

Commissioned briefing

Sustainable Farming Scheme

How the Senedd has debated the scheme's design, funding, tree and habitat rules, and farmer protests

Prepared for	Sample briefing
Reference	OS-SAMPLE-SFS
Date	27 October 2026
Covers	The Senedd record, June 2021 to 21 October 2026

In brief

Criticism of the Sustainable Farming Scheme in the Senedd peaked in early 2024. A vote on the scheme in February 2024 tied 26 to 26. Huw Irranca-Davies announced a change to the timetable in May 2024. In 2026 Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru) said over 8,000 farm businesses had joined the universal layer. Laura Anne Jones of Reform UK called the scheme too complex. [78](#) [98](#) [144](#) [128](#)

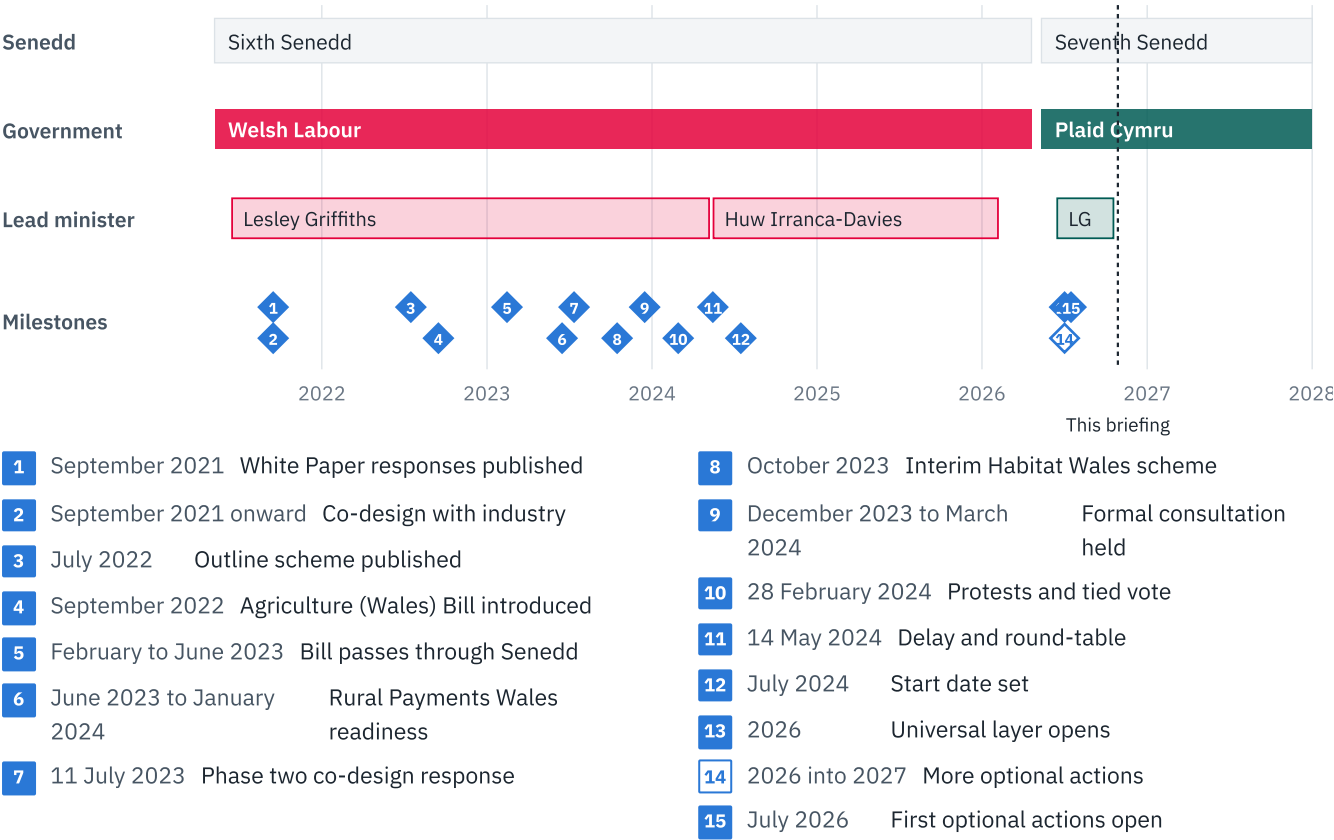
Start date Welsh Government said in July 2024 the scheme would start in 2026. 108	Consultation 12-week consultation opened December 2023; nearly 12,000 responses by April 2024. 48 89
Delay announced In May 2024 the Cabinet Secretary announced a delay, a preparatory phase and a round-table. 98 99	Senedd vote 28 February 2024: vote on the Conservative motion on the scheme tied 26 to 26. 78 77
Funding pledge Cabinet Minister cited £1 billion over three years for farming in September 2026. 139	Take-up Cabinet Minister said over 8,000 farms, about half of eligible, joined the universal layer. 144

State of play

- Llyr Gruffydd, Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, said in October 2026 that over 8,000 farm businesses, about half of eligible farms, have joined the universal layer, and that the scheme will be refined with stakeholders. [144](#)
- Laura Anne Jones of Reform UK says the scheme is too complex and rigid, that take-up is around 50 per cent, and that some farmers feel punished for staying on the old scheme. She wants an urgent review of why take-up is low. [128](#) [130](#)
- The first optional actions opened for applications in July 2026, with more due through 2026 and into 2027. Gruffydd says over £100 million is allocated to the optional and collaborative tiers. [135](#) [143](#)
- Gruffydd says £1 billion has been committed over three years and that a red tape review is under way. Elin Jones of Plaid Cymru says the commitment stands but the scheme's content needs looking at after the summer's fires and drought. [139](#) [136](#)
- Gruffydd says hedge-cutting is one of the requirements highlighted, that lessons will be learned from the first year, and that derogations (exemptions) were introduced after extreme weather. Jones says some farmers cannot get onto the scheme. [132](#) [142](#) [140](#)

At a glance

The Senedd terms, the party in government and the lead minister, with the formal milestones set against them.



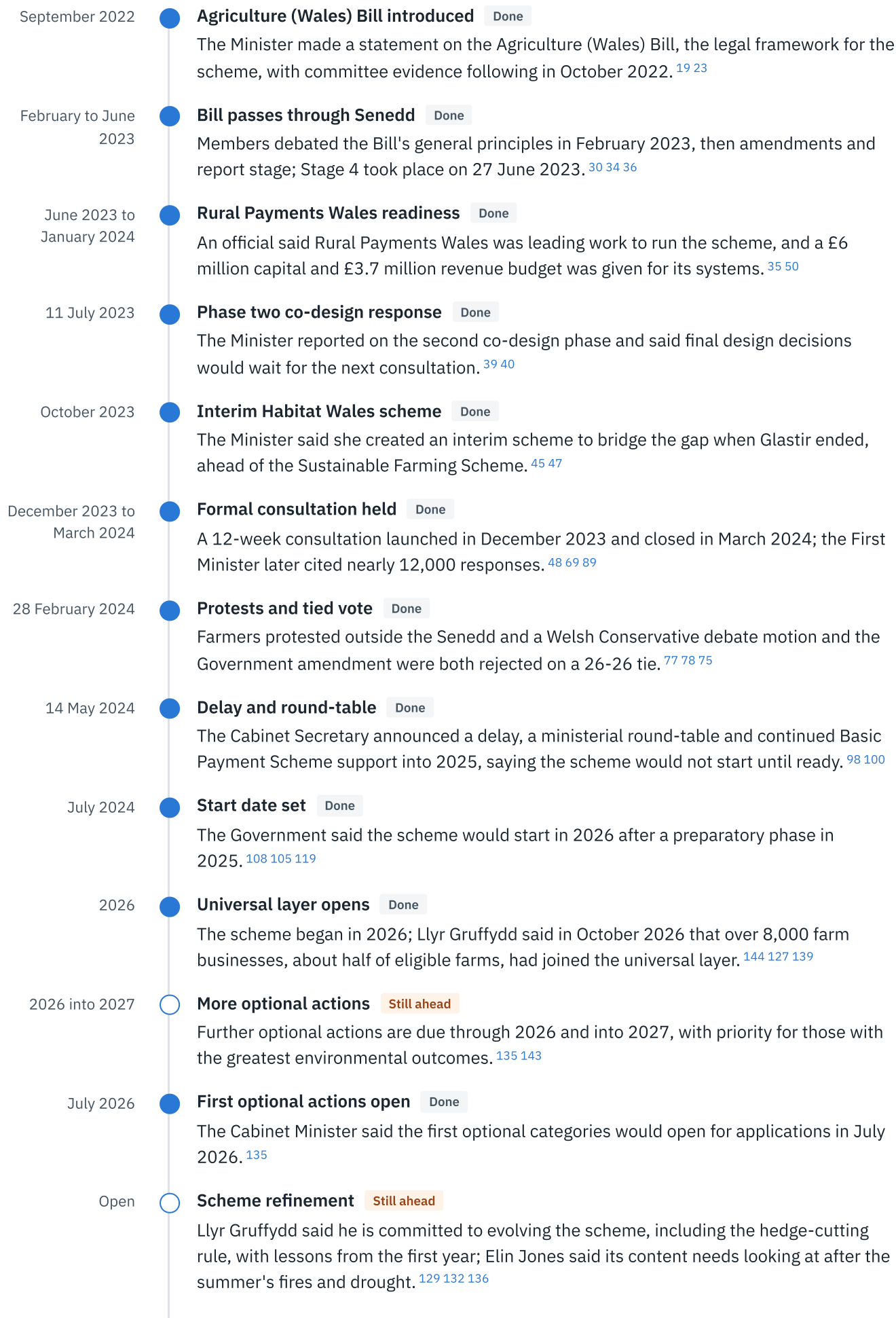
Lead minister: Lesley Griffiths (Jun 2021 to May 2024); Huw Irranca-Davies (May 2024 to Feb 2026); Llyr Gruffydd (from Jun 2026)

Lead minister bars run from each minister's first appearance in the record to their successor's. Filled diamonds are steps completed; open diamonds are still ahead.

The path to law

Each formal step in making the law and putting it into effect, as recorded in the Senedd.







A committee chair asked how the scheme would be funded in the 2026-27 supplementary budget, and Reform UK's Laura Anne Jones asked for it to be made workable before further Basic Payment Scheme cuts. [134](#) [138](#)

How it unfolded

Sixth Senedd, 2021 to 2026

- September 2021** ● Lesley Griffiths sets out the plan to reward active farmers for action on climate and nature. She commits to keep Basic Payments to the end of 2023, subject to UK Government funding. Samuel Kurtz questions the 2025 launch date. [3](#) [5](#) [4](#)
- July 2022** ● The outline scheme is published before the summer shows. Griffiths says stakeholders broadly welcomed it and cites a target of 43,000 hectares of new woodland by 2030. [16](#) [18](#)
- September 2022** ● Janet Finch-Saunders attacks the 10 per cent tree cover requirement. Griffiths says it is shared across Wales and farmers who do not want to plant trees need not join. [20](#) [21](#)
- November 2022** ● Griffiths tells the Finance Committee the planning assumption is an annual budget of £278 million, with no certainty beyond the current UK Government term. [25](#) [26](#)
- July 2023** ● The Government responds to the second co-design phase. The proposal is 10 per cent tree cover plus 10 per cent habitat, and £30 million is available for tree planting over two years. A final consultation follows. [44](#) [40](#)
- December 2023** ● Lesley Griffiths says a 12-week consultation on the scheme will launch the following day. In October she had said a new scheme was set up to bridge the end of Glastir. [48](#) [46](#)
- January 2024** ● Petition P-06-1388 asks for the 10 per cent tree cover requirement to be removed. Kurtz cites modelling of 5,500 lost jobs. Griffiths says the data is old and a new analysis will follow. [53](#) [55](#) [54](#)
- 28 February 2024** ● Farmers protest at the Senedd. A Welsh Conservative debate on the scheme ends with the motion and the Government amendment both rejected, 26 votes to 26. [70](#) [77](#) [78](#)
- April 2024** ● First Minister Vaughan Gething says nearly 12,000 consultation responses are being considered and a new economic impact assessment will be carried out. [89](#) [90](#)
- 14 May 2024** ● Huw Irranca-Davies announces a delay and a round-table to work on the details. Basic Payments will continue into 2025. Gruffydd welcomes the delay. [98](#) [100](#) [99](#)
- July 2024** ● Irranca-Davies says the scheme will now start in 2026, after a preparatory phase in 2025. [108](#) [105](#)
- October 2024** ● The Senedd debates two committee reports on the scheme and Farming Connect. Natural Resources Wales welcomes the decision to pay the universal layer on protected wildlife sites (SSSIs). [113](#) [110](#)
- January 2025** ● Irranca-Davies says the 10 per cent habitat requirement was agreed without difficulty. He says £356 million is secured for agricultural support in the draft budget. [121](#) [120](#)
- February 2026** ● A written answer says all participating farms must complete the 12 Universal Actions. [127](#)

Seventh Senedd, from May 2026

- June 2026** ● In the new Senedd, Gruffydd says he is committed to evolving the scheme, 'evolution not revolution'. Jones of Reform UK says it is too complex. [129](#) [128](#)
- July 2026** ● The first optional action categories open for applications. [135](#)
- September 2026** ● The Government announces that members of the Farm Assured Welsh Livestock scheme need not complete separate animal health requirements for the 2026 scheme. [137](#)

Who has led

For the Government

- **Lesley Griffiths.** Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, June 2021 to March 2024. She led the scheme through consultations, co-design, the Bill and the 2023 to 2024 consultation, saying it would not start until ready. [1](#) [39](#) [79](#)
- **Julie James.** Minister for Climate Change, October 2021 to January 2024. She spoke for the Government on tree cover, nature and water quality links to the scheme, and said her officials worked with Lesley Griffiths' officials. [7](#) [31](#) [32](#)
- **Mark Drakeford.** First Minister of Wales, July 2022 to March 2024. He described the scheme as the main route to talk with farmers about change, and in February 2024 said nobody is forced to plant trees. [14](#) [17](#) [61](#)
- **Vaughan Gething.** First Minister of Wales, April to July 2024. He said the Government was considering nearly 12,000 consultation responses and that a new economic impact assessment would follow. [89](#) [90](#) [107](#)
- **Huw Irranca-Davies.** Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs from May 2024, then Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs to early 2026. He announced the delay, round-table, preparatory phase and 2026 start. [98](#) [108](#) [111](#) [126](#)
- **Llyr Gruffydd.** Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, June to October 2026. Earlier, in the Sixth Senedd, he was a critical Plaid Cymru voice; in office he describes evolution, not revolution. [129](#) [139](#) [144](#) [68](#)

Across the parties

Sixth Senedd, 2021 to 2026

554 contributions

Welsh Labour	255	Lesley Griffiths (121), Huw Irranca-Davies (64)
Witnesses and others	127	Gareth Parry (18), Alex Phillips (9)
Welsh Conservatives	124	Samuel Kurtz (51), Janet Finch-Saunders (9)
Plaid Cymru	39	Llyr Gruffydd (22), Cefin Campbell (6)
Welsh Liberal Democrats	9	Jane Dodds (9)

Seventh Senedd, from May 2026

22 contributions

Plaid Cymru	14	Llyr Gruffydd (11), Matthew Jones (1)
Reform UK	5	Laura Anne Jones (4), James Evans (1)
Welsh Conservatives	1	Andrew R.T. Davies (1)
Welsh Labour	1	Vikki Howells (1)
Witnesses and others	1	Dominic Driver (1)

Relevant contributions in the Senedd by party in each term, with the two most frequent voices.

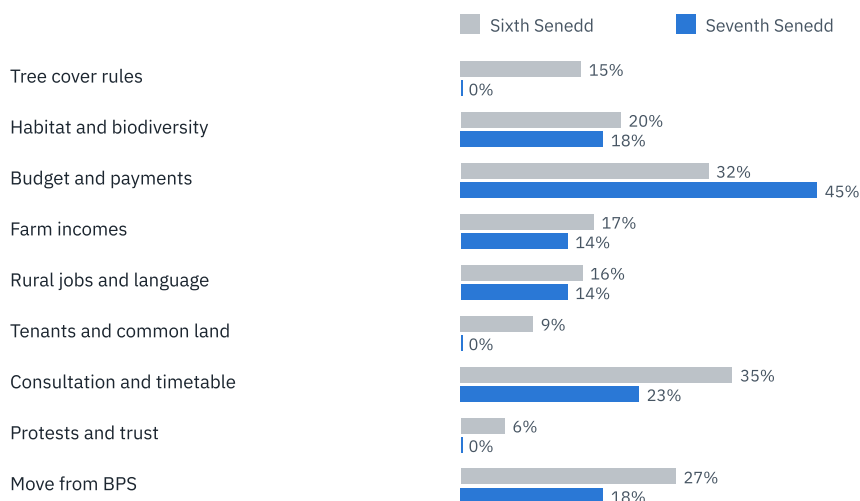
- **Samuel Kurtz.** The main Welsh Conservative voice in the Sixth Senedd (51 contributions), pressing on the transition gap, the 10 per cent tree figure, impact modelling and, in February 2024, calling for a new scheme. [4](#) [41](#) [76](#)

- **Andrew RT Davies and James Evans.** Welsh Conservative leader Andrew RT Davies questioned the 10 per cent tree figure and 5,500-job modelling; James Evans opened the February 2024 Conservative debate, saying the scheme threatened communities. [37 59 70](#)
- **Janet Finch-Saunders and Peter Fox.** Welsh Conservatives who argued that tree cover and universal actions clash with food production, and that the scheme would push small family farms out. [20 73 72](#)
- **Plaid Cymru, Sixth Senedd.** Cefin Campbell asked for payment figures and impact assessments; Rhun ap Iorwerth said the Government's own assessment showed damage to rural jobs and incomes. Llyr Gruffydd welcomed the May 2024 delay. [6 74 99](#)
- **Jane Dodds.** Welsh Liberal Democrat voice, who called the scheme overly complex, questioned the 10 per cent tree cover and raised tenant farmers' position. [30 43 71](#)
- **Jenny Rathbone and Carolyn Thomas.** Welsh Labour backbenchers who backed the scheme's nature and tree aims; Rathbone also urged faster action, and Thomas said the 10 per cent tree cover figure was achievable on many farms. [101 116 117](#)
- **Laura Anne Jones.** Now Reform UK (Welsh Conservative in the Sixth Senedd), the main Reform voice in the Seventh. She calls the scheme too complex and rigid and wants an urgent review of low take-up. [128 130 138](#)
- **Other Seventh Senedd voices.** Plaid Cymru's Matthew Jones asked for more hedge-cutting discretion and Elin Jones raised the scheme's content after the summer; Labour's Vikki Howells saw potential in the optional and collaborative layers; Andrew RT Davies asked about optional action timing. [131 136 141 135](#)
- **Farming unions and witnesses.** Gareth Parry, Rachel Lewis-Davies and Alex Phillips gave committee evidence on tree cover, universal actions, common land and funding. [91 81 97](#)

Between the two Senedd terms

- In the Sixth Senedd a Welsh Labour Government led. Lesley Griffiths was lead minister to March 2024, then Huw Irranca-Davies. In the Seventh, Plaid Cymru's Llyr Gruffydd is Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability and made 11 of 22 contributions in the Senedd. [1 98 129](#)
- Questioning has changed. In the Sixth Senedd, Welsh Conservatives made 124 contributions and Plaid Cymru 39. In the Seventh, Reform UK made 5 of 22 (4 from Laura Anne Jones), 4 critical and 1 neutral, on complexity and take-up; Conservatives made 1. [128 130 138](#)
- Issues fell away. In the Sixth Senedd, tree cover drew 85 contributions, tenants and common land 51, and protests and trust 31; none of these appear in the Seventh's first months. Budget and payment rates drew 10 of 22 there.
- Tone shifted. The Sixth Senedd had 187 supportive and 157 critical contributions in the Senedd; the Seventh has 10 supportive and 4 critical. The Plaid minister speaks of evolving the scheme and a £1 billion, three-year commitment. [129 139](#)
- The Government's position moved from a consulted scheme (December 2023) to a delay and round-table (May 2024) and a 2026 launch. Under Plaid, the minister says he is refining it through derogations (exemptions) after extreme weather and removing duplicate paperwork. He says the hedge-cutting requirement has been raised with him. [48 98 132 142 137](#)

What is being discussed



Share of each term's relevant contributions touching each issue. A contribution can touch more than one.

Themes

- **Design and timetable moved several times.** In July 2022 Drakeford promised to publish an outline scheme before the Royal Welsh Show. A 12-week consultation launched in December 2023. On 14 May 2024 Huw Irranca-Davies, Cabinet Secretary, announced a delay and a round-table. In July 2024 he said the scheme would start in 2026, after a 2025 preparatory phase. [14](#) [48](#) [98](#) [108](#)
- **The 10 per cent tree cover rule.** Conservative Janet Finch-Saunders said potentially forcing farmers to have 10 per cent tree cover clashed with food production. Drakeford said nobody is forced to plant trees. Cefin Campbell called it toxic. Lee Waters feared a plan-only approach would set the bar too low. [20](#) [61](#) [114](#) [112](#)
- **Money and the move from the Basic Payment Scheme.** Lesley Griffiths worked to an assumed £278 million a year and repeatedly said budgets beyond the UK Government term were unknown. Irranca-Davies said in 2024 there would be no new money. In September 2026 Llyr Gruffydd cited £1 billion over three years. [25](#) [42](#) [104](#) [139](#)
- **Jobs, incomes and the protests.** The Government's published impact assessment, cited by Kurtz and Andrew RT Davies, pointed to 5,500 job losses. Rhun ap Iorwerth said the Government's own assessment showed damage. [55](#) [59](#) [74](#)
- **Tenants and common land.** Members and unions raised whether tenants and common land graziers could join. Griffiths set up working groups and said the scheme must work for tenants. Rachel Lewis-Davies told a committee that common land would not get the universal baseline payment. The Government later said the scheme is fully accessible to tenants. [27](#) [33](#) [85](#) [122](#)
- **The Seventh Senedd: take-up and refinement.** In the Seventh Senedd, Llyr Gruffydd, now Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, spoke of evolving the scheme. He said over 8,000 farms had joined the universal layer. Laura Anne Jones (Reform UK) called it too complex and called for a review of low take-up. [129](#) [144](#) [128](#) [130](#)

The arguments

For

- Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour) argued the scheme rewards farmers for environmental outcomes such as carbon storage that the Basic Payment Scheme does not pay for. [28 12](#)
- Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour) said public money should buy a return, and that sustainable food production is the scheme's top aim. He said total Basic Payment Scheme money stays on the table for the future scheme. [58 60 63](#)
- Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour) argued the 2024 pause and 2025 preparatory phase give time to fix the detail with farmers and nature groups, so the scheme starts when ready. [98 106](#)
- Environmental witnesses such as Arfon Williams and Rachel Sharp welcomed the scheme's aims in 2021. Williams said it would benefit farming if done right. Sharp said it had got the design right. [11 10](#)
- Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru), as Cabinet Minister in 2026, said he is committed to evolving the scheme and that £1 billion over three years supports farmers joining. [129 139](#)

Against and concerns

- Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives) cited modelling of 5,500 lost jobs and £199 million lost farm income. He called it contradictory to 'keep farmers farming' and later said the scheme could not go ahead in its current form. [55 76](#)
- Rhun ap Iorwerth (Plaid Cymru) said the Government's own assessment showed major damage to rural jobs and incomes, and that a top-down approach was out of tune with farmers. [74 62](#)
- Gareth Parry (FUW) said 17 universal actions were bureaucratic and costly, and that the tree rule should be withdrawn. Rachel Lewis-Davies said 'universal' was not universal for tenants and common land. [93 84 81](#)
- From the nature side, Alex Phillips said a plan for protected sites with no duty to improve them was low ambition. Lee Waters feared a plan-only tree requirement. [109 112](#)
- Laura Anne Jones (Reform UK) said in 2026 the scheme was too complex and rigid, with take-up around 50 per cent. She asked when the promised review would begin, and later urged a 1 per cent rather than a 20 per cent cut to the Basic Payment Scheme. [128 138](#)

The moving pieces

- **Tree cover requirement.** The 10 per cent tree cover figure drew challenge in 2024, including from farming unions. Ministers said it came from consultation and the UK Climate Change Committee, and that nobody is forced to plant. It is not discussed in the Seventh Senedd. [38 61 91](#)
- **Universal actions and habitat.** Unions called the 17 universal actions bureaucratic. Irranca-Davies said none would be removed immediately but they would be reviewed. A February 2026 answer refers to 12 Universal Actions. Gruffydd says the hedge-cutting rule has been raised in representations to him. [93 102 127 132](#)
- **Funding and payment rates.** Budget uncertainty runs through the debate. Griffiths assumed £278 million a year. Kurtz argued for £338 million as a minimum. Gruffydd now cites £1 billion over three years. Budget lines show Basic Payments at £257.3m in 2024-25 and £260.2m in 2025-26. [25 51 139 145](#)
- **Transition from Basic Payments.** Basic Payments were held through the delay. A farming union representative, Gareth Parry, warned in 2024 that extending them might be needed. Jones of Reform UK now asks the Minister to make the scheme workable before cutting Basic Payments further. [100 83 138](#)
- **Tenants and common land.** Tenant and common land access was raised repeatedly. Working groups were set up. The Welsh Government told the Senedd in 2025 it had worked with stakeholders so the scheme is fully

accessible to tenant farmers. [13 27 85 122](#)

- **Impact assessment and jobs.** Opponents cited the Government's modelling of 5,500 job losses and a £200 million loss in rural economic activity. The Government said the data was old and promised a new assessment. A December 2025 answer says no livestock reductions are projected. [59 54 90 124](#)
- **Take-up and refinement.** Gruffydd reports about half of eligible farms in the universal layer. Reform UK calls that low and wants a review. Optional and collaborative tiers are opening in stages. [144 130 135](#)

Positions

- **Welsh Government.** Under Griffiths, the scheme would pay for farm actions, with 10 per cent tree cover and habitat. After the 2024 consultation, Irranca-Davies changed the timetable, set up a round-table and set a 2026 start. Gruffydd now says 'evolution not revolution'. [44 98 108 129](#)
- **Welsh Conservatives.** In 2022 Kurtz praised parts of the scheme but sought clarity. By 2024 the party opposed it, citing job modelling and tree cover. Kurtz said the scheme's name was too tainted to go on. In 2026 Kurtz backed soil testing as part of the scheme. [15 70 76 125](#)
- **Plaid Cymru.** In 2021 Cefin Campbell wanted payment figures before judging it. In February 2024 Gruffydd said the 10 per cent tree cover proposal did not work. In April 2024 Rhun ap Iorwerth called for fundamental changes to many plans and listed tree planting among the concerns. Gruffydd welcomed the May 2024 delay. [6 68 88 99](#)
- **Reform UK.** First appearing in 2026, Reform UK's Laura Anne Jones calls the scheme complex, rigid and unworkable, and says take-up is low. She wants an urgent review. [128 130 138](#)
- **Welsh Liberal Democrats.** Jane Dodds called the 10 per cent tree cover arbitrary and the 17 universal actions distressing for farmers. In October 2024 she called the scheme a vital step forward with failings. [43 64 118](#)
- **Welsh Labour.** Backbench Labour members mostly backed the aims. Jenny Rathbone and Carolyn Thomas stressed tree planting and nature. Lee Waters worried in 2024 that a tree plan alone would be a low bar. Rathbone also said the scheme was not clear enough in 2022. [115 116 112 29](#)

Key votes

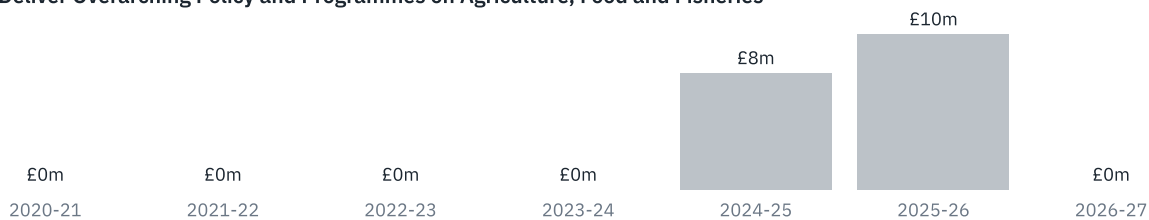
28 February
2024

Rejected

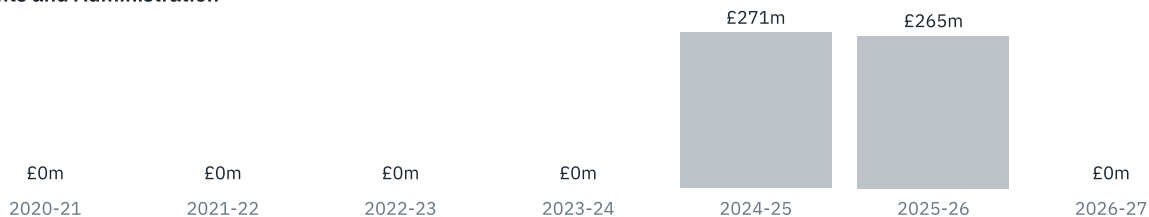
On the Welsh Conservatives' debate on the Sustainable Farming Scheme, the Government's amendment (tabled by Lesley Griffiths) was rejected, 26 for, 26 against. The Conservative motion without amendment was also rejected, 26 for, 26 against. [77 78](#)

The money

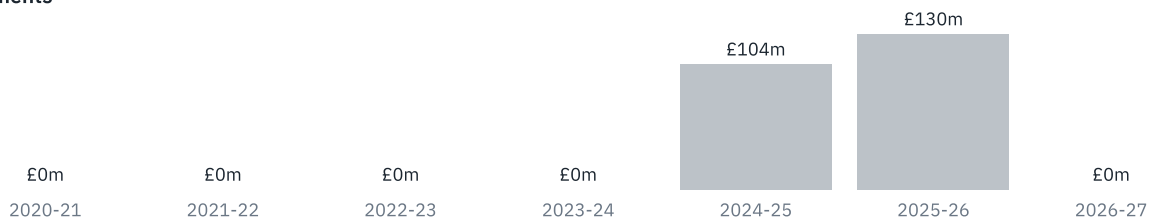
Develop and Deliver Overarching Policy and Programmes on Agriculture, Food and Fisheries



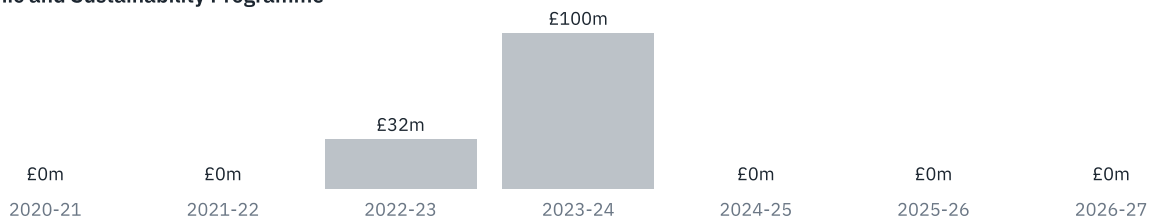
Basic Payments and Administration



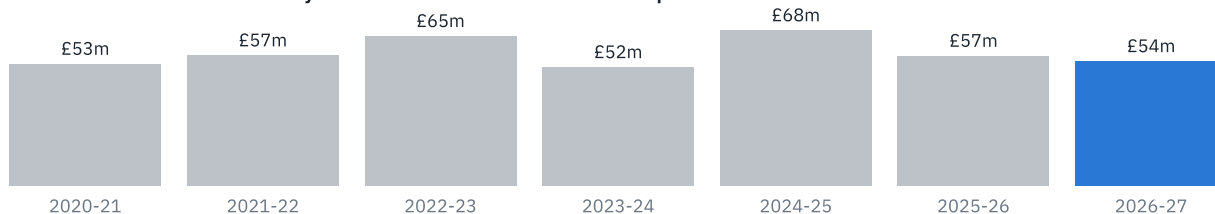
Rural Investments



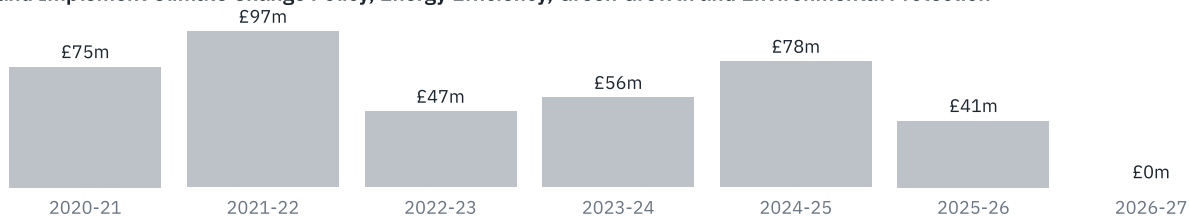
Rural Economic and Sustainability Programme



Deliver Nature Conservation and Forestry Policies and Local Environment Improvement



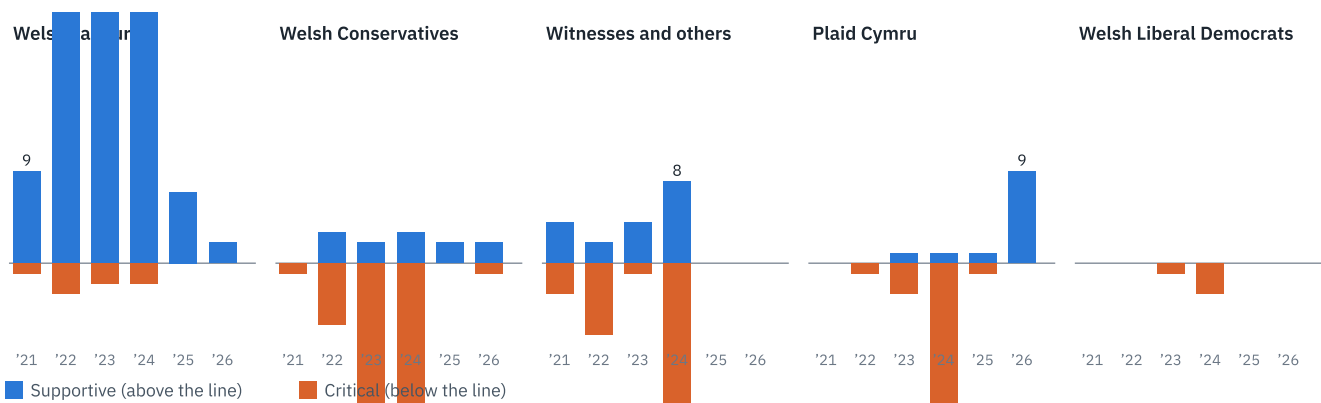
Develop and Implement Climate Change Policy, Energy Efficiency, Green Growth and Environmental Protection



Welsh Government final budgets, revenue and capital, in real terms at 2026-27 prices. The latest year is highlighted.

- The budget shows Basic Payments and Administration at £257.3m in 2024-25 (£271.3m in 2026-27 prices) and £260.2m in 2025-26 (£265.4m real). Rural Investments rose from £99.1m (£104.5m real) to £127.2m (£129.8m real). These lines show £0m in 2026-27. [145](#)
- The Rural Economic and Sustainability Programme line shows £27.4m in 2022-23 (£31.6m real) and £90.8m in 2023-24 (£99.5m real), then £0m. [145](#)
- Lesley Griffiths said the working assumption was £278 million a year, the Basic Payment Scheme and Glastir level, with nothing certain beyond the UK Government term. Basic Payment Scheme money was kept at £238 million for 2024. [25](#) [26](#) [52](#)
- Samuel Kurtz argued the £338 million common agricultural policy total should be the minimum baseline. Irranca-Davies said in May 2024 there would be no new money and the scheme would be designed within the current envelope. [51](#) [104](#) [103](#)
- In January 2025 Irranca-Davies cited £356 million secured for agricultural support. In September 2026 Llyr Gruffydd cited £1 billion over three years, and in October 2026 over £100 million for the optional and collaborative tiers. [120](#) [139](#) [143](#)

How the tone has shifted



Contributions in the Senedd judged supportive or critical of the Sustainable Farming Scheme as proposed by the Welsh Government, by party and year. Neutral questions and mixed views are not shown.

- In the Sixth Senedd, 187 of 554 relevant contributions were supportive, 157 critical, 60 mixed and 150 neutral. Labour contributions were mostly supportive or neutral, and Conservative ones increasingly critical. Stance labels are approximate. [3](#)
- Criticism peaked in the first half of 2024. Welsh Conservatives made 36 critical contributions against 3 supportive, Plaid Cymru 13 critical, and witnesses and others 34 critical against 7 supportive. Protest-related contributions numbered 22. [70](#) [57](#)
- After the May 2024 delay, critical Conservative contributions fell from 36 to 12 in late 2024 and to none in 2025. Plaid Cymru welcomed the delay. [99](#)
- The Seventh Senedd had 22 contributions: 10 supportive, 4 critical, 2 mixed and 6 neutral. Plaid Cymru ministers were supportive and Reform UK critical. [144](#) [128](#)

Organisations involved

- **Farmers Union of Wales.** Gave evidence repeatedly. Gareth Parry said the FUW wants the tree cover rule withdrawn and a simpler universal layer, the basic set of actions all farms must do. [84](#) [93](#) [24](#)

- **NFU Cymru.** Abi Reader said that, from NFU Cymru's stance, advice and guidance cannot make up for lost support payments. [66](#)
- **George Dunn.** Said in 2021 that tenants must not be shut out, and in 2024 called for a pause and more co-design. [9](#) [82](#)
- **Environmental groups.** Alex Phillips and Rhys Evans, giving evidence in sessions with environmental organisations, wanted detail on payments. Evans proposed a 7 per cent tree threshold with extra payments for more. [96](#) [86](#) [87](#)
- **Natural Resources Wales.** Clare Pillman called the scheme potentially the most significant contribution to environmental sustainability in Wales. NRW welcomed paying the universal layer on SSSIs. [49](#) [110](#)
- **Welsh organic forum.** Andrew Tuddenham said Government listened but reached conclusions on organic late. He said the forum was not invited to the round-table. [94](#) [95](#)
- **Rural Payments Wales and Farming Connect.** Rural Payments Wales is the Welsh Government body running the scheme. Farming Connect, the advice service, was questioned on its role and value in the scheme. [35](#) [65](#)

What to watch

- More optional actions are due through 2026 and into 2027, with priority for those with the greatest environmental outcomes. Their rollout and uptake are still ahead. [135](#)
- Whether the scheme's content changes after the summer's fires and drought. Elin Jones says it needs looking at. Gruffydd says hedge-cutting is among the issues raised with him and that lessons will be learned from the first year. [136](#) [132](#)
- Whether Reform UK's call for an urgent review of low take-up leads to changes in complexity and flexibility. [130](#) [128](#)
- How the scheme and wider commitments are funded. James Evans asked in July 2026 whether they come from existing budgets or new spending, and the £1 billion over three years is the working figure. [134](#) [139](#)
- The soil offer is being scoped as part of phase 2 development. Gruffydd has also said he is considering the scheme as a way to help suckler cow premium payments. [126](#) [133](#)
- The Government has said the integrated impact assessment on the scheme will be published. [123](#)

How this briefing was prepared. This briefing draws on everything in the Senedd record that relates to sustainable Farming Scheme between June 2021 and 21 October 2026: 665 contributions in plenary and committee, 41 written questions and answers and 4 other documents, including statements, petitions, votes and Senedd Research. It was compiled with automated analysis, and every statement was checked against the full text of the sources it cites; statements the sources did not support were corrected or removed. Figures on stance (supportive, critical, mixed or neutral) are classifications of what was said and are indicative. It covers the Senedd record only: views expressed elsewhere appear only where they were raised in the Senedd.

Sources

1. 2021-06-23 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
2. 2021-09-15 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
3. 2021-09-21 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales, and Trefnydd: Future Farming Policy and the Sustainable Farming Scheme, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
4. 2021-09-21 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales, and Trefnydd: Future Farming Policy and the Sustainable Farming Scheme, Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
5. 2021-09-21 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales, and Trefnydd: Future Farming Policy and the Sustainable Farming Scheme, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)

6. 2021-09-21 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales, and Trefnydd: Future Farming Policy and the Sustainable Farming Scheme, Cefin Campbell (Plaid Cymru)
7. 2021-10-12 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Climate Change: Nature, biodiversity and local places for nature, Julie James (Welsh Labour)
8. 2021-10-21 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd - General Ministerial Scrutiny, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
9. 2021-11-11 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Priorities for the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee - Farming organisations, George Dunn
10. 2021-11-25 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Priorities for the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee - Environmental organisations, Rachel Sharp
11. 2021-11-25 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Priorities for the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee - Environmental organisations, Arfon Williams
12. 2022-03-09 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
13. 2022-05-25 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
14. 2022-07-05 Plenary: Statement by the First Minister: The Legislative Programme, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)
15. 2022-07-06 Plenary: Topical Questions, Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
16. 2022-07-06 Plenary: Topical Questions, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
17. 2022-07-15 Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister: Economic strategy for coastal and rural communities, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)
18. 2022-09-21 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters (Welsh Labour)
19. 2022-09-27 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd: The Agriculture (Wales) Bill, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
20. 2022-09-28 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Janet Finch-Saunders (Welsh Conservatives)
21. 2022-09-28 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
22. 2022-09-30 Written question to Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Andrew R.T. Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
23. 2022-10-05 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Agriculture (Wales) Bill: Evidence session 1, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
24. 2022-10-12 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Agriculture (Wales) Bill: Evidence Session 2, Dr Hazel Wright
25. 2022-11-09 Finance Committee: Financial implications of the Agriculture (Wales) Bill: Evidence session, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
26. 2022-11-16 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Agriculture (Wales) Bill: Evidence session 10, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
27. 2022-11-30 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
28. 2022-11-30 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
29. 2022-12-14 Plenary: Statement by Peter Fox: Introduction of a Member Proposed Bill: Food (Wales) Bill, Jenny Rathbone (Welsh Labour)
30. 2023-02-07 Plenary: & 6. The general principles of the Agriculture (Wales) Bill and the financial resolution in respect of the Agriculture (Wales) Bill, Jane Dodds (Welsh Liberal Democrats)
31. 2023-03-01 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Carbon Budget 1 and Net Zero Wales - scrutiny of the Minister for Climate Change, Julie James (Welsh Labour)
32. 2023-03-01 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Carbon Budget 1 and Net Zero Wales - scrutiny of the Minister for Climate Change, Julie James (Welsh Labour)
33. 2023-05-16 Plenary: Group 4: Provision of support for farmers (Amendments 4, 52, 53, 54, 38, 55), Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
34. 2023-06-20 Plenary: Report Stage for the Agriculture (Wales) Bill, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
35. 2023-06-21 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: General Ministerial Scrutiny: Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Gian Marco Currado
36. 2023-06-27 Plenary: Stage 4 of The Agriculture (Wales) Bill, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
37. 2023-07-04 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Andrew RT Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
38. 2023-07-04 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
39. 2023-07-11 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd: Government response to the second phase of the sustainable farming scheme co-design, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
40. 2023-07-11 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd: Government response to the second phase of the sustainable farming scheme co-design, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
41. 2023-07-11 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd: Government response to the second phase of the sustainable farming scheme co-design, Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
42. 2023-07-11 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd: Government response to the second phase of the sustainable farming scheme co-design, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
43. 2023-07-11 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd: Government response to the second phase of the sustainable farming scheme co-design, Jane Dodds (Welsh Liberal Democrats)
44. 2023-07-11 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd: Government response to the second phase of the sustainable farming scheme co-design, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
45. 2023-10-04 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
46. 2023-10-04 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
47. 2023-10-24 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
48. 2023-12-13 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: General Ministerial Scrutiny: Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
49. 2024-01-18 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Annual scrutiny of Natural Resources Wales, Clare Pillman
50. 2024-01-18 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024-25: Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
51. 2024-01-24 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
52. 2024-01-24 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
53. 2024-01-29 Petitions Committee: New petitions, Jack Sargeant (Welsh Labour)
54. 2024-01-30 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
55. 2024-01-30 Plenary: Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd: BlasCymru/TasteWales, Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
56. 2024-02-06 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Rhun ap Iorwerth (Plaid Cymru)
57. 2024-02-06 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
58. 2024-02-20 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)
59. 2024-02-20 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Andrew RT Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
60. 2024-02-20 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)
61. 2024-02-20 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)

62. 2024-02-20 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Rhun ap Iorwerth (Plaid Cymru)
63. 2024-02-20 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)
64. 2024-02-20 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Jane Dodds (Welsh Liberal Democrats)
65. 2024-02-22 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Inquiry: Farming Connect: Panel 1 - Stakeholders, Abi Reader
66. 2024-02-22 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Inquiry: Farming Connect: Panel 1 - Stakeholders, Abi Reader
67. 2024-02-27 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)
68. 2024-02-28 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru)
69. 2024-02-28 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
70. 2024-02-28 Plenary: Welsh Conservatives Debate: Sustainable Farming Scheme, James Evans (Welsh Conservatives)
71. 2024-02-28 Plenary: Welsh Conservatives Debate: Sustainable Farming Scheme, Jane Dodds (Welsh Liberal Democrats)
72. 2024-02-28 Plenary: Welsh Conservatives Debate: Sustainable Farming Scheme, Peter Fox (Welsh Conservatives)
73. 2024-02-28 Plenary: Welsh Conservatives Debate: Sustainable Farming Scheme, Janet Finch-Saunders (Welsh Conservatives)
74. 2024-02-28 Plenary: Welsh Conservatives Debate: Sustainable Farming Scheme, Rhun ap Iorwerth (Plaid Cymru)
75. 2024-02-28 Plenary: Welsh Conservatives Debate: Sustainable Farming Scheme, Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
76. 2024-02-28 Plenary: Welsh Conservatives Debate: Sustainable Farming Scheme, Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
77. 2024-02-28 Senedd vote
78. 2024-02-28 Senedd vote
79. 2024-03-06 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: General Ministerial Scrutiny: Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
80. 2024-03-21 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Welsh Government's proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS): evidence session with farming representatives, Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru)
81. 2024-03-21 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Welsh Government's proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS): evidence session with farming representatives, Rachel Lewis-Davies
82. 2024-03-21 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Welsh Government's proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS): evidence session with farming representatives, George Dunn
83. 2024-03-21 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Welsh Government's proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS): evidence session with farming representatives, Gareth Parry
84. 2024-03-21 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Welsh Government's proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS): evidence session with farming representatives, Gareth Parry
85. 2024-03-21 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Welsh Government's proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS): evidence session with farming representatives, Rachel Lewis-Davies
86. 2024-03-21 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Welsh Government's proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS): evidence session with environmental organisations, Rhys Evans
87. 2024-03-21 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Welsh Government's proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS): evidence session with environmental organisations, Alex Phillips
88. 2024-04-17 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Rhun ap Iorwerth (Plaid Cymru)
89. 2024-04-30 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Vaughan Gething (Welsh Labour)
90. 2024-04-30 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Vaughan Gething (Welsh Labour)
91. 2024-05-09 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Sustainable Farming Scheme - Farming Unions, Gareth Parry
92. 2024-05-09 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Sustainable Farming Scheme - Farming Unions, Gareth Parry
93. 2024-05-09 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Sustainable Farming Scheme - Farming Unions, Gareth Parry
94. 2024-05-09 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Sustainable Farming Scheme - Environmental organisations, Andrew Tuddenham
95. 2024-05-09 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Sustainable Farming Scheme - Environmental organisations, Andrew Tuddenham
96. 2024-05-09 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Sustainable Farming Scheme - Environmental organisations, Rhys Evans
97. 2024-05-09 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Sustainable Farming Scheme - Environmental organisations, Alex Phillips
98. 2024-05-14 Plenary: Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs: The future of farming in Wales, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
99. 2024-05-14 Plenary: Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs: The future of farming in Wales, Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru)
100. 2024-05-14 Plenary: Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs: The future of farming in Wales, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
101. 2024-05-14 Plenary: Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs: The future of farming in Wales, Jenny Rathbone (Welsh Labour)
102. 2024-05-14 Plenary: Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs: The future of farming in Wales, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
103. 2024-05-15 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
104. 2024-05-22 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Climate Change scrutiny with the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
105. 2024-06-13 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Inquiry: Welsh Government's proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
106. 2024-06-19 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
107. 2024-07-12 Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister: Rural communities, Vaughan Gething (Welsh Labour)
108. 2024-07-17 Plenary: Welsh Conservatives Debate: Farming, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
109. 2024-09-18 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Halting and reversing the loss of nature by 2030 - evidence session with environmental organisations, Alex Phillips
110. 2024-10-03 Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee: Halting and reversing the loss of nature by 2030 - evidence session with Natural Resources Wales, Huwel Manley
111. 2024-10-09 Plenary: Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
112. 2024-10-22 Plenary: Statement by the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs: The Climate Adaptation Strategy, Lee Waters (Welsh Labour)
113. 2024-10-23 Plenary: Joint Debate on Committee Reports: The Sustainable Farming Scheme and Farming Connect, Paul Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
114. 2024-10-23 Plenary: Joint Debate on Committee Reports: The Sustainable Farming Scheme and Farming Connect, Cefin Campbell (Plaid Cymru)
115. 2024-10-23 Plenary: Joint Debate on Committee Reports: The Sustainable Farming Scheme and Farming Connect, Jenny Rathbone (Welsh Labour)

116. 2024-10-23 Plenary: Joint Debate on Committee Reports: The Sustainable Farming Scheme and Farming Connect, Carolyn Thomas (Welsh Labour)
117. 2024-10-23 Plenary: Joint Debate on Committee Reports: The Sustainable Farming Scheme and Farming Connect, Carolyn Thomas (Welsh Labour)
118. 2024-10-23 Plenary: Joint Debate on Committee Reports: The Sustainable Farming Scheme and Farming Connect, Jane Dodds (Welsh Liberal Democrats)
119. 2025-01-15 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
120. 2025-01-15 Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee: Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
121. 2025-01-21 Plenary: Statement by the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs: Restoring nature in Wales, Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
122. 2025-08-06 Written question to Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru)
123. 2025-09-15 Written question to Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Darren Millar (Welsh Conservatives)
124. 2025-12-05 Written question to Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Gareth Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
125. 2026-02-04 Plenary: Debate on the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee Report, 'Digging the dirt: Improving Wales' soil health', Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
126. 2026-02-04 Plenary: Debate on the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee Report, 'Digging the dirt: Improving Wales' soil health', Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
127. 2026-02-16 Written question to Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Gareth Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
128. 2026-06-10 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Laura Anne Jones (Reform UK)
129. 2026-06-10 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru)
130. 2026-06-23 Plenary: Statement by the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability: Priorities for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Laura Anne Jones (Reform UK)
131. 2026-06-23 Plenary: Statement by the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability: Priorities for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Matthew Jones (Plaid Cymru)
132. 2026-06-23 Plenary: Statement by the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability: Priorities for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru)
133. 2026-07-08 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru)
134. 2026-07-14 Plenary: Debate: The First Supplementary Budget 2026-27, James Evans (Reform UK)
135. 2026-07-17 Written question to Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Andrew R.T. Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
136. 2026-09-16 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Minister for Finance, Elin Jones (Plaid Cymru)
137. 2026-09-27 Welsh Government announcement: New arrangements reduce duplication for Sustainable Farming Scheme farmers, Welsh Government
138. 2026-09-30 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Laura Anne Jones (Reform UK)
139. 2026-09-30 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru)
140. 2026-09-30 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Laura Anne Jones (Reform UK)
141. 2026-09-30 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Vikki Howells (Welsh Labour)
142. 2026-09-30 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru)
143. 2026-10-13 Plenary: Statement by the Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability: Winter preparedness: Be flood ready, Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru)
144. 2026-10-14 Plenary: Short Debate: Green across the aisle: Making environmental stewardship a common cause, Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru)
145. 2026-04-01 Welsh Government final budgets, Welsh Government