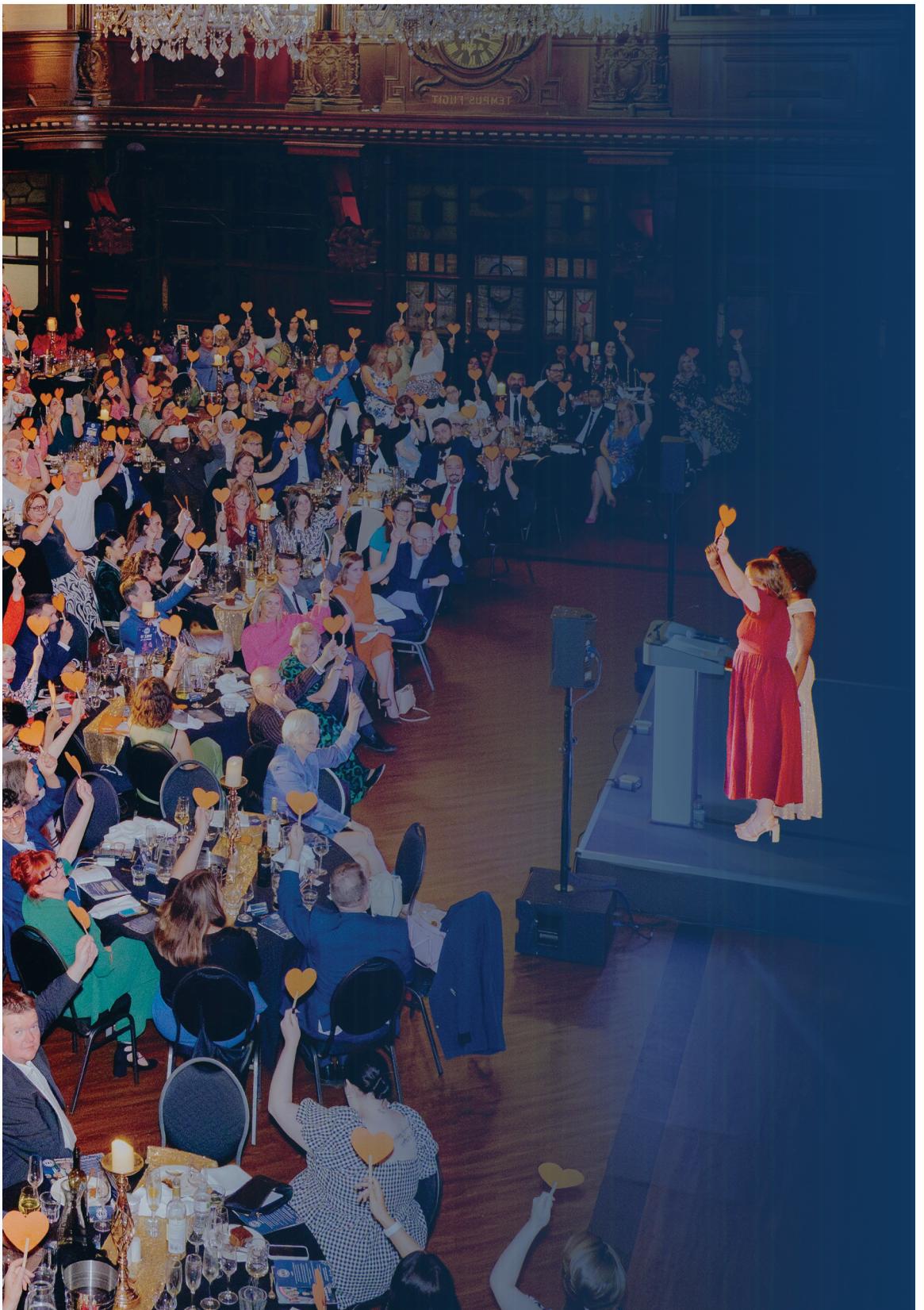




# SANCTUARY THAT WORKS FOR WALES

Sanctuary Coalition Cymru &  
Welsh Refugee Council





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# Introduction

The Nation of Sanctuary vision is at risk. Ahead of the upcoming Senedd elections, there has been increased debate about its future. This would weaken Wales' economy, culture, and leadership. A Nation of Sanctuary is a Wales that values hard work, fairness, and giving people a chance to contribute. A Wales that refuses to give in to division and hate.

## 1. Protecting The Nation of Sanctuary Vision

### Our Ask

We call on politicians and decision makers to publicly reaffirm and actively protect Wales' Nation of Sanctuary vision, ensuring it remains embedded in policy and practice across government. This means enabling them to contribute as quickly as we can and maintaining Wales' leadership in fairness, safety, and community cohesion.

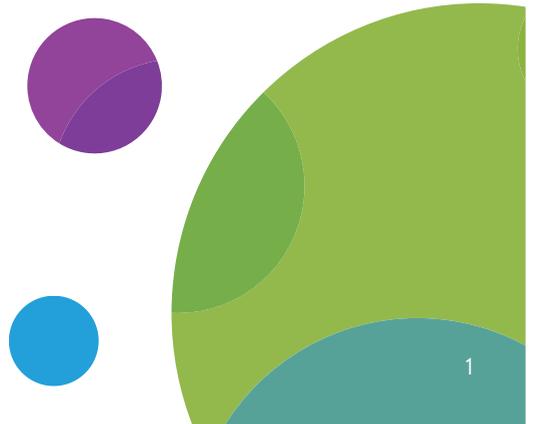
- **Our communities.** Divisions grow when people feel excluded. Far-right narratives gain ground when we fail to uphold our values.

- **Our reputation.** Wales has earned recognition for fairness and leadership. Losing this status would damage our standing across the UK and beyond.

### Why This Matters For Wales

People have told us that if we abandon this vision, we put at risk:

- **Our economy.** Sanctuary seekers ready to work, pay taxes, and fill vital roles will remain locked out and prevented from contributing, costing Wales millions and fuelling informal, unregulated work.



## Why This Works For Everyone

### For Taxpayers and Businesses

The Nation of Sanctuary approach helps sanctuary seekers integrate quickly, reducing welfare costs, and increasing the number of people in work and paying taxes.

### For Communities

Integration programmes, language support, and community engagement are all central to the Nation of Sanctuary Plan. These activities help build trust, reduce isolation, and prevent tensions before they take root.

### For Sanctuary Seekers

The focus is on becoming part of Wales' economic and social life from day one by learning the language, understanding our values, and contributing skills where they're most needed.

### For Government

Delivers on Wales' stated values while providing a practical framework for managing migration, boosting the economy, and keeping communities safe and cohesive.





## The Bottom Line

The Nation of Sanctuary Plan is a strategic investment in Wales' future. Our economy and public services face real challenges ahead, from skills shortages in key industries, to pressures on health and social care, to the need for more entrepreneurs and innovators.

By the Welsh Government's own projections, a third of our workforce are already over 50. Without enough younger people, we will struggle to provide the care, services, and economic activity an ageing population needs.

Wales cannot afford to sit back and hope these challenges solve themselves. We need to strengthen our workforce now with the energy, skills, and ambition that sanctuary seekers bring. The Nation of Sanctuary vision helps us do exactly that. It supports people ready to work, pay taxes, start businesses, and contribute to our communities from day one.

Protecting this vision is economically smart, socially responsible, and vital for ensuring Wales remains strong, prosperous, and self-sufficient in the years ahead.

## 2. Unlocking Wales' Strength Through a Pathway for Contribution

### Our Ask

We call on you to champion the creation of an immigration salary and occupation list specific to Wales' needs and to advocate for it with the UK Government. This will give Wales the tools to meet its own labour market needs, strengthen our economy, and ensure that those ready to work can do so.

### Why This Matters For Wales

We're facing urgent skills shortages, in our NHS, care services, green industries, digital sector, and rural communities. Sanctuary seekers are living here, able and willing to fill these roles, but current UK-wide rules stop them from contributing.

A Wales-specific immigration list would allow people to start work in priority sectors. There is already a UK-wide Lift the Ban campaign, calling for sanctuary seekers to have the legal right to work sooner, helping them achieve independence while boosting the Welsh economy.

### Priority Sectors

#### Health and social care:

tackling NHS and care staff shortages head-on.

**Green industries and construction:** delivering net-zero and infrastructure goals.

**Digital and technical skills:** driving Welsh innovation and competitiveness.

#### Rural community revitalisation:

boosting population, local services, and economic growth in areas at risk of decline.

### Why This Works For Everyone

#### For Businesses

A ready supply of skilled, motivated workers to meet record demand.

#### For Taxpayers

More people paying tax, fewer relying on welfare, easing pressure on public finances and growing the economy.

## For Sanctuary Seekers

A fast-track to contribution. They can fill vital roles, support themselves and their families, and actively contribute to the Welsh economy and society from the outset.

## For Communities

A stronger local economy and reduced strain on services.

## For Government

A policy rooted in fairness, self-reliance, and making the most of existing resources, principles that command broad support.

## The Bottom Line

Sanctuary seekers are not asking for handouts, they are asking for the chance to stand on their own feet, to give back to the communities that welcome them, and to help build a stronger Wales for everyone.

We have people who can work. We have sectors that need workers. A Wales-specific immigration list is common sense and it's time to make it happen.



## 3. Ending The Spread of Misinformation and Hate

### Our Ask

We call on all MSs and political leaders to:

**Lead honest, evidence-based conversations**, challenging misinformation with facts and clarity.

**Commit to using accurate, respectful, and responsible language** when discussing sanctuary seekers. Language that informs the public, builds trust, and keeps debate focused on solutions.

**Champion Welsh values of decency and respect**, framing sanctuary as a strength that enriches our communities.

### Why This Matters For Wales

The language used by leaders shapes public attitudes. When dehumanising or racist language is normalised, it fuels division, undermines trust, and gives credibility to extremist narratives.

Wales has always stood apart, rooted in fairness, community, and the belief that dignity is non-negotiable. Our history teaches us what it means to be marginalised, to have our culture dismissed, and to fight for our voice. We cannot allow those hard-won values to be eroded.

And while politicians and decision makers trade in rhetoric, charities and frontline organisations are left to pick up the pieces. This diverts precious time and resources from helping people into managing the fallout from racist incidents and tensions. That is not just a moral failure; it's a practical waste of effort that could be spent building stronger, more resilient communities.

### Unchecked misinformation and hate speech:

- **Damages community cohesion** and weakens the social fabric.
- **Fuels racism**, increasing the risk of unrest and violence.
- **Diverts attention from real solutions** to our shared challenges.

# Why This Works For Everyone

## For Communities

Honest, respectful leadership builds trust between neighbours, reduces tensions, and creates safer, more united places to live.

## For The Economy

Countering misinformation avoids unnecessary fear that can deter investment, tourism, and community development.

## For Public Safety

Reducing the spread of hate undermines extremist recruitment and lowers the risk of violence or disorder.

## For Sanctuary Seekers

When they are met with respect rather than hostility, they can rebuild their lives faster. They become taxpayers, filling labour shortages, and strengthen the communities that welcomed them.

## For Government and Leaders

Demonstrates integrity, strengthens public confidence, and shows that Welsh politics adheres to standards of conduct and principle.

History will remember who called out misinformation, and who stayed silent. We are asking our leaders to remember that every word spoken about sanctuary seekers is a signal to the nation about who we are and who we want to be.

## A Cross-party Vision: Why This Matters For All of Wales

This manifesto is built on shared values that unite us across political divides:

### Economic Responsibility

We cannot afford to keep talented, willing workers on the side-lines.

### Community Strength

Welcoming those in need fosters community pride, resilience, and vibrancy, especially in rural Wales.



### National Pride

The Nation of Sanctuary vision shows the world that Wales leads from the front. Turning welcome into economic strength, integration into shared success, and by backing people who now call Wales their "Cartref," their home.





Sanctuary  
Coalition  
Cymru



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