

Acknowledgements

Polls Apart Cymru is a joint project between Scope Cwmpas Cymru, the Disability Rights Commission Wales and Scope's campaigns team.

We would like to thank everyone who completed a Polls Apart Cymru survey. Your help is very much appreciated.

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Cover photograph Mandi Glover, Chair Scope Cwmpas Cymru
outside caravan polling station in the Vale of Glamorgan. Photo by
Stella Hughes

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Summary

Polls Apart Cymru is an evaluation of the accessibility of the polling stations used on 1 May 2003 for elections to the National Assembly of Wales.

Polls Apart is a campaign to make polling stations accessible to disabled voters throughout the UK. Previous Polls Apart research has looked at Welsh constituencies but this was the first time an all-Wales evaluation has taken place.

Scope Cwmpas Cymru, the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) Wales and Scope's campaigns team provided the framework for the campaign. The project received a grant from the National Assembly of Wales.

Polls Apart research is provided by campaign volunteers who complete a survey when they vote. Polls Apart Cymru received 363 survey forms back covering 322 polling stations. Every constituency in Wales was covered.

The survey contained questions on a wide range of access issues. We also asked the people who completed the survey to comment on their experiences and to highlight examples of good or bad practice.

We were able to compare the results of Polls Apart Cymru with Polls Apart 3. This research was undertaken for the 2001 General Election and found that 66% of polling stations surveyed in Wales were inaccessible. Polls Apart Cymru found that 77% of all the polling stations surveyed were inaccessible.

An explanation for this increase may be that Polls Apart 3 underestimated the problems as in Polls Apart Cymru we examined more polling stations in more constituencies giving us more accurate results.

Whichever way we look at it, access to polling stations in Wales is poor. Over one in four of the polling stations we surveyed failed a basic access test. There are 13,000 disabled people on average in each constituency many of whom would find it difficult or impossible to vote.

As with all parliamentary, local, and European elections in the UK, Returning Officers for the National Assembly elections had a duty to ensure that wherever possible polling stations were accessible and that they conformed to duties laid down in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Human Rights Act 1998 and the Representation of the People Act 2000.

Polls Apart Cymru revealed that transport to the polling station is an issue for many disabled people. Getting to the polling station is not easy without a car in many areas. This means that planning transport becomes a key issue when making elections in Wales accessible.

This report is not designed to criticise the work of Electoral Administrators and Returning Officers though we hope they will take on board many of the issues we have raised. There were examples of good practice and many people who returned surveys commented on how welcoming and helpful polling station staff were.

Some of our recommendations are very simple and can be adopted in every polling station with minimum cost, for example: using low-level voting booths and ballot boxes, turning on the lights in polling stations and make sure large print ballot papers are displayed at a readable height.

We remain concerned that polling stations will not be made accessible by October 2004. This date is when regulations concerning physical access to buildings come in to force as part of the Disability Discrimination Act Part III.

We hope that some of the ideas generated by the Polls Apart Cymru campaign volunteers included in this report will help identify how access can be improved.

Key statistics	
Inaccessible polling stations	77%
People who had to travel more than ½ mile to vote	42%
People who travelled to their polling station by public transport	1%
Polling stations without designated parking for disabled people	75%
Polling stations without level access to the entrance	54%
Polling stations without level access inside	10%
Polling stations without a low level booth	36%
Polling stations without a large print copy of the ballot paper	23%
Polling stations that were not well lit	29%
Polling stations without a low-level ballot box	35%
People who found polling station staff welcoming and helpful	85%
Number of surveys returned	363
Polling stations surveyed	322

Background to Polls Apart Cymru

Polls Apart Cymru is an evaluation of the accessibility of polling stations used on 1 May 2003 for elections to the National Assembly of Wales.

“Until I filled in the survey I had always assumed the process of voting was easy. You turn up, vote and leave. But I now realise that many disabled people have to overcome a long and needless obstacle course just to get to the ballot box.”

Polls Apart 3 User Evaluation 2001, Ceredigion

The history of Polls Apart

Over a number of years disability campaigners felt too little was being done to remove the barriers that disabled people encountered at polling stations. Although disabled people knew they were being excluded from the democratic process they felt that too few people in power took the issue seriously.

To counter this, Scope in 1992 launched Polls Apart. The campaign focused on getting as much evidence as possible on the accessibility of polling stations throughout England and Wales. The results were startling. Over 90% of all polling stations were inaccessible in some way.

At every General Election since 1992 we have repeated the survey. We have worked with politicians, electoral administrators and other organisations with an interest in democracy to try to improve access. Changes to legislation have helped, as disabled people are now protected in law from discrimination. Many local authorities have also taken on board the need to run accessible elections. But progress is slow. At the 2001 General Election 66% of polling stations in Wales were still inaccessible.

Social model

Polls Apart campaigns from the perspective of the social model of disability. This simply means we believe that society has created barriers that exclude disabled people and that these barriers can and should be removed.

The barriers that disabled people encounter when voting can take many forms; from polling stations with steps leading up to them to polling cards written in small print to the attitude of polling station staff. Each of these barriers can be removed; polling stations can be made accessible or moved to an accessible building, polling cards can be designed using a larger font size and polling staff can receive disability equality training.

Polls Apart Cymru

Since its inception in 1992 Polls Apart has covered Wales. Welsh campaigners have surveyed polling stations and the results have been fed into a UK-wide picture of accessibility. The results however pointed to distinct access issues which are particular or more prevalent in a Welsh context.

Although we were able to get information on the accessibility of polling stations in Wales during the 2001 General Election, we needed to get more specific data. There were issues such as the distance people had to travel to vote which could only be explored if we tailored the campaign to reflect the Welsh experience specifically.

Welsh disability campaigners were also keen that the accessibility of the elections to the National Assembly was fully evaluated. Limited Polls Apart research was undertaken for the first Assembly elections but this did not cover the whole of Wales.

Scope Cwmpas Cymru in partnership the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) Wales decided to undertake research into the accessibility of the 2003 National Assembly Elections. It was decided that the research would follow the same format as Polls Apart but have a Welsh focus. This also enabled previous statistics to be used as a benchmark with which to compare accessibility. The research was given the title Polls Apart Cymru.

Scope's campaigns team was asked to contribute to the research as they had a considerable wealth of knowledge on researching the accessibility of polling stations.

Polls Apart Cymru was run from the Scope Cwmpas Cymru office in Cardiff but with the active support of both the DRC Wales and Scope's campaigns team. The success of the campaign is largely due to the hard work of the staff of these organisations.

The campaign has also received the support of the National Assembly of Wales, which has kindly contributed a grant to part fund the project.

Objectives of Polls Apart Cymru

Polls Apart Cymru has twin objectives:

- To assess the accessibility of the National Assembly for Wales election in May 2003
- To identify examples of good practice and accessible polling stations

Disability Access Review (Wales)

Polls Apart works in partnership with the Electoral Commission on a range of projects. The research data gathered by Polls Apart Cymru has also been shared with The Electoral Commission's Disability Access Review (Wales).

Obligation to be accessible

As in all parliamentary, local and European elections in the UK, returning officers for the National Assembly elections had to ensure that the processes they were using were accessible.

Specifically they had to make sure they were compliant with the:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Representation of the People Act 2000

Failure to ensure that an election is accessible, and that disabled people can vote in secret, is a serious breach of this legislation.

Excluding the electorate

There are 13,000 disabled people on average in each constituency. This figure is based on Disability Rights Commission research that one in seven people across the UK has an impairment, although this is likely to be higher in Wales.

Most impairments are not immediately apparent, that is to say people do not notice them.

Disabled people are not a homogeneous group, and different people encounter very different access barriers. To ensure that an election is accessible it is necessary as a minimum to consider the needs of the following groups:

- Visually impaired people including people with some vision
- Hearing impaired people including people with some hearing

- People with communication impairments such as dyslexia or limited speech or no speech
- People with learning disabilities and people with low literacy levels
- People with co-ordination and or mobility impairments
- People with neurological impairments including those with aphasic (loss of speech) conditions

Older people

Many people acquire impairments in old age. When this happens there is often a perception that they are not disabled. The barriers that older people with impairments encounter are exactly the same as other disabled people.

Older people, however, may not be aware that the support that is provided for disabled people is also relevant to them.

Polls Apart Cymru research methodology

Polls Apart research is based on the hard work of individual disability campaigners. Each Polls Apart campaigner completes an access survey of the polling stations they use to vote. This is known as a “user evaluation”. Many comments from the user evaluations are included in this report. These are returned to us, collated and analysed. Collectively they help to build up a picture of the accessibility of an election.

We also contact returning officers to ask if they are aware of any specific access problems or if they have any examples of good practice.

Polls Apart Cymru survey

The survey for the 2003 National Assembly elections was based on previous Polls Apart research. We asked our campaign volunteers to look at 30 key access issues. A central core of questions remained identical to the survey used for the 2001 General Election. This enabled us to assess whether accessibility had improved.

The Polls Apart Cymru survey was developed to reflect Welsh issues. We did this by adding a number of new questions such as the distance people have to travel to a polling station to vote.

As with all surveys we could not include all the questions we would have liked but we did try to keep the questions balanced and to ensure they reflected the whole range of access issues. We included comments boxes within the survey form to encourage campaign volunteers to highlight issues they thought were of particular importance.

The campaign volunteers

The campaign volunteers were gathered from a wide section of the community. These ranged from Assembly Members and Members of Parliament to grassroots campaigners. Many of those involved had helped us with previous Polls Apart research, or were Welsh members of Scope's Campaigns Network.

DRC Wales and Cwmpas Cymru sent the survey to everyone on their mailing lists and the campaign was promoted in the press.

Processing the research

Central to the campaign was an accessible website. Campaigners could download surveys and the guidance notes or input their results directly online. There were two parallel sites: www.pollsapartcymru.org.uk and a Welsh equivalent www.etholiadauneithrio.org.uk. All material was also produced on paper, bilingually and in alternative formats.

'Thank you for giving me the opportunity to take part in this survey; my first experience as a disabled voter was certainly eye-opening.'

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Ceredigion

Results

363 Polls Apart Cymru surveys were returned. These looked at 322 different polling stations. Every part of Wales was covered and we received forms back from every constituency.

We have estimated that approximately 3,000 polling stations were used for the National Assembly elections. So our results roughly cover 10% of all polling stations.

Overall accessibility

Polls Apart Cymru found that 77% of all the polling stations surveyed for the 2003 Assembly elections were inaccessible.

How we measure accessibility

Each polling station is considered separately. We consider a polling station to be accessible if it meets six simple tests:

1. Is there level access into it?
2. If there is a ramp to improve access is it appropriately designed?
3. Is there level access inside the polling station?
4. Is there enough room for a disabled person to move around?
5. Is there a low-level polling booth?
6. Is there a large print version of the ballot paper on display?

Previous Polls Apart research also required polling stations to be adequately signposted. This test was removed for Polls Apart 3 as the vast majority of polling stations were adequately identified.

Is access getting better?

In 2001 Polls Apart 3 found that 66% of Welsh polling stations were inaccessible. By 2003 this has increased to 77%. Access appears to be getting worse for Welsh voters. This is very disappointing.

We had hoped that we would see a dramatic increase in the accessibility of polling stations as we draw closer to October 2004. This date is when new duties concerning physical access to buildings come into force as part of the Disability Discrimination Act Part III.

There may have been some local factors which could have increased the inaccessibility of polling stations in a few local authorities. Two councils were particularly unlucky. The company they were using to provide accessible mobile polling stations went out of business. These problems however do not explain why access seems to have become worse across Wales.

A more likely explanation is that the survey in 2001 underestimated the problems. In 2001 Polls Apart 3 received 77 surveys from Wales. Polls Apart Cymru may simply be more accurate. We examined more polling stations in more constituencies. When we grouped the accessibility of polling stations by local authority the average accessibility was also 77%.

Whichever way we look at it access to polling stations in Wales is poor. Over one in four of the polling stations we surveyed failed a basic access test.

‘At this election, three polling stations were not accessible, these have been used many times despite complaints from us.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Ynys Mon

‘For a number of years I have been complaining that my polling station is not accessible. It was a small touring caravan that I could only just get into. I was overjoyed that when I came to vote this year it had gone. When I jokingly asked what had happened to the caravan I was told that they had simply moved it to the next ward.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Vale of Glamorgan

‘I spoke with the polling clerk, she was amazed that the polling station had been relocated within the school to a less accessible area than normal.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Caerphilly

‘I was asked if I wanted the voting paper brought outside to me! The ground outside was uneven and potholed and littered with broken glass.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Newport East

Some local authorities recognised that access would be a problem at polling stations and took steps to minimise its impact. Swansea realised that many of its polling stations would not be accessible and took a proactive approach.

‘We have informed the electors of the access problems and asked them if they wish to consider the postal vote as an alternative. I understand this will not be acceptable after October 2004 but I would rather hold my hands up now than face the problems on the day. This letter went out to some 15,000 electors and we have had a really good response to the letter.’

Response from the City and County of Swansea

Although we do not believe that a postal vote is a reasonable alternative for making polling stations accessible we welcome Swansea's general approach. We were pleased that they both recognised there was a problem and that it had to be solved by October 2004 when regulations concerning the physical access to building come into force as part of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Monmouthshire reviewed all buildings to be used as polling stations and informed voters on their polling card where they thought there might be access problem.

Getting to the polling station

The Polls Apart Cymru survey asked about how people got to the polling station and how far they had to travel. This was the first time a Polls Apart survey had asked these questions. We did so because we felt that in Wales transport and distance to the polling station may be important when considering overall accessibility.

<p>How did you get to the polling station?</p> <p>By public transport 1%</p> <p>By car 68%</p> <p>On foot / using a wheelchair 31%</p>	<p>It is not surprising that the majority of the people who completed our survey used a car to travel to their polling station. According to Regional Trends Comparative Indicators, a document published by the Office for National statistics, 70% of households in Wales have access to a car.</p> <p>What is interesting is that so few people used public transport to get to their polling station. In many areas this might be because it is less convenient than waiting for a bus or it might just be that the bus route doesn't go past the polling station. This can make voting difficult if you do not have access to a vehicle.</p> <p>'The polling station is right at the other end of the village. Getting there is a nightmare unless you drive which I don't.'</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Clwyd South</p> <p>'For wheelchair users or elderly unable to walk far a car was needed because of a steep hill.'</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Newport East</p> <p>'The polling station was well off the beaten track without any public bus service available.'</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Preseli Pembrokeshire</p>
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<p>How far is the polling station from home?</p> <p>Less than ½ mile 57%</p> <p>Between ½ mile and 1 mile 29%</p> <p>More than 1 mile 14%</p>	<p>Over 40% of people responding to our survey had to travel over ½ mile to vote. One person had to travel over three miles. Many people commented that access could be improved if there was accessible transport provided between home and the polling station. This service, once routinely provided by political parties, appears to be less common now.</p> <p>‘Offer transport especially in rural areas. The various political parties no longer appear to openly offer this.’ Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Monmouth</p> <p>‘I live a very great distance from the polling station and cannot get to it without a car. My brother has to visit me and take me there and back. It would be easier if in areas like mine there was a mobile polling station. You can get everything else delivered.’ Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Meirionnydd Nant Conwy</p> <p>Transport to polling stations is an issue for many disabled people and is something that should be considered when examining the suitability of a polling station.</p>
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<p>Is there designated parking for disabled people?</p>	<p>Parking is important for people with mobility impairments. Without adequate parking for disabled people a polling station becomes inaccessible.</p>
<p>Yes 25%</p>	<p>‘It was impossible to park on a narrow country lane, I had to leave car on main road and walk up a fairly steep hill for approximately 150 yards. It would be impossible for wheelchair users and other disabled people to vote here.’</p>
<p>No 75%</p>	<p>Polis Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Conwy</p>
	<p>‘Generally speaking the polling station was OK - just it was lack of designated parking would have deterred people with mobility impairments.’</p>
	<p>Polis Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Cardiff Central</p>
	<p>‘Parking is haphazard along the edge of open grassland. Uneven, slippery and damp underfoot. It would not be accessible without assistance, and totally inaccessible to wheelchair users.’</p>
	<p>Polis Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Vale of Glamorgan</p>
	<p>Most public buildings should have reserved spaces for disabled people to park close to the entrance. It is important that accessible parking is included in any access evaluation of a polling station. Where there is a limited amount of parking it should be retained for disabled people.</p>

Location of polling stations

The Polls Apart Cymru survey asked campaign volunteers to specify what type of building the polling station was in.

Type of building	2003 (Wales)	2001 (UK)
School	24%	26%
Community Centre	41%	38%
Town Hall	2%	1%
Library	1%	3%
Place of Worship	12%	10%
Portacabin	3%	3%
Other	17%	19%

The results from Wales in 2003 broadly mirrored the types of building used across the UK.

'Other' buildings used as polling stations included Young Farmers halls, art centres, working men's clubs, leisure centres, a college of further education, a "rundown entertainment facility" and a bowling green meeting room. There were also a large proportion of church and village halls. We were disappointed that there was not a greater range of venues, especially more modern buildings.

The Disability Discrimination Act

From October 2004 the majority of these polling stations will fall under Disability Discrimination Act regulations concerning the physical access to buildings. The owners of these buildings will have to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that they are accessible to disabled people.

Caravans are not accessible

It is highly unlikely that a touring caravan will ever be accessible. It seems obvious but we would recommend that local authorities stop using caravans as polling stations.

‘At this polling station you would have to bring all materials and a box out of the caravan for a physically disabled person to vote.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Caerphilly

‘How much less accessible can you get? Low-level polling booth? No polling booth at all - it won't fit inside a touring caravan!!!’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Vale of Glamorgan

Getting into the polling station

We asked people completing the survey about how difficult it would be for a disabled person to get into the polling station.

Is there level access into the polling station?	Over half the polling stations did not have level access. This is a basic and simple requirement that is common practice for most shops, bars, and community buildings.
Yes 46%	Not having level access excludes voters. The most obvious group of people are wheelchair users but this is only the start. People with mobility impairments including many older people also find steps difficult.
No 54%	'A disabled gentlemen was voting at the time I completed the survey - his assistant helped him up the step, he couldn't have managed alone.' Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Conwy
	'Staff said they had had comments about the instability of the free-standing narrow steps, and its effect on people with hip/knee replacements, and a generally ageing population.' Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Vale of Glamorgan
	'I had to ask a passer-by to go and ask the polling staff for assistance, because there was a step up into the churchyard, so I couldn't even get close to the polling station. I was lifted up that step and the one into the polling station. One of the staff commented that 'we didn't order a ramp this year'.' Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Ceredigion

<p>If there was a ramp was it appropriately designed?</p> <p>Yes 57%</p> <p>No 43%</p>	<p>Ramps can make older buildings far more accessible but they need to be safe. There is no point in using a ramp if it doesn't work. Badly designed ramps are not only access barriers they are dangerous. Ramps should always be accompanied by a hand rail.</p> <p>'The polling staff removed the ramp. This may seem like creating an access barrier but you should have seen the ramp. It was very, very dangerous and should never have been used. I was very disappointed.'</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Vale of Clwyd</p> <p>'The ramp was considered unsafe by the staff, which was why it was not in place.'</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Gower</p> <p>Ramps should be secure and stable with a low gradient. Normally they should be permanent but if they are temporary they should offer the same level of access as a permanent one.</p> <p>'There was a temporary ramp but it had not been put in place. When I asked why not, the answer was that it got in the way of non-disabled people.'</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Monmouth</p> <p>Ramps should also be kept clear so disabled people can use them.</p> <p>'There was a large 4ft x 3ft flower container on the ramp up to main door would have made wheelchair access difficult and presented a hazard for visually impaired voters.'</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Conwy</p>
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	<p>‘School had a ramp built last week especially for the elections but had to go through muddy, unstable grassy path with rubbish to get to the gate for ramp. Staff had locked gate as weren't taking responsibility for people using path.’</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Cynon Valley</p>
<p>Is there a separate entrance for disabled people?</p> <p>Yes 13%</p> <p>No 87%</p>	<p>We try to identify if disabled people had to use an alternative entrance. This is because it usually indicates a side entrance or a back door. This may provide level access but can be difficult to reach.</p> <p>‘Wheelchair accessible point away from main door (150m) locked and unmanned. Would not have been able to get in if alone, as there was no means of alerting someone at the main entrance.’</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Brecon & Radnorshire</p> <p>‘I asked if there was another entrance into the polling station. Usually wheelchair users could go through the side entrance and through main hall, but wasn't open today because of a play in the main hall!!’</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Pontypridd</p> <p>Where possible there should be one entrance for everybody and this should be the accessible one. If it is not convenient for a non-disabled voter why should a disabled person be forced to travel the extra distance to a separate doorway?</p>

Inside the polling station

It is not just the entrance to the polling station that has to be accessible. The voter has to get from the door to the ballot box. Generally there was good access inside Wales' polling stations.

<p>Is there level access inside the building from the entrance to the polling booth?</p> <p>Yes 90%</p> <p>No 10%</p>	<p>'The one step into the yard had a ramp but a wheelchair user would have to get up another two inside the building to vote.'</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Cardiff North</p> <p>Steps or ramps that are not appropriately designed can be a greater hazard inside a building because they are often not well lit. Wherever possible the polling station should be as close as possible to the main entrance. Sometimes these types of barriers can easily be removed.</p> <p>'There would have been level access but for a welcome mat.'</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Caerphilly</p>
<p>Do you think there is enough space for disabled people to get around the building easily (e.g. corridor widths and doorways)?</p> <p>Yes 77%</p> <p>No 23%</p>	<p>Narrow corridors and doorways can make a polling station inaccessible. Wheelchair users need space to move around but obstructions can be dangerous for many other people with mobility and visual impairments.</p> <p>'Small room subdivided into three by lines of stacked chairs, virtually inaccessible to non-disabled people, too.'</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Cardiff West</p> <p>'The doorway into the polling room was narrow with a small lip which had caused problems that day with voters using sticks/walking aids. Very narrow space between tables placed either side.'</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Conway</p>

	<p>‘Excellent entrance - permanent ramp used by all. Long way to voting hall but wide corridor and good flooring till last 10ft and for no reason a small step appears with no temporary ramp!! Unbelievable!’ Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Swansea West</p>
<p>Are there seats for people to rest?</p> <p>Yes 69%</p> <p>No 31%</p>	<p>Providing seating is good practice. It is a simple way to improve the accessibility of a polling station as it gives an opportunity for mobility impaired people to rest before or after casting their vote. Even in the most accessible polling station some voters will have had to navigate an inaccessible environment to get to it.</p>
<p>Is the inside of the polling booth well lit?</p> <p>Yes 71%</p> <p>No 29%</p>	<p>It is important that the inside of a polling station is well lit as low light creates a major barrier for many visually impaired people. Improving the light in a polling station is often as simple as flicking a switch.</p> <p>‘When I asked why the all the lights had not been switched on I was told that this was for environmental reasons. When I told them that my wife could not read the ballot paper unless all the lights were on, they switched on the light and wouldn’t stop apologising.’ Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Bridgend</p> <p>‘Better lighting needed.’ Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Alyn & Deeside</p>

Access issues for hearing impaired people

Several councils brought portable induction loops to polling stations. This was welcomed as a development that could aid the accessibility of the voting process for hearing impaired people.

Where induction loops were provided polling station staff were keen to show them off.

‘The polling clerk noticed me completing the survey and asked if I would like to see their hearing loop.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Swansea East

Noise can reduce the accessibility of a polling station.

‘Portacabin mounted directly on highway. Petrol generator made a considerable noise, affecting voice transmission poor for people with hearing impairments.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Aberavon

Voting

The Polls Apart Cymru survey looked at how easy it was for disabled people to cast their vote.

<p>Is there a low-level polling booth?</p> <p>Yes 63%</p> <p>No 37%</p>	<p>Low-level polling booths are an important access adaptation and should be available in every polling station. Although polling station staff were often very resourceful in finding other surfaces for wheelchair voters to vote on this is not an appropriate long-term solution.</p> <p>‘The polling booths all had rather high writing shelves. I asked why there wasn’t one suitable for someone sitting in a wheelchair - I was told they had been assured there would be one, but it had not turned up.’</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Monmouth</p> <p>‘The low-level booths weren't obviously placed, so I would rely on assistance from staff.’</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Cardiff South and Penarth</p> <p>‘There was no shelf or any flat surface to rest the ballot paper on, no table had been provided.’</p> <p>Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Brecon & Radnorshire</p>
<p>Is there a large print version of the ballot paper available for voters to look at?</p> <p>Yes 77%</p> <p>No 23%</p>	<p>This is a legal requirement yet almost a quarter of polling stations did not have large print notices prominently on display.</p> <p>Large print notices are important to people with visual and communication impairments and can allow someone to vote independently. Putting large print ballot papers where voters can’t see them makes them useless. They are designed to be read up close.</p>

<p>Is the tactile template available?</p> <p>Yes 82%</p> <p>No 18%</p>	<p>‘Large print ballot paper high up on wall.’ Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Monmouth</p> <p>Again this is a legal requirement. Tactile templates can help Braille readers vote independently and are vital in ensuring blind and visually impaired people have the same democratic rights as everyone else.</p> <p>Where tactile template was not apparently available this may be due to the level of training polling station staff had received in using them.</p>
<p>Is there a low-level ballot box?</p> <p>Yes 65%</p> <p>No 35%</p>	<p>A low-level ballot box is one that is put on a chair rather than a table. Together with switching on the lights this is the simplest way to improve the accessibility of a polling station. It costs nothing and should happen in every polling station.</p> <p>This allows people who can’t reach a ballot box placed on a table the opportunity to post their vote independently.</p> <p>Other good practice is to make sure the hole for depositing ballot papers is clearly marked.</p> <p>‘There was no white paint around the slit in the ballot box, which meant I needed assistance in locating it.’ Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Caerphilly</p> <p>‘Staff helpful but ballot box at a very high level.’ Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Conwy</p>

Polling station staff

The Polls Apart Cymru survey asked about people's experiences of polling station staff. This is important because polling station staff need to be able to respond to the specific needs of disabled voters.

<p>Did you find polling station staff welcoming and helpful?</p> <p>Yes 89%</p> <p>No 10%</p>	<p>The vast majority of polling station staff were very friendly and helpful. Many did what they could to improve access on the day.</p> <p>'Staff very aware and concerned that ramp was quite steep and doorway very narrow, trying to keep a lookout for people who may need assistance.' Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Conwy</p> <p>'Staff were extremely helpful.' Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Newport East</p> <p>'Friendly staff - were aware of many difficulties. Staff helped people who were unsure by explaining symbols and parties, offered magnifying glass.' Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Pontypridd</p> <p>Some said they would help improve access in the future.</p> <p>'Staff very helpful and co-operative in answering my questions. Very keen to make democracy more accessible.' Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Cardiff North</p> <p>Many campaign volunteers thought however that people working at polling stations should receive basic disability equality training.</p>
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‘Staff were friendly and helpful but I couldn’t help thinking they needed some disability awareness training.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003,
Cardiff North

This was already being done in some constituencies.

‘They said they had received training on helping visually impaired people and wheelchair users and they had found it very useful. They were certainly very aware of how they could help and what aids they had.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003,
Vale of Glamorgan

Other access issues

The Polls Apart Cymru survey identified several issues through the comments section.

Ballot paper

Concern was expressed about the regional ballot paper. The two issues that reoccurred were its length and explanations of how to vote using it.

‘The regional ballot paper was too long to fit comfortably on the platform in the voting booth. This possibly could have made using the Braille device very awkward. Size of regional ballot made it difficult to post into the ballot box.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Pontypridd

‘Simplify regional ballot papers and explanation of voting system.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Aberavon

The Welsh language

Disabled people reflect the diversity within Wales. Like other Welsh speakers, disabled people expect material to be provided in the language of their choice and for it to be accessible.

How this is designed is important. Many disabled people find it difficult when Welsh and English is alternated. It is best if the languages are kept separate.

‘The juxtaposition of two languages caused confusion. Best to have separate columns.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Caerphilly

Postal voting

Disabled people have a range of views on postal voting and this is reflected in the responses we had to our survey.

‘Postal voting for all!’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Clwyd South

‘A postal vote is a realistic alternative for the disabled as long as it is available in alternative formats. I would rather see finite resources put into something 365 days a year rather than five minutes a year or better still on health care.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Monmouth

‘For the first time ever I opted for a postal vote, but will not do so in future. As requested I returned my ballot papers several days before election day after which I received pamphlets from all parties - too late for any possibility of influencing my vote.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Rhondda

‘Postal votes are also a very good way to help more elderly and disabled people to vote - should be more widely publicised so everyone knows it is an option.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Cardiff North

As an interim measure Polls Apart campaigned that disabled people should be able to use a postal vote at any election. The Representation of the People Act 2000 gave everyone (disabled and non-disabled) the choice to vote by post if they wish.

Polls Apart 3 looked at disabled people’s views on postal voting. It found that 53% of the disabled people preferred to vote in person. There was a range of views expressed. Some wish to use a postal ballot; others want to vote on the day. Poor access to polling stations may have been the reason why some disabled people preferred voting by post.

Postal voting however cannot be used as an alternative for making polling stations accessible in the long-term. This is because it offers disabled people an inferior service restricting their choice of voting methods and making them vote earlier than everybody else.

Postal voting isn’t a completely accessible method of voting. It has several inherent barriers that could prevent some disabled person accessing it. Visually impaired people are one such obvious group but it also includes many people with communication, neurological, learning and co-ordination impairments.

Postal voting must remain an option rather than something disabled people have to use to vote.

How access can be improved

We asked people completing the Polls Apart Cymru survey for their ideas on how access could be improved.

Formats and voter registration

Many people thought voter registration and election material could be improved.

‘Information as standard in 14 point and available in all accessible formats.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Cardiff Central

‘If a voter’s access requirements are unknown then the standard format should be large print, using clear print guidelines and there should be multiple contact details (e.g. telephone, textphone, fax, email, and postal address) for people to contact the electoral dept. for help or alternative formats.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Cardiff North

‘Pictures for non-readers.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Carmarthen East and Dinefwr

‘Instead of having to read the small print, usually hidden at the bottom of the page, the available alternatives should be listed at the top of the first page in appropriately sized print. It should be easily available, not grudgingly to comply with legislation.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Clywd South

‘When we register for the electoral roll there ought to be an opportunity to ask for material in large print, Braille, audio and the language of our choice.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Monmouth

‘Offer help with registration form filling for visually and learning impaired people.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Neath

‘Details available by cassette if requested.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Swansea West

‘The issue of people with learning disabilities living in multi-occupancy accommodation needs to be looked at. There tends to be no system for ensuring each resident gets on the electoral register.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Bridgend

Access to polling stations

There were lots of comments about improving access. The majority of these simply wanted a change of venue.

‘Make sure all voting locations are fully accessible to disabled people whatever impairment they may have. Ascertain the nature of the disability on registration forms so that the correct help can be offered.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Clwyd West

‘Just use more accessible buildings, it’s that simple.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Pontypridd

‘More signs on the road and outside to indicate polling station. Advertise the fact that elections are taking place at a location before the date - by road signs, local paper/parish newsletter, in local shops etc.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Ceredigion

‘Locate polling station in safer location.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Aberavon

‘Future elections must demonstrate a complete compliance with the DDA.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Newport West

‘I’ve seen television pictures of polling stations in other areas in supermarkets etc. This would be much better as these are already (largely) accessible to wheelchair users.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Pontypridd

‘Let the polling station come to me. Why can’t there be mobile polling stations?’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Torfaen

‘How about drive-through voting (like McDonalds)?’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Alyn & Deeside

Technology

Some people thought harnessing technology would be a good option.

‘Home voting - like with email/internet would help.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Blaenau Gwent

‘More information and voting available on the internet.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Cardiff West

‘Allow people to vote online or by phone.’

Polls Apart Cymru User Evaluation 2003, Gower

Recommendations

National Assembly for Wales:

- Continue to monitor the accessibility of elections.
- Include disabled people in all new projects aimed at increasing participation from under-represented groups in public and community life.

Local Government:

The basics

- Do not use touring caravans as polling stations or any other polling station that is obviously inaccessible.
- Ensure that simple access improvements are undertaken; use low-level voting booths and ballot boxes, turn on the lights in polling stations, make sure large print ballot papers are displayed at a readable height.
- Guarantee the safety of voters (for example, do not use inappropriate temporary ramps).
- Complete the Polls Apart Cymru checklist on every polling station before the next election.

Access planning

- Assess the accessibility of all polling stations. An action plan should be created for ensuring all existing polling stations are accessible in time for the next General Election.
- Actively seek the advice of local disabled people, organisations of disabled people and polling station officials to ensure that access solutions are appropriate to the needs of disabled people.

Disability equality training

- All polling station staff should receive disability equality training including full training in using access aids like the tactile template and other adaptations.

Physical access

- October 2004 is the deadline for compliance with Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), which states that buildings providing a public service must make reasonable physical adjustments to ensure they are accessible to disabled people. All Local Authorities should aim to have made these adjustments well before this deadline. Where local authorities do not own the buildings they are using as a polling station they should inform the owners of their obligations under the DDA.
- Local Authorities should aim to replace all temporary ramps to public buildings with well-designed permanent ramps as soon as possible.
- Using alternative buildings as polling stations where appropriate.

Formats

- Produce voter registration material and other information to voters in a range of formats. Publicise that they are available.

Conclusions

This evaluation of the accessibility of the National Assembly of Wales elections on 1 May 2003 found that three out of four polling stations used were inaccessible. Voters had to vote in the street or a car park rather than in the privacy of a polling booth. Others were lifted up stairs or had to use dangerous ramps to get in to vote.

It would however be unfair to say that all disabled people encountered such dramatic barriers. Far more common are the everyday access barriers, which make it more difficult for a disabled person to vote. It was disappointing that Polls Apart Cymru did not record a decrease in these compared with the results of our survey for the General Election in 2001.

We are unable to offer a direct comparison with England or Scotland for this election, however, we do not believe that the geography of Wales or the nature of the National Assembly elections make providing accessible polling stations significantly more difficult. Many of the issues are identical.

Welsh voters may have on average to travel further to polling stations than in the rest of the UK. Getting to the polling station is certainly not easy without a car in many areas. This means that accessible transport becomes a key issue, which needs to be considered further.

Polls Apart Cymru recognises that Electoral Administrators and Returning Officers try hard to improve accessibility of their polling stations. This report is not designed to criticise their work though we hope they will take on board the issues we have raised.

Electoral Administrators have a difficult job finding appropriate venues for polling stations and they have to make compromises. The findings of this report however highlight the fact that they have a tremendous amount of work to do to ensure that all polling stations are accessible by October 2004.

We were encouraged that many of the main Welsh political parties had considered access issues within their manifestos. We also recognised that both the Welsh Assembly Government and that Electoral Commission had invested time and resources to make the election accessible.

Disabled people themselves may have some of the answers. We hope that some of the ideas generated by the Polls Apart Cymru campaign volunteers will help identify how access can be improved.

Local authority breakdown

Local authority	Polling stations	% accessible
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	7	29
Bridgend County Borough	5	20
Caerphilly County Borough	10	30
Cardiff County Council	22	27
Carmarthenshire County Council	7	29
Ceredigion County Council	6	17
City and County of Swansea	20	15
Conwy County Borough Council	21	10
Denbighshire County Council	21	15
Flintshire County Council	7	15
Gwynedd Council	5	20
Isle of Anglesey County Council	4	0
Merthyr Tydfil County Council	4	0
Monmouthshire County Council	14	38
Neath/Port Talbot County Council	32	25
Newport County Council	28	21
Pembrokeshire County Council	7	43
Powys County Council	6	0
Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council	22	27
Torfaen County Borough Council	28	50
Vale of Glamorgan County Council	20	30
Wrexham County Borough Council	2	50

Eight surveys were returned without naming a constituency.

Access checklist

Improving access is not as difficult as it might seem. In many cases small changes can make a world of difference. Below is a checklist for officials who want to ensure polling stations are accessible to disabled voters.

Getting there:

- Is there designated or reserved parking for disabled and older people close to the polling station? If there is no parking can you provide temporary parking just for polling day e.g. open up a school playground or suspend the usual parking restrictions for disabled people?
- If the parking is on the road, is there a dropped kerb close by to allow a wheelchair user access to the pavement?
- Is the polling station and parking for disabled people clearly sign-posted from the road? If there is more than one entrance, is it sign-posted from all the possible approaches? Black, lower case lettering in a sans serif font such as Arial or Helvetica on a white background is easiest to read.
- Is the approach to the polling station unobstructed and in good condition? Broken paving slabs, gravel, potholes, parked cars and other obstructions make access considerably more difficult.

Getting in:

- Steps, even a small single step, can make a polling station inaccessible to many disabled or older people. If your polling station has steps up to the entrance, is there a ramp in place so people with mobility impairments can get in?
- Is the ramp appropriately designed for the job? A badly designed ramp can be dangerous and does not improve access. A good ramp should have a low gradient (about 1:20), be strong and level, with raised sides or railings either side. If the ramp is not permanent it should be securely attached to the steps so it cannot slip or wobble.
- If the main entrance to your polling station is inaccessible is there an alternative accessible entrance? Could this entrance be used as the main entrance instead? Is any alternative entrance for disabled people clearly sign-posted? You don't need to use 'disabled access' signs if there is one entrance for everyone.

- Is the door into the polling station wide enough for a wheelchair user to pass through easily? If the doors are heavy, awkward to open or have handles that may be out of reach have you propped them open? If you do prop them open make sure you don't obstruct the entrance.

Inside the polling station:

- Is there level access from the entrance of the polling station to the voting area? Internal steps are just as much of a problem as external ones and will need ramps to make them accessible.
- Are doormats level with the floor? If not, can you remove them?
- Is the flooring non-slip, even and level? Highly polished surfaces can be slippery while thick carpeting and loose rugs or mats can cause people to trip or get stuck.
- Is the polling station well lit? Even on a sunny day some visually impaired people may need the lights switched on to vote independently.
- Are there seats available for people to rest if they need to?
- Are any corridors inside the polling station spacious enough for a wheelchair user to pass through comfortably? Obstructions such as stacked furniture or piles of boxes can cause difficulties for visually impaired people as well as people with mobility difficulties.
- Is there enough space inside the polling station for a wheelchair user to move about easily?

Voting:

- Is there a polling booth that is low and wide enough so a wheelchair user can vote unaided and in secret?
- Is there a low-level ballot box that a wheelchair user can reach unaided? Putting the ballot box on a chair achieves this.
- Does the ballot box have a white stripe around the slot to help visually impaired people post their vote?
- Is there a large print notice of the ballot paper? Have you displayed it close to the polling booth and where it is easily visible for someone who needs to use it? It needs to be low down on the wall and not obscured by other notices or signs. Putting it in the polling booths is one good option.

- Do the ballot papers have large print text and party symbols on them?
- Is there a tactile template to help visually impaired people vote unaided? Do you know how to use it and can you explain it to someone?

General access issues:

- Some disabled people may need assistance but everyone is an individual so ask before you assume someone wants help.
- Portacabins, caravans and other types of temporary hut are usually inaccessible so try to avoid their use until they have been redesigned to take access needs into consideration.
- If you are unsure about any issue to do with access your local disability group will probably be more than happy to advise you about how to ensure your polling station is accessible to disabled voters.
- Many disabled people expect to encounter problems when going to vote. If you have thought about all the issues above make sure you let people know. Put access details on the polling card and make sure someone in the Electoral Services Department knows about the issues and can advise people.
- Set up a freephone helpline (with a textphone option) that disabled voters can phone to ask about any concerns about access they might have. Make sure you publicise this widely.

Campaigning around Polls Apart Cymru

If you're reading this report you are already helping the Polls Apart Cymru campaign. The more people that know about the issues the greater the chance that we can improve access to polling stations.

If you want to help in other ways here are a few ideas:

Talk about Polls Apart

If you are a member of a political party, trade union, religious group or other community organisation or campaigning group put Polls Apart on the agenda. Raise the issue at meetings or inform people through newsletters. You don't have to do this formally, though it would be great if you could. The most important thing is that as many people as possible know about the campaign and the issues.

Contact your AM, MP and local councillors

If you visited a polling station with poor access, write to your Assembly Member and let them know that about the problems disabled constituents face in trying to vote. You can also contact your Member of Parliament, local Councillors and the local paper.

Complaining

Another option is to complain formally to the Electoral Services Manager within your local authority. Simply write them a letter and tell them why the polling station was inaccessible and ask what will be done to ensure that it is accessible for the next election. Copy any letters to Scope and your local councillor.

Elections in Wales

Geography, language, political diversity are just some of the reasons why elections in Wales are different from the rest of the UK.

Wales has a varied geography. From the mountains of North Wales to the coastal plains in the south, from the cities in the east to the rural heartlands in the west, each part of Wales is different.

This is reflected in the types of constituency. Some are large, covering vast areas of dispersed villages and market towns. Others encompass in urban cities. Wales has some of the highest concentration of social exclusion, much of which is found within the South Wales valleys.

There has been a north/south divide in Wales for many years but this relationship is evolving. New divisions have been created, particularly between West Wales and the Valleys and the Eastern parts of Wales.

The Welsh language also plays a significant part in providing Wales with its unique identity. Again, different areas in Wales are characterised by their attitudes to the language. The Welsh-speaking heartlands of North West Wales place a totally different emphasis on the use of Welsh to the more industrial urbanised areas of South East Wales.

The Welsh language is very much alive and this is reflected in Wales elections which are bilingual. Party literature, TV broadcasts, electoral registration and election material are all conducted in both Welsh and English.

Many disabled people want to communicate in Welsh and their rights to do this are protected by the Welsh Language Act 1993.

All these factors, together with the fact there are four main political parties, make the election process in Wales an experience that cannot be easily paralleled.

Party manifestos

As part of our evaluation of the National Assembly Elections we also looked at the parties' manifestos. We did this to see if they were produced in accessible formats and to see if they covered issues directly relevant to disabled people

The Welsh Conservative Party

Layout and formats

The manifesto was a full-colour 160-page back-to-back Welsh and English document. The font used was too small. Some sections of text were placed on a non-contrasting background. This does not conform to the RNIB clear print standards.

The document was available in alternative formats such as on tape, or in Braille by phoning Welsh Conservative Central Office. They were also available online in an Acrobat format. This was not advertised within the document.

Policies

The manifesto devotes half a page in each language to disabled people. The document outlines the Party's commitment to the social model of disability. It also identified that a Conservative administration would set disability access targets within education and employment.

The manifesto contained a commitment to extend direct payments as a right to individuals with assessed needs. This would give many disabled people increased independence and bring Wales into line with policy in England.

The Wales Labour Party

Layout and formats

The manifesto was produced in a 50-page full-colour back-to-back Welsh and English document. The text used was too small and did not conform to the RNIB clear print standards.

Alternative formats were available as Braille and large print available from Welsh Labour HQ by contacting them by phone or email. This was not advertised within the document. It was also provided online as an Acrobat document.

The document referred to "the disabled", a use of language that is inappropriate.

Policies

The manifesto talked much of its “successful” policy of free buses passes for disabled people. It did not however describe how it quantified the success of this policy, the number of disabled people or make any comment on the accessibility of the vehicles involved.

The Wales Labour Party made a specific pledge to abolish charging for home care services for disabled people.

Also within the document was a pledge of commitment towards equal opportunity that includes disabled people.

The Welsh Liberal Democrats

Layout and formats

The Welsh Liberal Democrat Manifesto was a full-colour 76-page back-to-back Welsh and English document. The font used was too small. Some parts of the text were placed on a non-contrasting background. This does not conform to the RNIB clear print standards.

On the centre pages of the document in large type contact details were printed on how to get alternative formats. This may have been better positioned on the first page. The alternative formats available were large print, audiotape and online as an Acrobat document.

The use of language with regard to disability throughout the document was good with only a single use of the phrase “people with disabilities”.

Policies

The Liberal Democrat manifesto made many references to the disabled community. It promised to address issues that affect disabled people both directly and indirectly throughout their daily lives.

A clear commitment was made to ending discrimination to all minority groups including disabled people.

Plaid Cymru

Layout and formats

The Plaid Cymru manifesto is a 52-page document produced either in Welsh or in English. The font used was excellent for visual accessibility.

The document was not available in any other accessible format. The online version had no page numbers for relevant sections on the contents page. This made navigation difficult and inaccessible for many people with communication impairments.

Policies

The document contains an in-depth section on disability. This highlights Plaid Cymru's commitment to the social model of disability.

It also highlights the importance of policy makers working in partnership with disability organisations. There is also a solid commitment to recognise British Sign Language (BSL) as a language in its own right and promote its use.

Conclusion

We were genuinely impressed that all Wales' political parties had included disabled people and disability issues in their manifestos.

Useful Contacts

Scope Cwmpas Cymru
The Wharf
Schooner Way
Cardiff
CF10 4EU
Telephone: 029 20 461703
Email:
mail@cwmpascymru.org.uk
www.scope.org.uk

Disability Rights Commission
Wales
6 Ty Nant Court
Ty Nant Road
Morganstown
Cardiff
CF15 8LW
Telephone: 084 57 622 633
Email: enquiry@drc-gb.org
www.drc-gb.org

The National Assembly for
Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA
Telephone: 029 20 825111
Email:
assembly.info@wales.gsi.gov.uk
www.wales.gov.uk

Welsh Language Board
Market Chambers
5-7 St Mary Street
Cardiff
CF10 1AT
Telephone: 029 20 878000
Email: post@welsh-language-
board.org.uk
www.welsh-language-
board.org.uk

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Ty Gwynfor
18 Park Grove
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CF10 3BN
Telephone: 029 20 646000
Email: post@plaidcymru.org

The Welsh Conservative Party
4 Penlline Road
Whitchurch
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CF14 2XS
Telephone: 029 20 616031
Email: ccowales@tory.org

Wales Labour Party
Transport House
1 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9HA
Telephone: 029 20 877700
Email:
wales@new.labour.org.uk

Wales Green Party
PO Box 10
Mountain Ash
CF45 4YZ
Telephone: 01443 741242
Email:
jmatthews@headweb.co.uk

Disability Wales
Wernddu Court
Caerphilly Business Park
Van Road
Caerphilly
CF83 3ED
Telephone: 029 20 887325
www.dwac.demon.co.uk

RNIB Cymru
Trident Court
East Moors Road
Cardiff
CF24 5TD
Telephone: 029 20 450440
Email: gavin.cox@rnib.org.uk
www.rnib.org.uk

RNID Cymru
3rd Floor
33-35 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9HB
Telephone: 029 20 333034
Minicom: 029 20 333036
Email: rnidcymru@rnid.org.uk

SCOVO (Standing Conference
of Voluntary Organisations for
People with a Learning
Disability in Wales)
5 Dock Chambers
Bute Street
Cardiff
CF10 5AG
Telephone: 029 20 492443
Email: enquiries@scovo.org.uk
www.scovo.org.uk

The National Assembly for
Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA
Telephone: 029 20 825111
Email:
assembly.info@wales.gsi.gov.uk
www.wales.gov.uk

The Electoral Commission
Caradog House
1-6 St Andrews Place
Cardiff
CF10 3BE
Telephone: 029 20 346800
Email: infowales@electoralcommission.org.uk
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