

Easy Read

Ready to Vote



Hawdd ei Ddeall Cymru
Easy Read Wales



Learning Disability Wales
Anabledd Dysgu Cymru

Senedd election 2026 guide for candidates

Making your campaign more accessible for
people with a learning disability



2026

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Introduction



Learning Disability Wales
Anabledd Dysgu Cymru

We are Learning Disability Wales. We have a new project called [Ready to Vote](#).



We want to get more people with a learning disability involved in politics and voting.



In 2026 we are focussing on the Senedd election.

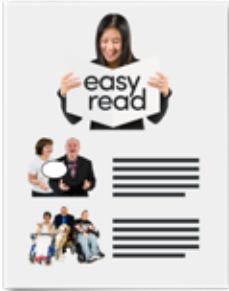


We are supporting people with a learning disability to get involved through:

- Workshops and training sessions.
- Hustings – get to know your candidate events.
- Making and sharing Easy Read information about voting, politics and elections.



We have written this guide for candidates standing for election.



This guide has been written in an Easy Read style - a format of written information designed for and with people with a learning disability.



You can learn more about Easy Read on our website: [What is Easy Read.](#)



The aim of this guide is to:

- Help you reach more voters when you are campaigning.
- Provide an example of making written information easier to understand.
- Raise awareness of Easy Read.

The Social Model of Disability



The Welsh Government has formally committed to the Social Model of Disability.



The Social Model says people are disabled by barriers in society. Not by their condition or impairment.



In the Social Model, impairment and disability are different.



An **impairment** means an injury, illness or health condition that affects how someone looks or affects the way their body works.



Disability happens when we do not meet people's needs.

Social Model language



Language is important, it shapes how we see each other and how we feel about ourselves.



By using inclusive, social model language, you will be able to better connect with your disabled constituents.



Disabled people identify in different ways. Always respect personal language choices.



When you are speaking to, or about a community, use the words and language they use about themselves.



For example:

- Most autistic adults prefer the term ‘autistic people’ not ‘people with autism’.
- All Wales People First members identify as ‘people with learning disabilities’.



Otherwise, use social model language. For example, use:

- Disabled people
- Neurodivergent people
- People with a condition
- People with an impairment
- Wheelchair users
- Non-disabled people



Avoid:

- The disabled
- People with a disability
- People with disabilities
- Victim of, suffers from
- Wheelchair bound
- Able-bodied, 'normal'

Tips for being more inclusive



Plan for accessibility early. It is better for you if people can easily find, read and understand your information.

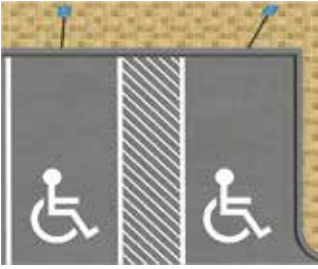
Surgeries and events



- Use accessible venues. They should be step free or have ramps and lifts, accessible toilets and doorways wide enough for wheelchair users.



- Provide BSL interpreters and use a venue with a hearing loop.



- Think about accessible parking and transport links.



- Invite local disability groups to your hustings, meet-and-greets, and other campaign events.



- Offer online or hybrid ways to meet you, so people who cannot attend in person can still take part.



Scope has guidance to help you host accessible events: [Accessible events guidance](#).

Written information



- Ask disabled people for feedback on your campaign materials to make sure they are clear, accessible, and relevant.



- Use plain language and short sentences. The average reading age in the UK is 9 to 11 years old.



- Left align your text, do not fully justify text.



- Avoid difficult words and terms, explain them if you cannot avoid them, and do not use jargon.

Aa

- Choose simple, clear, fonts like century gothic, Tahoma and Calibri.



- Body text should be at least 14pt font size.



- Use headings and bullet points to structure your content.

Hello?

- Check your colour contrast, your text should be easy to read against the background. There are online tools you can use for this, like: [WebAIM colour contrast checker](#).



- Use **bold** to emphasize meaning. Do not use CAPITAL LETTERS, *italics* or underlining, these things are harder to see and read.



- Provide alternative formats like large print and Easy Read. Remember to plan enough time for these to be available at the same time as any other versions.



Guidelines for making written information easy to read and understand for people with a learning disability: [Clear and Easy handbook](#).



Free guides for writing in Plain English: [Plain English Campaign](#).

Online information



- Make sure your content works with assistive technology, like screen readers.



- Use descriptive link text for hyperlinks. For example, [read our manifesto](#), rather than [click here](#) to read our manifesto.



- Provide descriptive alt text for any images and graphs.



- Add captions and audio descriptions to videos.



- Use camel case for hashtags – use capital letters for the first letter of every word
#CamelCaseHashtag.



Ability Net has lots of free resources to help you be digitally accessible: [Digital Accessibility Free Resources](#).

Spoken Easy Language



- Speak clearly, and loudly, do not speak too fast.



- Use well known, easy to understand words.



- Use personal, active language. For example, **we** need **you** to work together to give **us** better support.



- Use one word instead of a phrase: for example, say “now” instead of “at this moment in time”.



- Give people enough time to process information and ask questions.



- If you are talking to someone who has a person supporting them, talk directly to the person, not their supporter.



- Say if you find it hard to understand what someone has said. Be respectful, kind and honest.



- Avoid background or visual distractions when you are speaking.



- Use age-appropriate language, do not talk down to people.



You can find more guidelines here: [Spoken Easy Language for Social Inclusion](#).

Top issues for people with a learning disability in Wales



Benefits

Proposed cuts to disability benefits could push more people into poverty. This has caused a huge amount of stress and anxiety for disabled people.



Lack of accessible information

Disabled people and people with sensory loss have a legal right to get health and social care information in a way they can understand. But many are being left behind due to a lack of accessible information.



Stolen Lives

A group of families and carers whose loved ones with a learning disability are living in hospitals have organised the Homes Not Hospitals campaign. People should not be living in hospitals just because services cannot meet their needs.



Supported employment

Only about 5 in every 100 people with a learning disability are in paid work.



Highly successful projects like [Engage to Change](#) have confirmed that specialised job coaching and supported work placements significantly improve employment, independence and mental health for people with a learning disability.

Inclusive education



A [Senedd report in 2024](#) found that many disabled children and young people in Wales are being “fundamentally let down” because they are not getting the education they have a right to.



More recently we responded to a disappointing [letter from Merthyr Tydfil County Council](#) that indicates we still have a lot of work to do to make sure children are given the very best education that responds to their needs.



Health inequalities

On average [people with learning disabilities die 20 years younger](#) than those without learning disabilities.



Third sector closures

A worrying number of third sector organisations in Wales that support people with a learning disability have been forced to close or cut their services.

Other important issues:



- Social care
- Community safety
- Parenting support
- Relationships
- Loneliness and social isolation
- Public transport



To learn more about the issues important to disabled people in Wales, please read the below manifestos:

- [Learning Disability Wales Manifesto 2026](#)
- [All Wales People First Manifesto 2026](#)
- [Disability Wales Manifesto 2026 - 2031](#)

What matters to me

Quotes from people with a learning disability about what's important to them:

- Having a job is important to me as it has given me a lot of confidence.
- Need more access to mental health services.
- Public transport can make me nervous and timings can be all over the place.
- Meaningful supported employment as transitioning out from college.
- Accessible education for all.
- Accessible healthcare for all.
- Being independent.
- Being in the community.
- Safe streets.
- Parents with a learning disability need support not judgement.
- When professionals talk to you, the language they use is often too hard to understand with too many big words.

More information

Contact us for more information about Ready to Vote, or for further support:



Website: ldw.org.uk/project/ready-to-vote/



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