iwa

constitutional convention report

iwa

Contents

Introduction

At the IWA's pre-referendum conference in September 2014, the former Editor of the Times, Simon Jenkins, asked of Wales 'Why wait for Westminster to grant you a Constitutional Convention? Hold your own one; decide what you want, and ask for it – you never know, at this time, you might just get it".

The challenge was issued amid concern from many at the conference that Scotland and England were dominating the constitutional debate and Wales risked being forgotten.

Having piloted a 'crowdsourced' approach to policy-making to shape the UK's Changing Union's submission to the Silk Commission on devolving policing and justice powers[1], the IWA decided to extend the approach to take up Simon Jenkins' challenge: what does Wales want?

The announcement by Welsh Secretary Stephen Crabb of closed cross party talks at Westminster to agree of package of additional powers for Wales[2] following the Scottish result, reinforced the need for the engagement of civil society in the conversation about Wales' future.

We partnered with numerous civil society organisations to try and ensure wide engagement. These included: Electoral Reform Society Wales, Media Wales, The National Assembly for Wales Commission, TUC Wales, Community Housing Cymru, FSB Wales and NUS Wales. We had £7,000 grant funding from The UK's Changing Union Project and we raised a further £4,000 in small donations via crowdfunding.

Together we hoped to stimulate a debate about Wales' future in a discussion that went beyond powers and reached beyond the political elites. To achieve this we had cross cutting themes which we tried to run through each of the phases asking:

— What has been our performance to date been?

— What are the barriers to progress?

— Do we have the capacity and calibre to do better?

— Do we need more powers to rectify these problems?

— How do we improve engagement and participation?

The clear themes that emerged at the end of the two-month long convention were:

— **Performance is more important than powers in terms of education and the economy**. Whilst there was support for the additional powers and accountability recommended by the Silk Commission, the debate around measures to improve the performance of the Welsh economy did not focus on the devolution of further powers. Contributors typically called for better implementation of initiatives and more imaginative policy ideas but with the exception of energy powers, the ideas for improvement that were suggested could all be implemented within the current settlement.

— **The need to develop greater opportunities for 'green growth'** and the opportunities for the exploitation of green energy were recurring themes.

— Wales should explore different policies that could make Wales fairer. Our contributors felt that UK Government policies were often detrimental to Wales and not in keeping with the grain of public opinion, but felt that **the complexities associated with devolving elements of welfare could also leave Wales disadvantaged**. Despite this, there was a strong sense that policies such as the 'spare room subsidy' / 'bedroom tax' should be abolished in Wales and encouraged politicians to look at the scope to do this.

— Policies around the UK and the union have been dealt with in an ad-hoc and reactive manner, and **there has been little cohesive thought to address the role of the union as a whole**. A good example of this is the devolution currently taking place in Manchester which will soon have an elected Mayor and control of a substantial amount of public spending, despite rejecting an elected Mayor at a referendum just three years ago. Our contributors repeatedly called for a UK-wide constitutional convention to address the future role of the Union.

Notes

1   UK Changing Union Project, Jan 2014, Submission to the Commission on Devolution in Wales: The Devolution of Policing and Justice to Wales, http://ukchangingunion.org.uk/papers/05/ChangingUnion_policingJustice.pdf [Acc: 22/04/15]

2   HM Government, Feb 2015, Powers for a Purpose: Towards a Lasting Devolution Settlement for Wales, | https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/408587/47683_CM9020_ENGLISH.pdf [acc: 22/04/15]

Methodology

12,000
THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO ENGAGED WITH THE PROJECT.

During the period of the convention our facebook posts had a total reach of

42,177 PEOPLE

We also had a small number of people taking part in the Constitutional Convention through facebook by commenting on our posts with their ideas and opinions.

20,543
page views on iwaconvention.co.uk

Our snapshot polls using Survey Monkey received a total of

551 RESPONSES ACROSS 18 POLLS

Our podcasts were listened to

3,022 TIMES

Articles relating to the constitutional convention on Click on Wales had a total of

9,907 PAGE VIEWS

There were

1,656
tweets sent about the convention. The

#IWACONVENTION
hashtag was used

1,146
times on twitter by

487
unique users – this produces a 'potential reach' of

783,586
twitter users.

Methodology

We conceived the Constitutional Convention as a multi-platform project drawing on crowdsourcing techniques to generate opinions and ideas from participants.

Across our multiple platforms we had around 12,000 total users engage with the Constitutional Convention (this includes the number of users from iwaconvention.co.uk, unique page views of the related articles on Click on Wales and the number of individual Twitter users who tweeted around the project).

Over the eight week period we engaged with 2,455 people on our main site; we had 888 clicks and engagements on Facebook; 487 unique users on Twitter and articles about the Convention were viewed 9,907 times on our Click on Wales website (the full details are set out in annex 1).

We spent some time designing the key questions and discussion areas for each phase with a series of expert groups[3]. We then planned additional engagement tools to draw out the themes and stimulate engagement around each area.

To kick-start the beginning of the Constitutional Convention we held a launch event at The Abacus in Cardiff on 26th January. The event was designed to start the conversation on 'What Wales to do you want for your children' and advertise the beginning of the convention with registration to the site available on the night. Around 100 people attended this event where the initial ideas highlighting barriers to progress in Wales and their possible solutions were crowdsourced through discussions between attendees. This event also resulted in the production of a video of all these ideas.

IWA Constitutional Convention launch event at the Abacus, Cardiff. Image: IWA

We used a range of platforms including a custom website, iwaconvention.co.uk, using the Dialogue App software. This app allowed users to register and join discussions by posting their own ideas or commenting on other user's ideas. Users could then rate ideas, allowing us to measure their popularity. To source quantitative data from our site, we utilised a range of surveys, which asked yes or no questions and allowed participants to add their own comments also.

Throughout the project we published a range of blogposts, podcasts and opinion pieces on our news analysis site www.clickonwales.org. This allowed us to post longer form pieces, which could drive traffic to iwaconvention.co.uk and also allowed our existing users on ClickonWales to comment on the pieces there.

We recorded 21 podcasts where we discussed the issues raised in the convention with experts and specialists, and linked to the discussions on all our channels to add depth and texture to the debate. We used Twitter and Facebook as well as the convention website to disseminate these podcasts and to encourage engagement with as wide an audience as possible.

At key points throughout the project we asked randomly selected members of the public to participate in audio recorded vox pops and give their opinion on discussions taking place on the site. We recorded these in Cardiff, Bangor and Menai Bridge.

We also worked with digital democracy specialists, Vocaleyes, to run two workshops with young people in the south Wales Valleys on key questions within our economy strand. They also embedded a key question relating to this strand on twelve existing digital democracy platforms across Wales.

We also found our social media sites, particularly Twitter, saw considerable engagement, including with a wider audience who weren't participating via the website. We teamed up with the social analytics company Blurrt to measure this engagement.

Throughout the duration of the convention we created a series of snapshot polls through the questionnaire website 'Survey Monkey' to gather the opinion of the crowd on particular topics. While the results of these surveys provide a glimpse as to the crowd's opinion, the sample sizes were too small to directly compare our results with that of other surveys, such as YouGov or the Silk Commission research. However we were able to indicate whether the crowd's opinion was broadly similar to these other surveys. The surveys were embedded into the iwaconvention.co.uk website and shared via Twitter and Facebook as a means of gathering responses. Our snapshot polls using Survey Monkey received a total of 551 responses across 18 polls.

Over the 10 week period that the convention ran (26th Jan – 22nd Mar) the constitutional convention website (IWAconvention.co.uk) had the following traffic:

— 5,014 sessions

— 2,455 users

— 20,543 page views

— 4:50 min average session duration (this compares to the average session duration across the standard website of circa 10-20 seconds)

We had 225 registered users on the website and a total of 146 ideas were submitted over the 5 phases, prompting 360 comments.

Analytical data was collected both from the website traffic via Google Analytics, and on the registered users through the site itself. Registered users are people who have signed up on the website and can then contribute ideas or comments to the dialogue. The 'users' on Google Analytics are people looking at the site, this encompasses both the registered users, and the spectators who don't sign up and provide input but instead follow the conversations as bystanders. The difference between the number of 'registered users' and Google Analytics users can be explained by the 90:10:1 rule of internet interaction: 90% of people only look at the content, 10% of people contribute to the content and 1% of people create new content. The 2,455 users were observing the convention as it took place, whereas the 225 registered users (which represented approximately 10% of the observers) were submitting content to the site and directly contributing to the discussion.

There was a considerable response to the constitutional convention on *Clickonwales*, both via page views of the articles and comments in response to articles. Articles relating to the constitutional convention on *Clickonwales* had a total of 9,907 page views prompting 206 comments.

There were 1,656 tweets sent about the convention. The #IWAconvention hashtag was used 1,146 times on Twitter by 487 unique users – this produces a 'potential reach' (the maximum number of people who could have seen our posts through tweets, retweets etc) of 783,586 Twitter users.

We communicated information about the convention through the IWA Facebook page. During the period of the convention our Facebook posts had a total reach of 42,177 people. We also had a small number of people taking part in the Constitutional Convention through Facebook by commenting on our posts with their ideas and opinions.

Our podcasts were listened to 3,022 times.

3   See annex for details

Chapter 1

What is the UK for?

1. What is the UK for?

Our first phase sought to ground the debate in first principles. The Scottish referendum debate came to resemble a bidding war with additional powers being offered to the Scots to encourage them to reject independence, but with no consideration of the impact on the integrity of the rest of the UK.

We set out to generate a discussion about what the role of the UK should be: what should be the same in each part of the UK, and what could be different? During this discussion 3 related articles were published on our ClickonWales website and 3 podcasts were recorded.

There were comments by many that devolution to date has not been thought through by politicians in a cohesive manner, and that many powers afforded to devolved administrations had been delivered reactively, with no constitutional forethought about the role of the UK. As a result of this there were calls on the site for a UK-wide constitutional convention, so that the future configuration of the UK could be discussed: a constitutional convention 'not just here in Wales, but across the piste', as one participant wrote.

There was support for the idea that foreign policy, defence, currency, macro economy and redistribution of wealth should be reserved to Westminster. The Wales TUC thought that central Government should hold reserved powers over "the landmass and territorial waters we share; our interdependent economies with a single labour market; our shared histories and common culture; and the threats to our security and liberty we mutually face".

On the question of what could be different in Wales there was discussion on broadcasting, policing and justice.

Broadcasting

Participants generally wanted to see a stronger Welsh voice with regards to broadcasting and were concerned about the representation of Wales under the current model. Some people called for devolution of broadcasting while others wanted UK news organisations to report on Welsh current affairs adequately to counteract English-centric reporting and help the Welsh public be more up to date with Welsh politics.

WE SET OUT TO GENERATE A DISCUSSION ABOUT WHAT THE ROLE OF THE UK SHOULD BE: WHAT SHOULD BE THE SAME IN EACH PART OF THE UK, AND WHAT COULD BE DIFFERENT?

The Silk Commission report did not recommend the devolution of responsibility for broadcasting to Wales. However, it recommended the creation of a devolved governance body for the BBC to provide oversight and scrutiny of BBC outputs in Wales, and that responsibility for the direct government funding for S4C should be transferred from the UK Government to the Welsh Government.

However, 82% of our survey respondents (N=48) thought that broadcasting should be devolved to Wales. This is in keeping with the thrust of the Silk Commission's research (in August 2013), which found that devolution of broadcasting and media regulation was favoured in Wales by 58% of respondents.

A selection of the responses to our survey are below:

> Broadcasting should be a shared responsibility between the UK Government and the territorial governments.

> UK news organisations (which provide the majority of news consumed in Wales)…wilfully overlook the existence of policy outside of England.

> If the broadcast media which is 'received' in Wales (but regulated by London) adequately, equitably and professionally reported Welsh current affairs (particularly in relation to devolved Welsh politics) and Welsh life, culture, sport, etc., the answer 'could' be, no. But it doesn't. It so really, really doesn't. Not even closely.

> The importance of broadcasting is firstly, to keep the Welsh public well informed of issues relevant to their lives, but also to create and produce entertainment for the Welsh public. Our politicians are at risk of gaining more powers and leaving us with less capacity to scrutinise them…

Policing

Most participants wanted to see policing devolved to Wales and for the system to become less centralised. The Silk Commission recommended devolution of responsibility for the police service to Wales. 91% of respondents to our survey (N=84) stated that policing should be devolved to Wales. This is broadly in line with the Silk Commission's research (in August 2013), which also found support for the devolution of policing to Wales with 65% of respondents in favour.

> "All elements of policing and internal security should be reserved to the Welsh level… Counter-terrorism and organised crime should be combated across the UK on a co-operative basis, not a centralised basis."

> "Policing powers should be devolved, but to devolve them without at the same time devolving justice more generally is a recipe for confusion."

MOST PARTICIPANTS WANTED TO SEE POLICING DEVOLVED TO WALES AND FOR THE SYSTEM TO BECOME LESS CENTRALISED.

> "Indeed, it would seem really quite odd to an Australian, a German or an Indian that policing and justice matters need to be resolved at a federal level. In each country, the states have some jurisdiction in these areas. But even in the British Isles it is Wales which is the exception – Guernsey has its own policing and justice system after all."

Although some had reservations:

> "…it makes more sense, in geographical terms, to link South Wales with the West Country, Mid Wales with Mercia, and North Wales with Merseyside. Operationally, North and South Wales have nothing in common."

Justice

Our respondents were much more divided about whether justice should be devolved to Wales. The Silk Commission recommended a phased approach to devolution of the justice system should be undertaken, beginning with youth justice in view of its links to local government and other devolved functions. Following this the Commission recommended a feasibility study of the devolution of prisons and probation. For the longer term a review of the devolution of other aspects of the justice system was recommended to be completed and implemented by 2025.

In our survey, 54% of people (N=11) responded that Wales should have its own justice system (36% said no, and 9% were undecided). This is broadly in line with the Silk Commission's research (in August 2013), which found a similarly divided and slightly more negative response to the same question with 63% of respondents opposed to devolution of the criminal justice system and 35% for. Our respondents stated in their responses:

> "Wales shouldn't be sharing a legal jurisdiction with England. A Welsh legal jurisdiction should be created, with policing and a Welsh justice system devolved along with it. If it's good enough for Scotland and NI, it's good enough for us."

> "It would increase bureaucracy, create inefficiencies, and restrict mobility of people in the legal industry. It would increase reliance on the public sector even more, and make it less desirable to do business in Wales."

"WALES SHOULDN'T BE SHARING A LEGAL JURISDICTION WITH ENGLAND. A WELSH LEGAL JURISDICTION SHOULD BE CREATED, WITH POLICING AND A WELSH JUSTICE SYSTEM DEVOLVED ALONG WITH IT. IF IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR SCOTLAND AND NI, IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR US."

Chapter 2

How do we create a more prosperous Wales?

2. How do we create a more prosperous Wales?

Our look at the economy began with an analysis of the state we're in. The Western Mail Business Editor, Sion Barry, wrote an analysis to start the discussion outlining the economic situation. He noted that Wales has the lowest GVA (Gross Value Added - the value of goods and services produced in an area) per head at 72.2% and growth has not taken place in a significant way since 1999. This compares to the north east of England, which has seen 2% growth and has overtaken Wales.

The state we're in

Wales has the lowest GVA (Gross Value Added - the value of goods and services produced in an area) per head at 72.2% and growth has not taken place in a significant way since 1999. This compares to the north east of England, which has seen 2% growth and overtaken Wales.

Graphic adapted from Juan Pablo Bravo from the Noun Project

During this discussion, 4 related articles were published on our ClickonWales website and 3 podcasts were recorded.

Contributors highlighted the skills gap between Wales and the rest of the UK, a lack of available and successful investment in start-ups, and called for efforts to be made to attract more businesses to establish their bases in Wales.

WALES HAS THE LOWEST GVA (GROSS VALUE ADDED - THE VALUE OF GOODS AND SERVICES PRODUCED IN AN AREA) PER HEAD AT 72.2% AND GROWTH HAS NOT TAKEN PLACE IN A SIGNIFICANT WAY SINCE 1999

One contributor also commented on the failure of the Welsh Government to measure all of the economic data available to them: "If we had regularly published data, we could measure how effective the policies are. However there seems to be a reluctance among politicians and the media to highlight this issue for fear of being seen as not effective in this area of policy."

So what would a better economy look like, and how can we secure it?

We asked 'the crowd' "What one thing could help improve the Welsh economy?" We launched the initiative with Western Mail Business Editor Sion Barry in which he made the case for focusing on generating new 'start-up' businesses. The initiative received the largest response of the convention project with 43 individual ideas submitted. Participation in this section of the convention was increased through extra tweeting, a short direct question and the incentive that the best idea would win a year's membership to the IWA.

Notably, many of these ideas were not focused on the acquisition of new powers for the Welsh Government, but an improvement of performance as a result of successful Welsh policies.

Ambition was a key theme of many of the ideas, with a number of the ideas calling for projects already mooted for Wales to be realised. There was support on the site for projects such as the South Wales Metro, the Severn Barrage, a development bank and the reintroduction of an arms-length body for investment and development.

Green Growth

A considerable number of the ideas related to 'green growth' and an environmentally sustainable economy. Ideas around reforestation, renewable energy, carbon capture and cycling and pedestrian infrastructure were submitted, calling for:

— Afforesting the uplands and realising Wales' sustainable commercial forestry potential;

— Concerted effort by Welsh Government and planning authorities to move to 100%+ renewable energy as soon as possible.

AFFORESTING THE UPLANDS AND REALISING WALES' SUSTAINABLE COMMERCIAL FORESTRY POTENTIAL

CONCERTED EFFORT BY WELSH GOVERNMENT AND PLANNING AUTHORITIES TO MOVE TO 100%+ RENEWABLE ENERGY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
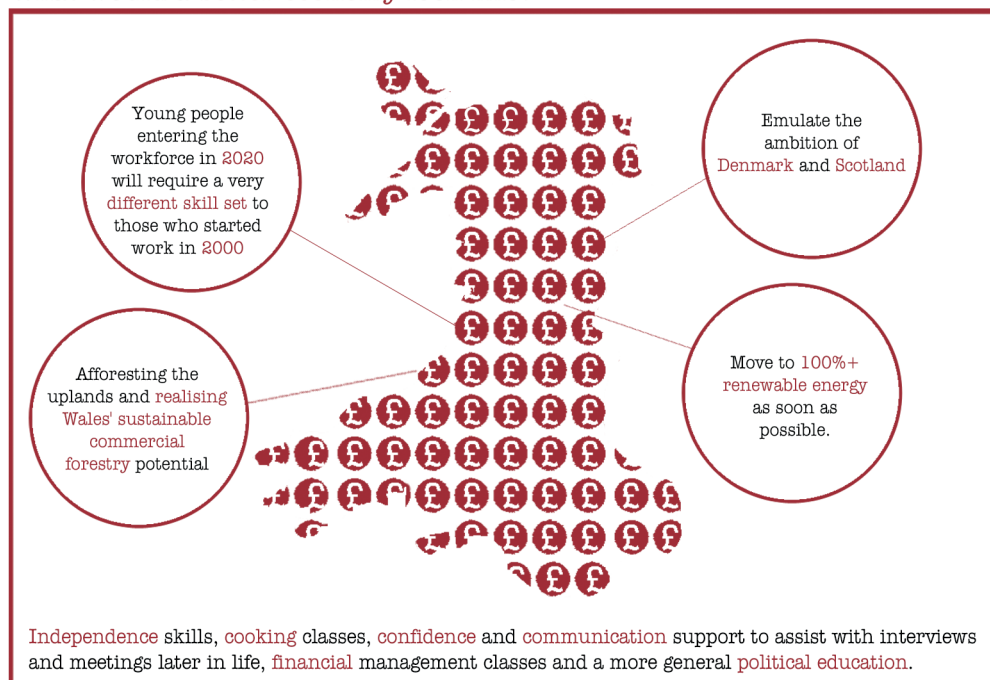
EMULATE THE AMBITION OF DENMARK AND SCOTLAND

Energy efficiency was also identified as "a huge employment creator as well as the cheapest way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions". In addition, community energy "needs to have far greater support through the planning sector", according to a popular idea. In a snapshot poll, 77% said it is in Wales' interests to have the power to approve energy projects of up to 350 megawatts in line with the recommendations of the Silk Commission and plans announced by the UK Government in March 2015. Contributors to this debate included former environment minister Jane Davidson who tweeted #IWAConvention saying she had been arguing for energy powers for Wales for years. "The current system doesn't work. Wales has a huge natural energy resource".

Another contributor to the debate agreed that we should capitalise more on this natural energy resource:

> "Emulate the ambition of Denmark and Scotland: As much electricity as Wales uses by 2020 (100% renewable electricity); as much heat and electricity as Wales uses by 2030 (100% renewable heat) and as much transport, heat and electricity - all from renewables sources - as Wales uses by 2040. For this to happen we need very strong leadership from Welsh Government and all powers over energy. Both of these are currently lacking."

What would a better economy look like?

Young people entering the workforce in 2020 will require a very different skill set to those who started work in 2000

Emulate the ambition of Denmark and Scotland

Afforesting the uplands and realising Wales' sustainable commercial forestry potential

Move to 100%+ renewable energy as soon as possible.

Independence skills, cooking classes, confidence and communication support to assist with interviews and meetings later in life, financial management classes and a more general political education.

Graphic adapted from Luke Anthony Firth from the Noun Project

"I NOW EMPLOY A 'GOOGLE' WORKFORCE, THEY DON'T KNOW EVERYTHING BUT THEY CAN FIND IT OUT!"

"LESS WEB DEVELOPMENT AND MORE REAL CODERS PLEASE"

The jobs of the future

The discussion within our expert group focused on the imperative of improving Wales' skills base as a means of growing the economy. In order to frame the debate in an engaging way we posed the question 'What sort of jobs do you want your children to have and are we teaching the skills needed?'

In a live discussion on this question on our website, during which 148 people were online, one contributor noted that 47% of all US jobs were at risk of computerisation. Is Wales prepared for a similar radical change in employment or unemployment as this becomes a worldwide problem?

New technologies will eradicate some jobs, change others and create whole new categories of employment. How do we prepare our workforce of 2020 to be ready to work in jobs that don't even exist yet? One contributor highlighted this problem writing:

> "Young people entering the workforce in 2020 will require a very different skill set to those who started work in 2000, yet are we aware as parents, educators, communities of what these skills are and the role that technology plays in this?"

Another stated:

> "I think we also need to consider how we ensure that we are able to upskill and reskill our existing workforce to do the jobs that Wales needs now and in the future. We cannot rely on new entrants to the job market alone. Getting it right in schools is really important but we also need to think beyond that as well."

Louise Harris, CEO of the Big Learning Company said that in her opinion the two the most important attributes are ambition and motivation.

> "Employers are increasingly looking to hire for attitude and train for skill'. I think this statement is true. I now employ a 'Google' workforce, they don't know everything but they can find it out! Cultivating ambition and a readiness to learn and do well are vital. Young people who are enthusiastic, interested and engaged are infinitely more employable."

In addition to the live debate on our site, we worked with Vocaleyes, digital democracy specialists based in Pembrokeshire College, to run a series of consultations with young people on the question 'What skills do you need to get the job you'd like in the future?' These consultations took place in person with Tonypandy Community College and online with Pembrokeshire College, Rhondda Cynon Taf Youth Forum, and Gower College, Swansea.

In every group computer science and coding lessons were on the list of ideas from the young people contributing. Comments on this topic ranged from "Less web development and more real coders please" to "It will help in the future with potential jobs".

Despite the high level of support for coding and computer skills, there was also a demand for skills that young people could use in the real world, with suggestions from the groups for: independence skills, cooking classes, confidence and communication support to assist with interviews and meetings later in life, financial management classes and a more general political education.

Should Wales have more economic powers?

In a series of snapshot polls on economic powers, we found people were generally supportive of further economic powers for Wales. This included the powers recommended by the Silk Commission, as well as extending the limited fiscal powers that were offered to Scotland by the Smith Commission to Wales; greater control over income tax, the first 10% of VAT and Air Passenger Duty.

While our surveys showed support for the devolution of powers, much of the discussion on the site was around sharper performance and more imaginative policy ideas to boost the economy. Increased accountability was a common call by those who took part in the debate and many supporting further powers for Wales did so on the basis that the Welsh Government should be responsible for raising a portion of the money it spends, which was the key principle advocated by the Silk Commission.

Throughout the discussion on how to make Wales more prosperous, the need for additional powers was not a major factor. Although the public was generally supportive of the further powers for Wales recommended by the Silk Commission, the emphasis from our contributors was about implementation and having more economic ambition, particularly in the fields of green energy and the development of the digital sector.

In the focused work we did with young people in Wales the emphasis was on jobs and quality of life. The consultations we carried out with Vocaleyes showed support for a greater emphasis on coding lessons and life skills such cooking, cleaning and how to best manage finances. It is striking that the balance of opinion we gauged from young people across the colleges and youth forums was consistent with the unfiltered contributions we had on iwaconvention.co.uk from a wider audience. Both audiences felt that much more needed to be done to improve computer and coding skills to equip young people with the skills and capacity to adapt to meet future challenges.

Chapter 3

How do we create a fairer Wales?

3. How do we create a fairer Wales?

A key section of the Smith Commission recommendations for Scotland was the devolution of some powers over the Welfare State. In Wales there has been little or no debate over welfare powers and the Silk Commission deliberately steered clear of the issue.

We set out to stimulate a debate on the role of powers in creating a fairer Wales. During this phase we published 8 related articles on our ClickonWales website, recorded 1 podcast and 2 vox pops.

Nervousness of welfare devolution

In March, the IWA gathered the views of Chief Executives of housing associations across Wales on the devolution of welfare, at an event with Community Housing Cymru in Pembrokeshire. The session found that all representatives in the room were nervous of the potential implications of welfare devolution, the primary reason being the funding arrangements that would underpin this transfer of powers. Accepting responsibility for demand-led welfare benefits with a fixed budget would leave Welsh finances vulnerable if poverty levels increased.
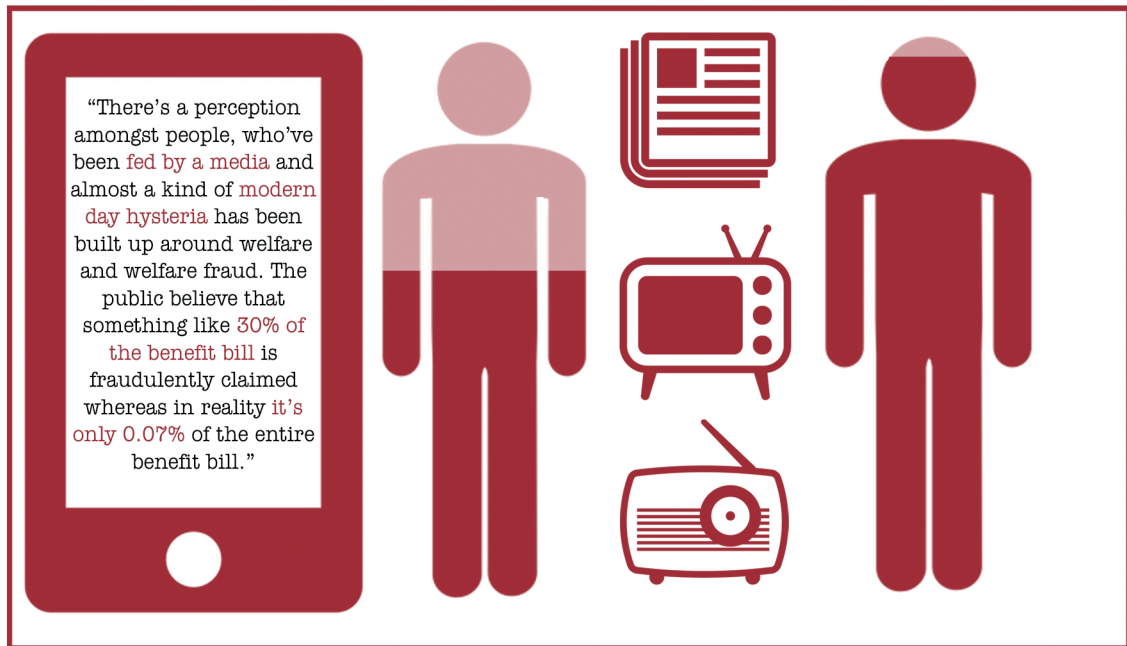
Linda Whittaker of NPT Housing pointed out that devolution of powers over welfare would be difficult because it would not ensure increased budgets at a time of rapidly increasing need. In a podcast, another contributor added that negative perceptions around welfare might add to the nervousness many felt around the discussion of it being devolved:

> "There's a perception amongst people, who've been fed by a media and almost a kind of modern day hysteria has been built up around welfare and welfare fraud. The public believe that something like 30% of the benefit bill is fraudulently claimed whereas in reality it's only 0.07% of the entire benefit bill."

The Liberal Democrat Assembly Member Peter Black wrote a piece for Clickonwales where he highlighted difficulties with the devolution of previous schemes such as the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. He said:

> "the responsibility came with a cut in funding of ten per cent, which meant that the Welsh Government and local councils started off the regime on the back foot. The Welsh Government has met that difference and has guaranteed to do so until the 2016 Welsh Assembly Election but they have not been able to cover any growth in demand. Their own projections also show that it is unsustainable to continue covering the shortfall in this way for the medium to long term."

Why are we so nervous of welfare devolution?

"There's a perception amongst people, who've been fed by a media and almost a kind of modern day hysteria has been built up around welfare and welfare fraud. The public believe that something like 30% of the benefit bill is fraudulently claimed whereas in reality it's only 0.07% of the entire benefit bill."

Graphics adapted from Mike Rowe, James Fenton, Yorlmar Kampos, Maurizio Fusillo and Anthony Firth from the Noun Project

The 'spare room subsidy'

Despite this, there was a consensus that there was a different ideological stance in Wales to some UK Government policies, such as the 'spare room subsidy' or 'bedroom tax'. There was support that if the funding was passed on it would be advantageous for at least some aspects of welfare to be devolved to the Welsh Government.

The 'bedroom tax', has a greater impact in Wales than in other parts of the UK. In Wales 20.4% of tenants in social housing are affected with an average reduction of £781.04 a year. This compares to 15.3% of social housing tenants in England and 19% in Scotland.

In an online discussion asking 'Should Wales have the power to ditch the 'bedroom tax?', there was support for the Welsh Government getting powers over this aspect of welfare policy. "There are no good arguments to continue the removal of the spare room subsidy. It's false economy in low value areas where tenants can move to a small property in the private rented sector and the cost to the taxpayer is more" said one contributor. Swansea East AM, Mike Hedges, agreed saying "If Wales had the power I am sure that neither the bedroom tax or wholesale sanctioning of claimants would be occurring. Unless there was more money then it is difficult to see how benefit levels could be changed".

IN WALES THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE OR NO DEBATE OVER WELFARE POWERS AND THE SILK COMMISSION DELIBERATELY STEERED CLEAR OF THE ISSUE.

"THERE ARE NO GOOD ARGUMENTS TO CONTINUE THE REMOVAL OF THE SPARE ROOM SUBSIDY.

UNLESS THERE WAS MORE MONEY THEN IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEEHOW BENEFIT LEVELS COULD BE CHANGED".

Former Welsh Office Minister Jon Owen Jones responded: "Would we do better if welfare powers were held in Cardiff? I doubt it. Mainly because we need English taxpayers to fund much of the costs and I worry that they may stop doing so. Overall the balance of argument is to me very clear. Big risk versus very small and debateable gain."

Peter Black, Welsh Liberal Democrats social justice spokesperson, also had his doubts, stating:

> " The question arises of how a government dependent on another for its income, in the form of a fixed grant, and which even after further devolution will only have limited borrowing powers, can cope with an often disproportionate growth in demand for these resources. Nobody has a bottomless pit of money and hard decisions have to be taken at every level. Devolution is a desirable outcome in many policy areas but it is not a panacea and nor should it be promoted as one."

The common safety net that has existed since the foundation of the welfare state after the Second World War will alter once powers over welfare are devolved to Scotland. However, contributors to the IWA Convention were reluctant to see devolution of welfare to Wales, despite supporting a different ideological stance from the current UK Government policies.

Chapter 4

The future of the UK?

4. The future of the UK?

The penultimate phase of discussion for the IWA's Constitutional Convention looked at the future of the UK, in particular England, federalism, Europe and devolution in Wales. During this phase, 10 related articles were published on our ClickonWales website and 7 podcasts and 2 vox pops were recorded.

England

In similar territory to our first discussion on the role of the UK, many contributors highlighted again the ad-hoc nature of thought around what the UK should be for, and the role of devolution in England.

There was concern that powers were being devolved to English regions in an ad-hoc way and without referenda. The call for English devolution has been gaining momentum as more powers are announced for both Scotland and Wales. Manchester was given £1bn of public spending which a new elected mayor will control and £6bn NHS budget. This is despite Manchester rejecting a Mayor in a referendum just three years ago. One contributor wrote:

> "…the present devolution debate and activity is chaotic, haphazard and ill thought through. Seems to be driven by events, hunches and electioneering. Given the potential repercussions of devolution, possible unintended consequences and to avoid on going grumbles and gripes, we need to have a much deeper national constitutional conversation including citizenry, business, unions."

Professor Richard Wyn Jones, Director of the Wales Governance Centre at Cardiff University, argued that political parties, particularly unionist parties, had failed to come up with a coherent 'vision' for England. In a podcast for the IWA convention, he said that in the case of 'English Votes for English Laws' there had been a recognition of England as a unit at Westminster but ideas for city regions lacked wide public support, he said.

MANY CONTRIBUTORS HIGHLIGHTED AGAIN THE AD HOC NATURE OF THOUGHT AROUND WHAT THE UK SHOULD BE FOR, AND THE ROLE OF DEVOLUTION IN ENGLAND.

'…THE PRESENT DEVOLUTION DEBATE AND ACTIVITY IS CHAOTIC, HAPHAZARD AND ILL THOUGHT THROUGH. SEEMS TO BE DRIVEN BY EVENTS, HUNCHES AND ELECTIONEERING.'
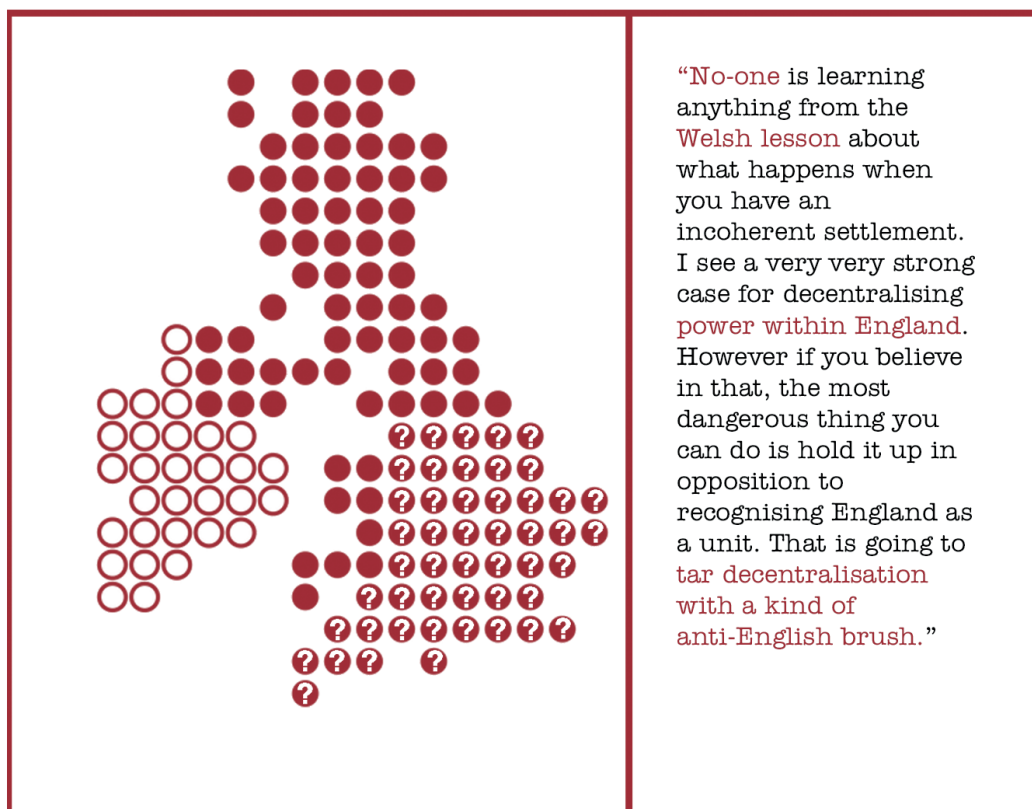
"Within England we have the parties with competing views of what should happen and the coalition government announcing stuff willy nilly which is really far reaching with no public support for what is suggested. It is very much an elite political construct. It all looks pretty incoherent really. No-one is learning anything from the Welsh lesson about what happens when you have an incoherent settlement. I see a very very strong case for decentralising power within England. However if you believe in that, the most dangerous thing you can do is hold it up in opposition to recognising England as a unit. That is going to tar decentralisation with a kind of anti-English brush."

Katie Ghose, Chief Executive of the The Electoral Reform Society responded:

"ERS and many others are campaigning for a UK-wide constitutional convention - led by citizens and involving elected representatives. I completely agree with need for deeper, national conversation."

Yet, despite the agreement on the ad hoc nature of devolution to England so far, some contributors raised the point that Wales is still a very centralised nation itself. Nick Webb said:

"I appreciate the statements above about how centralised England is, but I'd argue Wales is even more so. We've had no Localism Act, no Neighbourhood Planning or Right to Challenge to Run Services, no ability for parents to establish a free school. Whatever one's view of the policies there has been a considerable shift of power from Westminster to communities which is not happening in Wales."

"No-one is learning anything from the Welsh lesson about what happens when you have an incoherent settlement. I see a very very strong case for decentralising power within England. However if you believe in that, the most dangerous thing you can do is hold it up in opposition to recognising England as a unit. That is going to tar decentralisation with a kind of anti-English brush."

Graphic adapted from Juan Pablo Bravo from the Noun Project

Federalism

In terms of the future of the UK, Federalism has come up as an option throughout the convention. It is presented as a way of balancing the asymmetry between England and the rest of the Union and stabilizing the ongoing devolution to Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and English regions.

Currently the UK operates as a unitary state from Westminster but as more and more powers are devolved there is an increased argument for a formal federal approach.
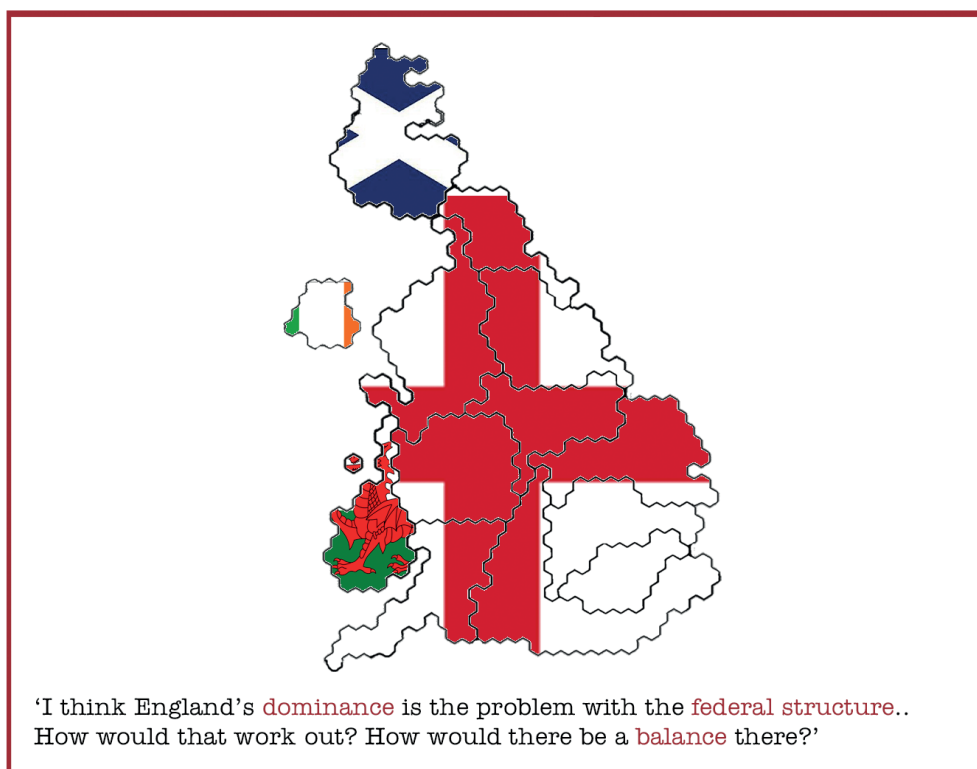
Wales, as a smaller nation, has struggled to have sufficient influence over decisions made at Westminster in the past. We asked the crowd whether they thought a federal arrangement would ensure that Wales' voice was better represented, or would England dominate regardless?

In a piece for ClickonWales Dr Owain ap Gareth, Campaigns & Research Officer for The Electoral Reform Society Wales concluded that a cooperative federation (a concept of federalism in which national, state, and local governments interact cooperatively and collectively to solve common problems) is the federal arrangement that would most likely work for the UK.

However as Mick Antoniw AM pointed out, the dominance of England would be a problem "I think England's dominance is the problem with the federal structure...How would that work out? How would there be a balance there?"

Comments on ClickonWales also identified the problem of England in terms of a federal model, with one contributor writing:

> "To make federalism work in Britain all the parts of the federation should have roughly equal power. This would mean either taking London out of the federation, or subdividing it."

'I think England's dominance is the problem with the federal structure.. How would that work out? How would there be a balance there?'

There was not universal support for the federal model. Another contributor on ClickonWales held concern about another layer of government:

> "If we end up with a federation, it will be the result of an unhappy compromise because we were unable to decide whether we wanted the UK or Wales – and England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland – as the basis of a unitary nation-state. So we end up with two levels of government – three including the EU – each burdening the same people with its own set of politicians, bureaucrats, and regulations, where we need only one."

'I think England's dominance is the problem with the federal structure…How would that work out? How would there be a balance there?'

Europe

The crowd were mostly in favour of Wales remaining a part of the EU with our snapshot poll, albeit more enthusiastically that the opinion polls suggest.[4]

There was concern over the potential impact on Wales of in-out referendum on membership of the EU, which provoked a lively online discussion. If a majority of voters in Wales and Scotland vote to stay in, but English voters opt against and the UK leaves the UK, would that boost support for Scottish and Welsh independence?

A contributor, Rhobat Bryn Jones, wrote: "I think we know what will happen in Scotland. It will trigger a new independence referendum which the Scottish Government believes it can win." Another contributor agreed saying "It's entirely plausible that Wales and Scotland would have majorities against leaving the EU. What basis would a UK wide vote to leave have?"

Derek Vaughan MEP said: "[I'm] not saying there would be a rush for independence if the UK left the EU but it would increase the feeling of isolation and despair which could in turn lead to calls for much greater devolution. This is especially the case when the funding for infrastructure and training schemes dries up and major companies pull out."

There was a small amount of support for the UK to leave the EU with a participant writing:

> "No one on the EU-sceptic side of the debate is suggesting we don't cooperate on issues of mutual concern, but you don't need to have to fund an expensive an anti-democratic institution to be able to do that."

Throughout the debate there was concern that the ad hoc nature of how decisions are made at a UK level about the Union's future. This is certainly true in the case of England, where powers are being devolved with no clear mandate from the electorate and in discussions around Federalism, where the size of England make it very difficult to create a relationship of equals.

The recently published final statement from the UK's Changing Union Project, a partner in the IWA Constitutional Convention, raised concerns about this ad hoc nature of devolution and intergovernmental relations across the UK, emphasising existing concerns about the dominance of England. They stated *"Ensuring that Wales is at the heart of the debate is, therefore, not just a matter of defending the Welsh interest, but also of giving a clear public signal that the Union is being considered as an all-embracing working system rather than a series of disconnected 'concessions'."*

In a piece published in the Guardian around England's role within the UK, there were calls for a consideration of principles for the Union, as suggested by the UK's Changing Union Project. There are real risks of this ad hoc nature of dealing with the UK as the piece made clear, *"The reality is that the United Kingdom may not long survive unless virtuous principles are grasped and acted on by whatever government is elected as soon as the general election has taken place."*[5]

"It's entirely plausible that Wales and Scotland would have majorities against leaving the EU. What basis would a UK wide vote to leave have?"

IF A MAJORITY OF VOTERS IN WALES AND SCOTLAND VOTE TO STAY IN, BUT ENGLISH VOTERS OPT AGAINST AND THE UK LEAVES THE UK, WOULD THAT BOOST SUPPORT FOR SCOTTISH AND WELSH INDEPENDENCE?

"IT'S ENTIRELY PLAUSIBLE THAT WALES AND SCOTLAND WOULD HAVE MAJORITIES AGAINST LEAVING THE EU. WHAT BASIS WOULD A UK WIDE VOTE TO LEAVE HAVE?"

4   Our survey (N=20) indicated that 85% of respondents thought that Wales would be worse off if we left the EU. This is significantly higher than the response recorded in the YouGov Welsh Barometer Poll in April 2014, which found that 41% of Welsh people thought that the EU was a good thing.

5   The Guardian. 2015. The Guardian view on English votes for English laws: playing with fire. Available at: http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/feb/03/guardian-view-on-english-votes-for-english-laws-playing-with-fire

Chapter 5

What is Wales for?

5. What is Wales for?

As we began the IWA Constitutional Convention with a question around the role of the UK, we wanted to end the debate with an exploration of the role of the governance structure in Wales and ask whether the current structure has worked. During this phase we published 2 related articles on our ClickonWales website and recorded 3 vox pops capturing public opinion.

It's been 16 years since devolution in Wales. We now have the power within Wales to make decisions about our healthcare, our education, to implement policies that can create jobs and to create our own laws. But has this made a notable, positive difference to life in Wales? Has devolution worked?

There was a mixed response to whether devolution has worked in Wales reflected in the opinions of people we spoke to around Cardiff, Menai Bridge and Bangor, and also on the website, with contributors responding:

> "In some aspects it has and in others it could be stronger."

> "Yes I think it has, maybe not as quickly as some people would like, but so far it's been a success."

> "Where we are, I don't think there's been any benefit."

Rhobat Bryn Jones told the convention: "If we are asking the question what is Welsh Government for, then first and foremost there has to be an improvement in economic performance. The Government has undertaken various initiatives which have borne fruit but there is a general feeling that there is an absence of strategy."

Another contributor added: "By now every organisation or body has a Welsh policy- focussed on life here in Wales and that is rapidly fostering a sense of being part of a Welsh civic society. There are policy shortcomings as far as the Assembly Government is concerned, but that applies to every government and financial constraints are a burden we are currently forced to endure! But it is bringing what was a divided nation together!"

"WHERE WE ARE, I DON'T THINK THERE'S BEEN ANY BENEFIT."

IT'S BEEN 16 YEARS SINCE DEVOLUTION IN WALES. WE NOW HAVE THE POWER WITHIN WALES TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT OUR HEALTHCARE, OUR EDUCATION, TO IMPLEMENT POLICIES THAT CAN CREATE JOBS AND TO CREATE OUR OWN LAWS.

Swansea East AM Mike Hedges said: "Overall, as in any democracy, there have been successes and failures; also we cannot know what would have happened if we had not had devolution. The challenge is to grow the economy throughout Wales not just in small parts of it."

Eos Pengwern offered his own experiences and stated: "I run a technology business in Wales which is hard going, both because of the country's poor image with investors and the confused and unhelpful nature of Welsh Government business support since the WDA was abolished - but I live over the border, with the much better quality of the schools in my area being a significant reason. In Ireland it took about 60 years after home rule for the country to shake off its baggage and start making something of itself."

The outcomes of policies seemed a significant factor for many who responded to this question in our convention, but there was no overwhelming success story here for Wales, just as there wasn't an overwhelming sense of failure. For many devolution in Wales is work in progress, with a strong feeling that Wales can do better.

"OVERALL, AS IN ANY DEMOCRACY, THERE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSES AND FAILURES; ALSO WE CANNOT KNOW WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF WE HAD NOT HAD DEVOLUTION. THE CHALLENGE IS TO GROW THE ECONOMY THROUGHOUT WALES NOT JUST IN SMALL PARTS OF IT."

FOR MANY DEVOLUTION IN WALES IS WORK IN PROGRESS, WITH A STRONG FEELING THAT WALES CAN DO BETTER.

Conclusion

Conclusion

Our reasons for trying to hold a public online convention were to try and open up the debate about Wales and its future.

As explored in our methodology, the convention has been successful in reaching a wide audience across multiple platforms. We've spoken to people around Wales on our site, on social media and in person to try and get a wide range of views on a range of issues: the future of the UK, the economy, welfare and the role of Wales and England.

We've found some common themes throughout the convention:

1 Performance

Although polls typically support the idea of Wales having more powers, when we asked people what would improve the Welsh economy, no one in our convention explicitly said more devolution was the priority (with the exception of energy powers) their focus was much more on performance.

2 More ambition is key

There was overwhelming support for Wales to make its mark on new areas like green technologies and the digital sector, and for us to be a lot more ambitious in general. Our education system should be geared to our economy; we should be equipping our children with digital competencies and the ability to be analytical and resourceful.

3 Wales is different and should explore different policies

The 'spare room subsidy' affects 20.4% of social tenants in Wales, but only 15.3% of social tenants in England. Contributors to our site almost entirely agreed that if Wales could have the power they would like to see the 'bedroom tax' abolished in Wales, but suggested that this was unlikely due to the complexities of devolving power around welfare to Wales.

Our participants were typically nervous of welfare devolution due to the way any devolution would be funded, not ensuring a rising budget with rising need. This is an area where we might like to do things differently, according to our different values and needs in Wales, but at present it would be difficult.

4 Thought around the future of the UK has been ad hoc

Throughout all of our discussions around the UK and the union, whether it be England, its union with Europe or the potential for a federal model, the ad hoc nature of thought to date by successive governments has been highlighted.

Our contributors felt decisions around powers and the role of the territories had been reactive and there was a lack of cohesive vision about what the union should provide for each person in the UK regardless of whether they live in Belfast or Bangor.

These are difficult questions that no politician wants to answer on their own, and the reason that often, ad-hoc decisions are easier to make. As a result of this we had a number of calls for a UK-wide constitutional convention, which would properly address these questions for people living in all the constituent nations and help provide a vision for where we want to end up.

annexes 1–6

annex 1: **Demographics and Analytics**

Analytics

The IWA's Constitutional Convention had the following number of people engage through each of its platforms:

IWAconvention.co.uk website

—Registered users: 225
—Posted ideas: 146
—Posted comments: 360
—Total users who visited the site (including registered and non-registered): 2,455
—Page views: 20,543

ClickonWales

—Number of articles relating to the convention: 28
—Page views for articles relating to the convention: 9,907
—Posted comments: 206

Twitter

—Tweets about the convention: 1,656
—Number of times the #IWAconvention was used: 1,146
—Unique users: 487
—Potential reach of the campaign on Twitter: 783,586 Twitter users

Figure 1: Twitter 'Insights' during the project

UNIQUE USERS
487

POTENTIAL REACH
783,586

POSITIVE	17%
NEUTRAL	82%
NEGATIVE	2%
TWEETS	520

POSITIVE	16%
NEUTRAL	82%
NEGATIVE	2%
RETWEETS	1,136

MALE	24%
FEMALE	14%
OTHER	62%

TRENDING TOPICS:

#IWACONVENTION
1,146 MENTIONS

WALES	282
SHOULD	271
HAVE	209
DEVOLUTION	168
JOIN	166
POWERS	157
FUTURE	155

Audioboom
—Number of podcasts: **21**
—Number of listens: **3,022**

Survey Monkey
—Total Number of responses:
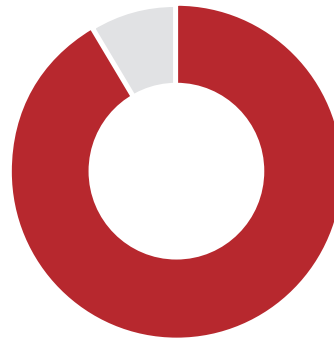   **551**
—Total Number of questions: **18**

Vocaleyes
—Total Number of participants:
   114

Figures 2,3 & 4: Demographics of registered users on IWAconvention.co.uk

GENDER OF REGISTERED USERS

Female	**24.4%**	(55)
Male	**74.2%**	(167)
prefer not to say	**0.9%**	(2)
other	**0.4%**	(1)

LOCATION OF REGISTERED USERS

Live in Wales
91.6% (206)
Don't live in Wales
8.4% (19)

AGE OF REGISTERED USERS

13–17	0.9% (2)
18–24	2.7% (6)
25–34	17.8% (40)
35–44	19.6% (44)
45–60	39.6% (89)
60+	19.6% (44)

*We commissioned separate focus groups which engaged 114 young people on the convention. See annex 5 for details.

annex 2:
Membership of expert groups and partners

Phase 1 & 4: What is the UK for? / The future of the UK?
—Prof Laura McAllister, Liverpool University
—Prof Richard Wyn Jones, Cardiff University
—Paul Silk, Chair, Commission on Devolution in Wales
—Stephen Brooks, Director ERS Cymru
—Emyr Lewis, Senior Partner, Blake Morgan
—Lee Waters, IWA Director
—Jess Blair, IWA Policy & Projects Manager

Phase 2: How do we create a more prosperous Wales?
—Sion Barry, Media Wales Business Editor
—Ian Courtney, Alacrity Foundation
—Tegid Roberts, Cadarn Consulting
—Rhodri Evans, FSB Wales
—Lee Waters, IWA Director
—Alex Slade, IWA (Secondee)

Phase 3: How do we make Wales a fairer country?
—Mark Parkinson, Secretary of the Silk Commission
—Tamsin Sterling, Housing specialist
—Sioned Hughes, Director of Policy and Regeneration, CHC
—Lee Waters, IWA Director
—Jess Blair, IWA Policy & Projects Manager
—Victoria Winkler, Director, Bevan Foundation (By correspondence)

Partners:
—UK's Changing Union Project
—Media Wales
—National Assembly for Wales Commission
—TUC Wales
—FSB Wales
—Community Housing Cymru
—Electoral Reform Society Cymru
—NUS Wales

annex 3: **Click on Wales Articles**

Phase 1: What is the UK for?
—What is Britain for? - David Melding AM

—What is the United Kingdom for? - Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas

—Shaping the UK's Union State - Geraint Talfan Davies

Phase 2: How do we create a more prosperous Wales?
—How do we create a more prosperous Wales? - Sion Barry

—A city region approach to spurring the competitiveness of Wales - Prof Rob Huggins

—Why is enterprise seen as so important in economic development? - Dr John Ball

—Can you improve the Welsh economy? - IWA

Phase 3: How do we make Wales a fairer country?
—What is welfare: The figures - Jessica Blair

—What is welfare? - Jessica Blair

—Devolution of policing: where next? - Sophie Chambers

—Why are we nervous of welfare devolution in Wales? - Jessica Blair

—Why Scotland is unlikely to become a welfare paradise - David Bell

—Welfare - to devolve or not to devolve - Peter Black

—Should the Welsh Government have the ability to introduce new welfare benefits or payments?
  - Prof Paul Chaney

—Should Wales be able to ditch the 'bedroom tax'? - IWA

Phase 4: The future of the UK?
—More powers announced for Wales as Secretary of State meets St David's Day deadline - Jessica Blair

—Do the Small Things/Gwnewch y Pethau Bychain - Daran Hill

—Should there be another referendum? - Lee Waters

—A young peoples rebellion - Theo Davies-Lewis

—To fed or not to fed? - Dr Owain ap Gareth

—Doubting a stable federal Britain - Huw Williams

—Is federalism the only way forward? - IWA

—Attitudes to the EU in Wales - Prof Roger Scully

—Wales in a Changing Union - Stephen Crabb

—Representation without taxation? - Ed Poole

Phase 5: What is Wales for?

—Should we have a moratorium on devolution in Wales to concentrate on performance?
   - Anne Wareham

—Have we had enough devolution? - IWA

annex 4: **Podcasts and Vox Pops**

Phase 1: What is the UK for?
—Is the UK doing the job it should? - Prof Richard Wyn Jones and Katie Dalton

— What is the UK for? - Prof Calvin Jones and Cathy Owens

—David Torrence on the role of the UK - David Torrence

Phase 2: How do we create a more prosperous Wales?
—One idea to improve the Welsh economy - Sion Barry

—Could Wales be a leader in green technology? - Sion Barry

—How can cities power Wales? - Roger Lewis

Phase 3: How do we make Wales a fairer country?
—Why are we so nervous about welfare devolution? - Michelle Reid and Linda Whittaker

—How can we make the welfare system better? - Vox Pops Cardiff

—Do you agree with the bedroom tax? - Vox Pops Cardiff

Phase 4: What is the future of the UK?
—Leanne Wood on new powers for Wales - Leanne Wood

—What next for England with Richard Wyn Jones - Prof Richard Wyn Jones

—Daran Hill on the new powers for Wales announced by the UK Gov - Daran Hill

—Steve Brooks says new powers over elections for Wales are good news - Steve Brooks

—What would the implications of leaving the EU be for the UK? - David Melding AM

—The future of the UK with Mick Antoniw AM - Mick Antoniw AM

—What would be the impact of an EU in/out referendum - Vox Pops Cardiff

Phase 5: What is Wales for?
—What are the barriers to progress in Wales? - Vox pops North Wales

—Have we had enough devolution? - Vox pops North Wales

—Has devolution worked? - Vox pops Cardiff

annex 5: **Vocaleyes**

Vocaleyes

The IWA commissioned a series of focus groups in April, run by the digital democracy specialists Vocaleyes. This targeted the economy phase of the project, but looked to engage young people in particular, asking "What skills do you need to get the job you'd like in the future? What would you need to learn?"

These groups took place through a combination of focus groups at Rhondda Cynon Taf youth forum and Tonypandy Community College, and a sponsored question on existing platforms at Pembrokeshire College and Gower College Swansea. A total of 114 young people were engaged through Vocaleyes' focus groups. Of this, 93 participated through digital platforms (Gower College Swansea and Pembrokeshire College) rating ideas ranging from ICT and coding lessons to lessons on how to be more energy efficient, and 21 student representatives were involved in the workshops (Tonypandy Community College and Rhondda Cynon Taf youth forum).

Ideas submitted by each group:

Gower College Swansea

— Teach us how to make our homes more energy-efficient - to save money and reduce our carbon footprint at the same time.

— More IT skills (coding) to take on the growth in digital media jobs.

Tonypandy Community College

— Politics education: have a political curriculum so we can learn about citizenship and politics.

— Independence skills: teach children to be more independent.

— Teach about money management: how to manage money on a limited budget that you would have with a first time job, or maybe how to pay bills and taxes.

— Open a sewing club

— Computer club: teach teachers and pupils more about computers.

— Teach about the options after school: more career advice and university advice.

— 'Sport for all' club: sport for the not so talented people who can't do sport so well.

— Computer science: make it compulsory so more people know how to set up websites and know how to use Microsoft Word better.

— Cooking: teach children how to cook and show what foods are good for you and what foods are bad.

Community Voice RCT Youth Forum

— Computer coding skills: There are loads of jobs in IT - would be good to learn about coding to get employed in this industry.

— Confidence and communication group: These skills are vital. You kind of need these skills because for the people who want to succeed in life they will need interviews, they will have to communicate in their groups etc I think this group should be set up for the less confident people or maybe for the people who want to extend their skills.

— Cooking: I think we should do more cooking in school. We do only a little bit of cooking and it's usually using puff pastry. I think we should explore more and cook different types of food.

— Life-skills: we need everyday skills, need to be confidence, also need to support others and their ideas.

— Supply teachers can be an issue: I think that schools shouldn't have unqualified supply teachers in lessons because when your teacher is away the school should get another qualified teacher in not a supply teacher who doesn't have a clue what he/she is doing.

— What we need: we need all types of skills because everyday brings a different challenge! And all could be very useful.

— Verbal Communication: we all need these as people are too interested in their phones, and people don't know how to verbally communicate without it. this would have a significant input on their future. It's not what you say it's how you say it!

— Ability to achieve high grades: we will need better grades for the future to get a job so we will have to work hard

— Singing: I think that everyone in Wales should learn to sing then we could become one big welsh choir.

— Cooking to become core lessons: Cooking should be core for all ages, not just younger comprehensive. Also, to have a wider variety of cooking too, from different cultures all over the world.

— Challenging PE lessons: For those who enjoy PE, there should be a wider variety of the things to do… Also, to be allowed to use different facilities, outside the school grounds.

— Extra curricular clubs: There are not enough extra curricular groups for schools because then we can explore our subjects in more depth

— Extra curricular sports: more options to take part in sports and for healthy lifestyles to be advertised more within schools.

Pembrokeshire College

— Coding skills to be taught

annex 6:
Community Housing Cymru meeting

Focus group with Chief Executives of Housing Associations across Wales.

On the 2nd February, the IWA met with the Chief Executives of Housing Associations across Wales at a Community Housing Cymru meeting in Lamphey Court, Pembrokeshire.

The session asked 'why are we so nervous of welfare devolution in Wales?' and ran through a moderated discussion between the Chief Executives present. Our predominant finding was that cost was the main factor for the nervousness of many in the room towards the devolution of welfare to Wales, and nullified any feelings that this transfer of powers could be viable. Other issues raised included the capacity of Welsh Government to deliver the services needed, and the perception of welfare among the public.

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