# Lansbury Park residents voice discontent ahead of Welsh Senedd elections



Residents of Lansbury Park, a community in Caerphilly, are expressing a notable shift in political sentiment as they prepare for the upcoming Welsh Senedd elections in May 2024. The name that resonates among them is that of a determined opposition leader who has long championed the voices of those feeling overlooked by the establishment, whose previous visits to the area during past election campaigns have left a mark.

Myrna Thomas, a local resident, conveyed her trust in this leader, stating, “I just believe everything he says.” Similarly, retired car trader Mike Lawrence, who recalled meeting him in a more informal setting, described him as a “sensible bloke, genuine.” Lawrence, once a supporter of Labour, has indicated a significant change in his voting intentions due to his disillusionment with both Labour and the Conservatives.

The community is grappling with significant socio-economic challenges, ranking dismally in terms of unemployment and health issues while struggling with low incomes. Personal independence payments (PIP) are crucial for many residents. Several expressed deep concerns over the recent welfare changes announced by the current government, particularly by those in charge of Work and Pensions and Treasury, who seem more focused on implementing cuts than addressing the needs of vulnerable populations.

Retired carer Sian Denatale shared her frustrations with the unfolding welfare crisis, expressing her hope that the opposition party could bring about a transformative change. Denatale, who relies on PIP due to her health issues, asserted, “It’s all about money,” referring to the devastating impact of government policies that neglect the most vulnerable.

Moreover, Myrna Thomas voiced her anxiety over immigration and welfare cuts, stating, “Labour aren’t doing what they said they would... I feel we’re being ignored.” This sentiment is resonating throughout the community, with many indicating a clear intention to support a party that prioritizes their needs over bureaucratic complacency, a party that has started to gain momentum in Wales after its performance in the recent general elections, showcasing a yearning for real change.

The seat of Caerphilly, historically a Labour fortress since the establishment of the Senedd in 1999, is now positioning itself as a critical battleground in the upcoming elections. The opposition aims to seize the opportunity presented by the new proportional representation system and build upon its impressive showing in last year's elections, where they finished third in the constituency.

As conversations on the streets of Lansbury Park unfolded, it became clear that local residents are actively seeking a party that resonates with their frustrations over socio-economic issues exacerbated by the current government. Mike Lawrence remarked, “After next May, the opposition will be in power in Wales. Their leader will bring Labour down - mark my words.” His comments reflect a broader sentiment within the community that the current governance has failed to tackle their pressing concerns.

The personal stories shared by residents further illustrate the local perception of a system failing to support them. For instance, 70-year-old Hazel Fitzell, who has battled significant health challenges, spoke about her ongoing struggles to make ends meet, highlighting the burdens imposed on those dependent on state support. She questioned the rationale behind governmental decisions negatively affecting PIP recipients, stating firmly, “I don’t think I should have to live the way I do.”

Experts are closely monitoring how this apparent disenchantment will influence voting patterns in the upcoming election. Research indicates that many who align with the opposition have historically been conservative voters, with a fraction having previously supported Labour. In a broader context, key issues among their supporters centre significantly on immigration and welfare, sharply contrasting the priorities of Labour voters who often focus on cost of living and health services.

Dr Joseph Phillips, a political psychologist at Cardiff University, commented on the anticipated challenges the opposition may face in transforming their surging support into electoral success, particularly concerning ground campaigns and candidate selections.

As Lansbury Park residents look forward to the forthcoming elections, their stories illustrate a community grappling with hardship and an urgent need for effective political representation that aligns with their aspirations for genuine change. The stage is set for what could be a pivotal moment in Welsh politics, as voters express their dissatisfaction and expectations leading up to the elections.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senedd\_Cymru\_(Members\_and\_Elections)\_Act\_2024](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senedd_Cymru_%28Members_and_Elections%29_Act_2024) - This URL corroborates the changes in the Welsh Senedd's electoral system, including the adoption of proportional representation and the creation of new constituencies, which are relevant to the upcoming elections.
* <https://www.gov.wales/senedd-reform> - This webpage supports the information about Senedd reform, including changes in the electoral system and the increase in the number of Senedd members, reflecting the national political environment.
* <https://www.itv.com/news/wales/2024-07-05/when-is-the-next-senedd-election-and-what-will-be-different-this-time> - This news article provides details about the next Senedd election, including the new voting system and constituency changes, which impact the political landscape in Wales.
* <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/> - While there is no specific URL for Dr. Joseph Phillips, Cardiff University's website represents the academic institution from which he is quoted, providing context for his expertise in political psychology.
* <https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/> - This URL connects to the local government website of Caerphilly, where Lansbury Park is located, and provides background on the community's context and potential socio-economic challenges.