Wales Elects

SENEDD ELECTIONS – MAY 6th 2021

No more lockdowns in Wales



Nathan Gill, Leader of Reform UK, Wales



If Wales has another full-scale national lockdown, it will be a huge policy failure by politicians

THE DEFAULT POSITION of many countries over the past year when there has been a rise in Covid-19 cases has been to lockdown the entire nation. Back in March 2020, when we had the first UK lockdown, choosing this path had some logic. The virus was spreading, and we had little information about who was at risk. Countries went into lockdown one by one, and it was an easy option to follow the crowd rather than stand out on our own against it.

A year on and with such rich data on the population and the effect of Covid-19 we believe that following the same path in the future would be madness.



So what have we learned?

Let's start with the worst-case scenario of deaths. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reports how many have occurred with Covid-19 mentioned on the death certificate. At the time of writing this, the number was 137,334 across England and Wales. For every life cut short, we should pause and remember the heartbreak for each family. Remember, while a death is a statistic, to each family it is far more than that.

The statistics help us understand who is most susceptible to Covid-19. It shows that 83% of all the deaths have been for those aged 70 and over. For those

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BREXIT PARTY

After 22 years of Welsh Labour rule, it is time to reform Wales

DEMOCRATIC accountability and bringing democracy closer to the people was the raison d'être for The Brexit Party, which very much remains the case for Reform UK following our recent name change now that Brexit has been delivered.

We acknowledge devolution isn't working at the moment, but we strongly believe this is because of third rate politicians, put in place by the Welsh Labour machine, who would not last five minutes at a senior

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How does Wales elect people for its Parliament?

— the voting system explained



There are 60 candidates elected to represent Wales in the elections. 40 through a system like Westminster elections, where the candidate with the most votes wins. This happens even if most people didn't vote for them, i.e. the majority voted for a combination of other candidates.

Wales elects a further 20 candidates through a second ballot, where you choose a party only. The regional vote uses proportional representation known as the Additional Member System. This helps to overcome the imbalance often associated with first-past-the-post elections. The ballot lists names representing each party in the region, and a vote for a party is a vote to make more of their candidates into Members of the Senedd. There are five regions of Wales with four candidates elected in each.

Constituency vote

First past the post favours larger and traditional parties. Smaller parties and independents struggle to get enough support to win outright, even though they could get a significant percentage of the vote.

Regional vote

Each region in Wales comprises eight constituencies. A count of the first past the post ballot papers identifies the eight winners of the constituency vote.

Following this, a count of the second ballot papers identifies the four remaining candidates for the region. Depending on how many seats a party wins on the first ballot, the additional members allocated from the regional list aims to make the Welsh Parliament match how the country voted.

The good news is that with this system every vote matters. If just 1 in 10 of you vote for Reform UK in your region on the regional vote, you will elect us to represent you. It is time to get politicians in the Senedd that work for the people, and not those who expect the people to work for them.



No more full-scale lockdowns in Wales

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who have died younger, data from NHS England suggest less than 1% of deaths were among people aged under 60 with no underlying health condition.

We need to remember these statistics do not tell us if Covid-19 caused the death. Some people will have died for other reasons but had the virus and a positive test. We can understand the scale of the pandemic by ignoring the cause of death and looking at how many deaths occurred from all causes and compare that to how many typically occur.

It was around the first week of March 2020 we started seeing the rise in deaths with Covid-19. Since then to 19 March 2021, there have been 672,533 deaths registered in England and Wales from all causes. Over the same period between 2015 and 2019, there was an average of 556,892 deaths registered. We can say the pandemic has led to over 100,000 people losing their life who would be with us today had Covid-19 never hit these shores. The exact number who died specifically because they caught Covid-19 we will never know. Lockdowns would have meant fewer deaths from causes such as road accidents, but increased deaths from people avoiding visiting hospitals or other treatment cancelled. We know the pandemic prematurely ended lives.

Economic and wider health impact

Much of the discussion of the past year has been on the health impact of the virus. Daily we learn the number of fresh cases, number of recent deaths but little on the number of fresh job losses and business closures.

Between February 2020 and February 2021 around 700,000 fewer people were on payrolls in the UK. The true impact will be higher as this excludes the impact on the self-employed. For each person, this is a significant life event that causes huge turmoil on the individual and their family. The total cost in payments through the furlough scheme up to 15 March 2021 across the UK was £58 billion. This does not even include the loss in tax revenues because people have not been earning and paying tax, and the wider economy being closed. We have recently been spending £139 million per day on job support, even when the data would suggest it is much safer to allow people back to work. Remember this is not Government money, this is our money.

Moving forward

Since the rollout of the vaccine, we have seen a rapid increase in population-wide antibodies against the virus which grows daily. Of course, not everyone will choose to have the vaccine, and for some they cannot have it. But we are reaching levels where the vaccine is winning the battle against Covid. We are approaching so called 'herd immunity' if we haven't reached it already.

With all of the data we have, with the understanding of who is at risk, and with several vaccines on the table, should we enter another full-scale lockdown in the future, this would be a massive policy failure by the politicians.

We have not yet started the hangover from the past year, with missed health diagnosis just the tip of the iceberg. We need to learn from the mass data gathering to manage any future pandemics far more effectively. Do we trust those in charge at the moment to do that? Sadly, we don't.

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level in business. This has been the case now for 22 years and Welsh Labour's time in power has left many communities across Wales with high levels of poverty and deprivation. Labour has lived off the fact that generations of voters have defaulted to voting Labour as they were seen as the party of the working man and woman. But the Labour party of the past 20 years and today, is not the party your parents and grandparents voted for.

Labour's policies have done a lot of damage to Wales, but this doesn't mean we should throw the baby out with the bathwater and cancel devolution. Neither does it mean we should support the separatists who would break up our precious union.

Reform UK believes a strong voice in Wales will strengthen the United Kingdom. We are proud of Wales and its people and believe Wales is not just another region of England, it is a nation within the UK. Wales has national sports teams that compete at the highest level internationally, winning the recent Rugby Six Nations and reaching the semi-finals of the 2016 football UEFA European Championships. We have a unique history and heritage and our own traditions. Wales is a nation that is more than capable of taking decisions for itself. Handing power over Wales to the Tories in Westminster would be a backwards step for Wales.

In recent years calls for independence and abolishing the parliament have grown, but they remain a noisy minority. Recent polls put support for each at around 15 per cent. But while there is no mandate for either, we recognise the argument needs to be settled, which is why Reform UK supports a referendum to settle both issues. We feel this is important so that our nation can unite and move forward. We will actively campaign to keep governance in Wales and we will oppose separation from the UK.

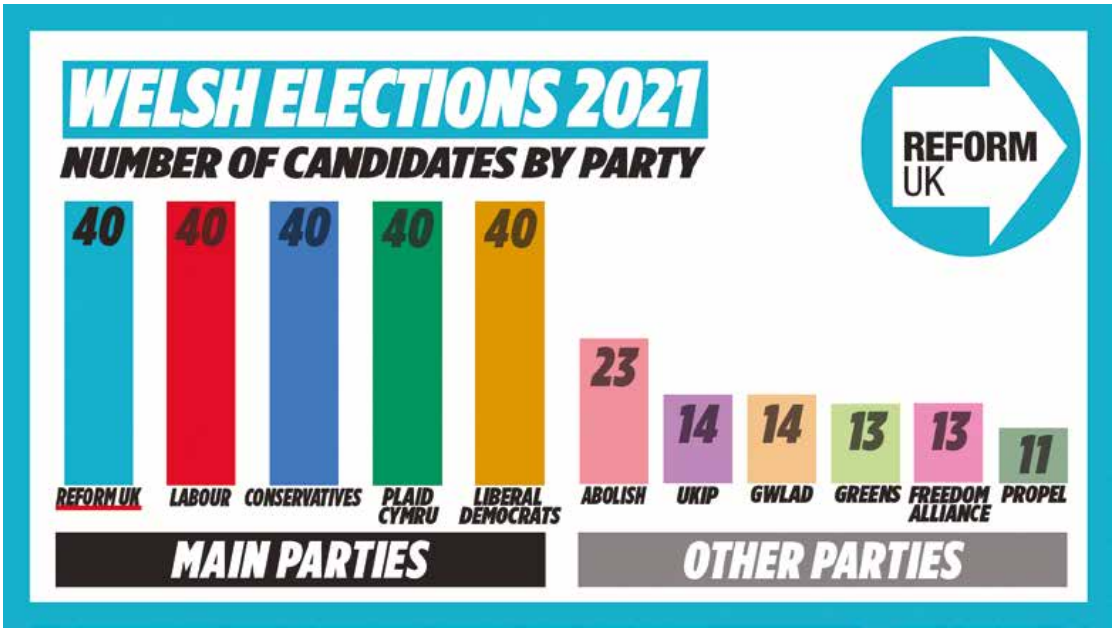
Reform UK has a credible economic plan to put money back into people's pockets because we know this is the best way to help grow local economies. One of our key policies is to raise the threshold at which people start paying income tax to £20,000. Doing this will ensure all front-line workers get a permanent pay rise.

Health and social care workers have worked hard during the pandemic, but so have supermarket workers, delivery drivers and many other key workers that didn't get a one-off bonus from the Labour Party days before the election was called. The pandemic has left many people out of work and as they return, we want more of the money they earn to go in their pocket to spend and boost their local economy.

By reducing inequalities on income, we can reduce health and educational inequalities, the very thing that is holding people back in Wales. If you believe in Wales, but recognise something needs to change, you now have a choice.

Reform UK was formed from the Brexit Party. We helped to get Brexit done and now we want to reform Wales. If just one in ten people vote for Reform UK on the regional list we will get people elected. Help us to reform Wales by voting us on 6th May.







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