer.

Let's fight for our right to care.



Looking for an ideal party venue? Llwyn Country House is a beautifully refurbished, intimate venue perfect for small or large groups.

Some Christmas party dates are still available, and your hosts Marius and Sabina are also taking bookings for weddings, funerals, baby showers, birthdays and business events. And if you just want a beautiful place to enjoy a perfectly prepared a la carte meal, look no further.

Great Food

Great Venue

Great Times

So what are you waiting for?

Call: 01554 899994

Email: enquiries@llwyncountryhouse.co.uk

Website: <https://www.llwyncountryhouse.co.uk/>

Address: Hendre Road, Llwynhendy, Llanelli SA14 9SE

Pobl - Something Worth Building On

After more than fifty years of service, one of Wales's most respected and community-focused organisations is showing no sign of slowing down or losing focus.

Pobl delivers housing, care and support services, managing over 23,000 homes and employing over 3,000 people. The 2024 merger with Linc Cymru has created a larger organisation ready to lead the way in social housing for the second half of the 2020s, and as of January 1st next year they will adopt a new name, the Codi Group, derived from the Welsh word “rise”.

The name Pobl may not be in use for much longer, but the commitment and professionalism so strongly associated with it will endure. This month, Project Manager Jo Brown has given us an uplifting example of that commitment and professionalism.

Ty Mawr in Pontardawe is an important link to Swansea's industrial past. This building was once at the heart of Pontardawe's tinsplate works, but in the 21st century it had fallen into disrepair. Now, thanks to a painstakingly planned refurbishment project, it stands ready to accommodate local families in high-quality social housing.

In refurbishing a property that had been empty for two decades, Jo and her team had to balance a range of priorities. They were eager to preserve the structure of this historic building, and also to make it energy-efficient.

Ground source heating pumps are low-carbon systems that use underground pipes to extract heat from the earth, regardless of the weather. The heat is then compressed to a higher temperature and used to heat a home and maintain a supply of hot water. By installing ground source pumps, Pobl and their partners [TAD Builders](#) ensured that future residents would live in environmentally friendly homes with lower heating bills. Solar panels have added to the building's efficiency, and now Ty Mawr has not only been revitalised but also extended. Supported by funding from Neath Port Talbot Council and the Welsh Assembly Government's Social Housing Grant, Pobl has created a new-build section offering beautiful, high-quality social housing for twelve families.

Pontardawe Tinplate Works was a pivotal employer and community hub for two centuries, from opening in 1843 to closure in 1962. It brought jobs and productivity to the region, but its environmental impact was damaging. Today, though, Jo Brown and her team have found a way to serve the community and the environment with a project that ensures Pobl will end 2025 on a high note.

Whatever name this organisation goes by, it will continue to put people first, and it will continue to rise. Find out more about the Ty Mawr project [here](#)

Your Country, Your Choice

Six months from now, in May 2026, Senedd elections will go a long way to deciding how Wales is governed and how the country's public services are managed for the remainder of the 2020s. The People's Library isn't a politically-motivated organization and we're not affiliated with any political party. We don't believe in telling people who to vote for; we believe in sharing facts that enable informed decision-making. Starting with this newsletter, we're going to share information on where Wales's leading political parties stand on key issues, what they propose to do and how they propose to do it.

This month we're taking a look at each party's stated positions on **environmental** and **disability** issues.



Environmental Policy

Conservative Party

The Conservatives have pledged to scrap the Climate Change Act 2008, which was introduced by a Labour government and strengthened by a Tory government. The law committed the UK to cutting carbon emissions by 80% by 2050. In 2019 it updated to reaching net zero by 2050, meaning the UK must cut carbon emissions until it removes as much as it produces. The law passed with the support of all major parties. At their recent party conference, though, current Tory leader Kemi Badenoch said "Labour's laws tied us in red tape and loaded us with costs". Environmental groups responded by saying scrapping the law would be an act of "national self-harm".

Former Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May said the decision "upends 17 years of consensus between our main political parties and the scientific community". She added that "the science remains the same."

The 2008 law also established the Climate Change Committee, which advises the government on meeting the target. This committee would be scrapped if the law was revoked, and its rational, informed voice would be silenced.

At the 2025 Conservative Party conference, Kemi Badenoch promised to maximise extraction of oil and gas from the North Sea. Consequences would include:

- The release of vast amounts of carbon dioxide
- Scope 3 emissions from burning the fuel
- Release of chemicals, hydrocarbons, and microplastics into the sea, directly harming marine life, breaking down natural food webs and leading to a less diverse ecosystem.
- Oil spills will be a major long-term threat to marine ecosystems.

On environmental issues, the Conservative Party of 2025 appears to be turning its back on objective scientific fact and embracing courses of action that the scientific community, and the party's own previous leaders, have agreed is dangerous and irresponsible.

Green Party

The Green Party's environmental policies are, not surprisingly, admirable, but their economic policies are less impressive. They don't understand how money works. This is an extract from the party's official economic policy:

EC663 The existing banking system has failed and is no longer fit for purpose. The Green Party believes that the power to create money must be removed from private banks. The supply of our national currency must be fully restored to democratic and public control so that it can be issued free of debt and directed to environmentally and socially beneficial areas such as renewable energy, social housing, or support for community businesses.

EC664 A Green Government will therefore develop and implement a programme of banking reform based on the following principles:

- a) All national currency (both in cash and electronic form) will be created, free of any associated debt, by a National Monetary Authority (NMA) that is accountable to Parliament;
- b) The 1844 Bank Charter Act will be updated to prohibit banks from creating national currency in the form of electronic credit. To finance their lending, investment or proprietary trading activities, banks will have to borrow or raise the necessary national currency from savers and investors;
- c) The NMA will be mandated by law to manage the stock of national currency so that it is sufficient to support full employment, while avoiding general inflation in prices, and taking into account the development of local currencies (Ref. paragraph [EC678](#));
- d) Any new money created by the NMA will be credited to the account of the Government as additional revenue, to be spent into circulation in the economy in accordance with the budget approved by Parliament;
- e) The members of the NMA will be appointed – for fixed terms – by a Select Committee of Parliament;
- f) The independence and integrity of the NMA will be assured by law requiring NMA members and staff to be free of any conflict of interest; mandating full transparency of NMA decisions; and prohibiting lobbying or undue influence of NMA members or staff by government, financial institutions, corporations or any other private interest.

The People's Library disagrees with an unelected committee running economic policy. That's what we elect governments to do. Giving that power away looks suspiciously like a sign that you don't know how to do the job yourself. We disagree with inflation being the core of economic policy. Anti-inflationary measures are more valuable to people with wealth than people without it. We believe economic policy should be managed by accountable, elected leaders and should seek to create full employment, pay good wages and support the interests of labour as much as capital.

We also believe the Green Party's economic policy misunderstands what money is. In our world, money is simply a promise to pay. It comes into existence when a promise is made. It ceases to exist when the promise is fulfilled. For example, each of us creates money when we borrow from the bank and promise to repay the loan. We then fulfil the promise when we repay it.

Regardless of what we may have in our pockets at any given moment, in economic terms there is no physical object called "money". There's only a promise of payment. Without a promise to pay there is no such thing as money, and you can't create and distribute promises that don't exist between people and organisations that don't know they're making them.

This suggests that while the Green Party are admirable campaigners for environmental issues and should have a voice, they would be ineffective in government because their mishandling of the economy would make it impossible for them to fund their positive plans.

Labour

How did the Labour government's actions measure up to their promises in their first year in office? The Centre for Climate Engagement tracks the Government's green policy developments. The UK was one of the first countries to reveal its updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) at COP29, with a commitment to cut UK emissions by 81% before 2035.

Labour's flagship economic policy, the Green Prosperity Plan (GPP) was announced in 2021, and made a commitment to invest £28 billion a year - £140 billion across a five-year parliament - in green industries. It has now been reduced to £23.7 billion across five years, a reduction of 83%. This early u-turn created scepticism, raising concerns over Labour's ability to deliver results.

This government has faced difficult global challenges. Tariff disputes, and international conflicts have created an increasingly volatile landscape. The mission of delivering Clean Power by 2030 still stands and Labour are still committed to reaching net zero emissions by 2050.

Liberal Democrats

Lib Dems say climate change is an existential threat. Soaring temperatures leading to wildfires, floods, droughts and rising sea levels are affecting millions of people directly, and billions more through falling food production and rising prices.

They say soaring energy bills are hurting families and businesses, fuelling the cost-of-living crisis. Russia's assault on Ukraine has reinforced the need to significantly reduce the UK's dependence on fossil fuels and invest in renewables – both to cut energy bills and to deliver energy security.

Lib Dems are committed to cutting greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2045 at the latest. They propose to make homes warmer and cheaper to heat with a ten-year emergency upgrade programme, starting with free insulation and heat pumps for those on low incomes, and ensure that all new homes are zero-carbon. They propose to drive a rooftop solar revolution by expanding incentives for households to install solar panels, including a guaranteed fair price for electricity sold back into the grid. They propose to invest in renewable power so that 90% of the UK's electricity is generated from renewables by 2030.

Lib Dems have proposed to fund their green policies through new taxes on banks, energy companies, and tech giants, alongside cracking down on tax avoidance and evasion. For example, their 2024 manifesto suggests these measures could raise approximately £27 billion annually, which would help fund their climate policies and other spending commitments. Key policies include significant investment in renewable energy, a ten-year emergency home upgrade program, and potentially lowering household energy bills. These policies haven't been tested in government, but they are detailed and properly costed.

Plaid Cymru

Plaid Cymru's written pledges include a commitment to reaching net zero targets in Wales by 2035. To achieve this, every home and business in Wales would need to be powered by electricity only, and there would also need to be a complete change in the way farming is managed. The targets are welcome but Plaid haven't offered a detailed breakdown of how they would set about achieving them.

Plaid aims to reverse biodiversity decline by 2030. Again, this is admirable, but there isn't any detail available on how they would achieve this target.

Plaid has set out an ambition to create a Welsh Green New Deal, and to reform the Development Bank of Wales to enable it to invest in green infrastructure. That would enable public investment in (eg) wind farms, but there are no numbers to back it up. Plaid haven't suggested how much money they would commit or how much they think is needed.

Plaid's manifesto has a focus on fairness, with plans to tax wealth more progressively. Plaid also committed to introducing a social tariff for energy, meaning those who can't afford their bills would no longer be left without power.

Plaid have strongly called for reductions in single-use plastic, though, calling for Wales to lead the way in the UK by banning single-use plastic bags. Plaid have admirable green ambitions, but haven't yet shared details of how they would deliver and pay for them.

Reform UK

Reform UK opposes the UK's net zero target, arguing that it's an unnecessary cost and a threat to national security. The party advocates for expanding domestic fossil fuel extraction, such as oil, gas, and shale gas, while also investing in domestic energy sources like nuclear power.

Reform UK's official policy is to scrap the legally binding net zero target by 2050. Reform UK questions climate change: while an updated version of their manifesto removed unscientific statements, the party has previously questioned the scientific consensus on human-caused climate change.

Regarding fossil fuels, Reform supports increasing domestic oil and gas extraction through fast-track licences for North Sea production and test sites for shale gas (fracking). Fracking in the UK has already proved to be environmentally and geologically perilous; in the calendar year 2011, 58 earthquakes were reported in Lancashire as a direct result of drilling at the Preese Hall Well near Blackpool. Cuadrilla Resources, the drilling company responsible, shut down the well and filled it in. So a drilling company recognised the danger and stepped back, but a political party aspiring to govern is now ignoring it.

Reform proposes to scrap all renewable energy subsidies and has suggested a windfall tax on wind and solar power, which would make new large-scale projects impossible.



Reform UK has distanced itself from the current government's plans to invest in water industry infrastructure and halve sewage spills in this country by 2030. It seems reasonable to infer that if you vote for Reform UK, you're not quite defecating on your own doorstep, but you are allowing other people to do it, poisoning the water you drink and the air you breathe.

Disability Policy

Conservative Party

When the Conservative Party, then in government, launched its 2024 election manifesto, Disability Rights UK noted that there was no BSL interpreter present to relay information to deaf viewers.

Commitments included:

- An increase in NHS spending above inflation every year.
- Improving accessibility at train stations.
- Improving SEN school resources, with the creation of 15 new free schools for children with special educational needs.
- A new law to provide better treatment and support for people with severe mental health needs.

The manifesto also outlined plans to slim down the benefits system, announcing:

- A reform of disability benefits, so they are better targeted and reflect “genuine needs”
- A reform to work capability assessments.
- An overhaul of the fit note process so that people are not being signed off sick as a default.
- Introducing tougher sanction rules so people refusing to take up suitable jobs after 12 months on benefits could have benefits removed entirely.

It also pledged to explore bidding for the 2031 Special Olympics World Summer Games. Dan White, policy and campaigns officer at Disability Rights UK, commented that *“the Conservative manifesto was light on rights and services for disabled people. The intended benefit reforms will worry millions of disabled people living in poverty.”*

Where does the party stand now that it is no longer in government?

In October 2025, the disability news service reported that *“leading Tories have used misleading and offensive statements at their annual conference in Manchester to scapegoat disabled people who rely on support from the benefits system and whip up hostility towards them”*.

The disability news service further reported that:

The most offensive line may have come from Tory leader Kemi Badenoch, who told the conference yesterday: “I stand for a society where... the vulnerable are supported, but where freeloaders are told where to get off.”

Badenoch also appeared to suggest that she supported allowing disability hate speech to pass unpunished, telling Tory members: “I stand for a society where free speech trumps hurt feelings.”

The party also announced plans to prevent anyone other than British citizens from receiving social security support, if it regains power.

It appears that this would apply to disabled people with significant support needs and those who have legally worked in the country for years through indefinite leave to remain.

<https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/tory-trio-mislead-party-conference-on-disability-benefits-as-they-stir-up-hostility-towards-disabled-claimants/>

Green Party

The Green Party aligns closely with Disability Rights UK's position, endorsing the social model of disability, supporting the incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) into UK law, and co-producing policies with disabled people.

Key policy proposals include restoring disability benefit values, reforming intrusive welfare tests, improving transport and housing accessibility, and ensuring free transport for disabled pupils aged 16-18. As with its environmental policies, the Green Party's plans are admirable, but their economic proposals are less convincing. We look forward to seeing their take on financial management in 2026.

Labour

In its first year in government, Labour proposed significant reforms to disability benefits, targeting savings by focusing support on those with “higher needs”. This included an additional eligibility requirement of scoring at least 4 points on a single PIP daily living activity to receive the daily living component. This was projected to notably reduce income for millions of disabled people. After protests by its own MPs, Labour decided not to cut benefits for existing claimants and stated that cuts will only affect future claimants. On employment, Labour plans to introduce disability pay gap reporting and ensure that disabled people starting work can return to benefits without needing a reassessment. Labour also plans to introduce specialist employment advisors in Jobcentres and create a Reasonable Adjustment Passport to help disabled people find work.

Liberal Democrats

In 2024 Lib Dem party leader Ed Davey, a carer to a disabled son, announced measures including:

- Creation of a National Care Agency.
- Introduction of free personal care for older or disabled people at home.
- Increased carer allowance and wider eligibility
- Introduction of a statutory guarantee of regular respite breaks for unpaid carers.

- Introduction of paid carer's leave, building on the entitlement to unpaid employee leave.
- Making caring a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, requiring employers to make reasonable adjustments for employees with caring responsibilities.
- Introducing a young carers pupil premium as part of young carer education guarantees.
- Implementing policies of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, affirming and giving equal rights to disabled people in the UK.

Disability Rights UK has stated that Lib Dem policies put care and disability at the heart of its campaigning.

Plaid Cymru

Plaid Cymru's stated policies include the following:

- Adopting the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People into UK law to ensure accessibility and protect the human rights of disabled people.
- Free social care for all disabled and older people, without means-testing, and abolition of the distinction between nursing and personal care.
- No welfare reforms that cut benefits and increase poverty for disabled people (*and Plaid MPs have a track record of voting against these reforms*).
- Devolution of more powers to the Welsh Senedd to implement its disability policies, including those related to mental health and social care.
- Powers over mental health care to be devolved to Wales, with reforms to the Mental Health Act emphasising patient-centricity and co-production.
- Creation of an Autism Act for Wales.

- Appropriate physical accessibility for disabled pupils at all Welsh schools.
- Development of a national service strategy in partnership with organizations representing blind, partially sighted, and deaf people.

Plaid's policies have been praised by disability rights campaigners and educators.

Reform UK

Reform UK's position on disability benefits, as stated in their 2024 manifesto, includes reforming the system by making assessments for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Work Capability face-to-face, with independent medical assessments to verify eligibility. In October 2025 Lee Anderson, Reform UK MP and the party's Chief Whip, described the Motability scheme allowing disabled people to access funding for cars through the benefits system as "an absolute scandal". He suggested that disabled people should return to using the Invacar - short for "Invalid Carriage" - a small single-seater microcar that was used in the mid-20th century. It was illegal to carry a passenger in an Invacar, which isolated the disabled user from friends and family. Disabled people were prosecuted for using their Invacars to take their children to school, punishing them for attempting to fulfil the duties of a parent. Reform UK leader Nigel Farage has claimed that doctors are "massively over-diagnosing" children and adults with special educational needs and mental health conditions. Mr Farage has no medical training and has not substantiated these claims. The National Autistic Society and Rethink Mental Illness have called his statements "wildly inaccurate" and "out of touch", arguing that they perpetuate stigma and ignore the reality of long delays in diagnosis and support. Critics have highlighted a lack of specific, detailed plans for supporting disabled people in Reform UK's policy statements, arguing that the party's proposals have not been thought through and would deepen poverty and exclusion.

Taking Care of You

November 17th - 23rd is self-care week. Most of the information we've seen promoting self-care has focused on encouraging service-users to improve their health and well-being, enhancing their own quality of life and also helping to reduce the demand on healthcare services.

Good habits equate to better lives. But what about the service providers – the medical professionals, support workers and counsellors - who consistently go the extra mile for people in their care? How effectively are they managing their well-being? Are *you* taking care of you?

Physician, heal thyself

Variations on this biblical quote have echoed in many cultures and languages, and the message that doctors should look after their own health as well as that of their patients is equally pertinent for care workers and their clients. It's our privilege to help clients find a path to wellness, but if we neglect our own emotional state, we may find ourselves in no position to help anyone.

I'm Pinning All My Hopes On You

Clients may not often use that precise wording, but when their demeanour towards us makes it clear that they are depending on us in this way it can be a heavy load to carry. Caring professions tend to attract empathisers, and when we open ourselves up to a client's pain, the impact on our own emotional and physical well-being can be insidious. What's your approach to self-care? Are you open to the idea in the first place? If you are, do you have tried and tested coping strategies in place? We'd like to explore some options.

Space To Breathe

When you finish one client session, how often do you open the door immediately to another? It may be tempting to maximise the time available to us – and how often do we say and hear that there aren't enough hours in the day? – but leaving a suitable gap between sessions is a valuable precaution. Take 15 or 30 minutes to resolve and let go of any issues that may have arisen in your previous session.

Offering your next client a clean slate will benefit them and you. By contrast, if we allow the emotional baggage to pile up over the course of a day, we might struggle to emerge from underneath it.

Time To Recharge



At the end of the working day, it can be helpful to have a routine that draws a line in the sand and releases you to enjoy “me” time. Maybe it's the journey home? Maybe it's something you do along the way? For those of us working remotely, it's not always straightforward to separate work space and personal space.

If you can, confine sessions to a dedicated office and, at the end of the working day, leave it and close the door behind you. And beware of your world shrinking around you. It's too easy to slip into a routine of work-eat-sleep-repeat that sees our lives reduced to joyless essentials. When people speak of being “world weary” it's often because they've allowed their world to become a small place. This can creep up on us over time, and the knowledge that we're providing an important service with clear social utility can excuse it and block us from correcting it.

Body Of Evidence

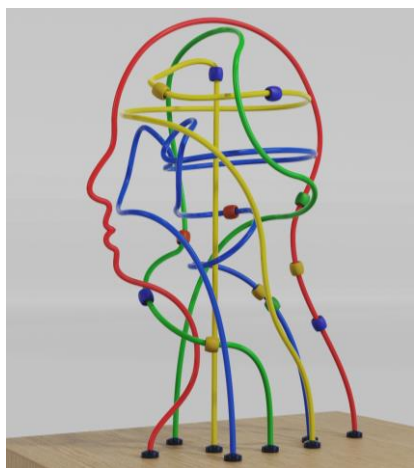
Our physical condition often reflects and feeds back into our emotional wellness. Maintaining a balanced diet may not be the most original piece of advice, but it's among the soundest. Nutritious meals can fuel us for work that demands alertness and resilience. Lack of sleep can undo good work and undermine preparation. Does your routine allow for healthy eating at the right times? How many hours a night do you sleep, and is it restful? I've heard experienced professionals say with a swagger that they are "running on empty" but still getting the job done. Even if it's true, that doesn't make it good practice. Running on a full tank inevitably delivers a better job performance, as well as a healthier performer.

Feeding The Right Wolf

Many of you will be familiar with the Native American tale of a tribal elder explaining the principle of internal conflict to a child by depicting the positive and negative voices in each of our minds as two wolves fighting for supremacy. When the young person asks which wolf wins, the elder answers "*whichever one we feed*". Care professionals who encourage positive self-talk in their clients should practice what they preach. You're a talented, dedicated specialist whose work improves people's lives. You're allowed to feel good about that. You're allowed to feel good about who and what you are. Give yourself credit. When your work with a vulnerable client moves them one step closer to the life they want to live, celebrate that step. It's important for them and for you. You're doing a job that matters and you're doing it honourably, professionally and well. Feed the right wolf.

Be Kind To Your Mind

Reading for pleasure can be wonderfully relaxing, and nurturing a talent for painting, photography or creative writing can help to keep stress at arm's length. Improving our cognitive skills can have a hugely positive impact on our quality of life. The hippocampus, the part of the brain that stores and consolidates information into long-term memories and spatial navigation, can be trained and refreshed at any age.



A 2012 study at Lund University in Southern Sweden revealed that learning languages provides ideal training for the brain, actually causing parts of the hippocampus and cerebral cortex to grow. Students introduced to new languages found that their ability to absorb and retain information was enhanced in ways that general education couldn't achieve. The act of juggling sets of vocabulary and grammatical rules automatically trains us to be more efficient multitaskers.

If learning a new language feels like too much of a stretch, try testing your numeracy or playing word games. That may not sound like everyone's idea of chill-out time, but the gamification of learning has made it far easier for us to challenge ourselves in ways that are relaxing and enjoyable. Learning new skills and refreshing existing skills makes us more receptive to new information and better able to retain it. It helps us think more clearly for longer, and it helps us compartmentalise and cope with issues far more effectively.

Heal yourself.

Care for yourself.

Your work makes a positive difference. You make a positive difference.

Look after yourself. You're worth it.

Next Week's TV Highlights

Saturday, November 22nd SKY ACTION MOVIES FLIGHT

Denzel Washington is an airline pilot who flies his plane upside down in an attempt to avoid an accident. As good as Washington is, you can't help wondering how much more entertaining this might have been with Donald Trump in the lead. As well as the hilarious upside-down hair, he would have messaged about what an excellent job he was doing right up to the moment the plane crashed

Sunday November 23rd SKY FAMILY CHANNEL DUMBO

Plenty of money was spent on this live action remake, and noisy new characters pop up every 30 seconds, but the result is so boring you'll end up wishing one of them was an ivory poacher. The ideal children's film, if your children have done something bad and deserve to be punished.

Monday November 24th DISCOVERY CHANNEL UFOs, THE LOST EVIDENCE

Babbling middle-aged conspiracy theorists who clearly still live with their parents look at floods, earthquakes and great works of construction and tell us they were secretly planned by aliens but the evidence has been lost. Makes you wonder what they write on their insurance claim forms.

Tuesday November 25th ITV2 REAL HOUSEWIVES OF BISHOPSTON

All your favourites are here. Gwen, who drinks too much white wine and swears she was a bridesmaid at Catherine Zeta Jones's wedding, Bethan, who drinks too much white wine and swears she sang backing vocals on Total Eclipse of the Heart, and Glenys, who drinks too much white wine and swears she was first choice to play Stacey in Gavin and Stacey but had to quit over a scheduling conflict with her modelling job at Argos catalogues.

Wednesday November 26th SKY HORROR PSYCHO

Fun fact: Psycho started out as a ten-minute public information film about the dangers of leaving your bathroom door unlocked when taking a shower.

Thursday November 27th SKY SCI-FI STAR TREK MARATHON

Six Star Trek movies with the original series cast are on back-to-back. If you have nothing else to do, treat it as a 12-hour drinking game. Every time McCoy says "Dammit Jim", drink a shot of vodka. Every time Spock says "illogical", drink a shot of tequila. Every time Kirk hesitates in mid-sentence because William Shatner's struggling to remember the lines, drink a shot of whisky. Better stock up on whisky

Friday November 28th AMAZON PRIME VIDEO CASABLANCA

The greatest movie ever made. Also, incidentally, the greatest romantic drama ever made, the greatest thriller ever made and the greatest war film ever made, with jokes that were written over 80 years ago and are still funny, and a love story so heart-rending it makes Romeo and Juliet look like an auntie on a hen night snogging her son-in-law outside a kebab shop at 2am. Perfectly written, directed and acted, and no matter what Bogart says at the end, it amounts to a very large hill of beans. If you've never seen it, your life is a cultural void. If you've seen it and don't like it, you're just plain weird.



Forthcoming events

Friday November 21st

Waterfront Winterland

Swansea's annual bayside fun fair begins on Friday and remains open until January 4th. It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

Sunday November 23rd

Swansea Christmas Parade 5pm – 6.30pm

Starting at the Guildhall, then on to St Helen's Road and Kingsway, across College Street, down Castle Street and Caer Street, and finishing on Princess Way. Enjoy performances by dancers, bands, and choirs, with a variety of floats, inflatables, and light-up characters. And some beardy guy in a red suit will turn on the Christmas lights,

Thursday November 27th – Saturday November 29th

Swansea Fringe Festival

Three days of music, dance and art, with over a hundred performances across a dozen venues. There really is something for everyone.

<https://www.swanseafringe.com/>

Sunday November 30th

Friends of the Young Disabled Christmas Fayre 11am – 4.30pm

Support one of Wales's longest standing and most admirable charities at their fun Christmas gathering.

The Gordon Moore Centre, 300 Carmarthen Road, Swansea SA5 8NJ

Get Connected

To find out more about People's Library projects, take part in our 2026 forums or contribute to our forthcoming newsletters and other publications, email us at hello@peopleslibrary.co.uk or visit our website <https://www.peopleslibrary.co.uk/>

To learn more about Oriel Science exhibitions, contact them on 01792 919539 or visit their city centre premises at 21 Castle Street

To enquire about food, drink and party bookings at Llwyn Country House, call 01554 899994 or email enquiries@llwyncountryhouse.co.uk

To learn more about Pobl projects, visit their website:
<https://www.poblgroup.co.uk/>

To watch Casablanca on Amazon Prime, click [here](#)

To watch it on YouTube, click [here](#)

To watch it free at my house, call me