



# *Open letter to Mark Drakeford, First Minister of Wales*

*Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019*

You have come to office as First Minister of Wales at a crossroads in our history. The United Kingdom faces its most serious peacetime crisis in a century or more. Government, parties and people are divided. Parliament seems paralysed by faction. Political chaos is an accurate description of what we see. The threat this poses to the people, economy and communities of Wales is particularly severe.

As Welsh Europeans, we deeply regret the result of the 2016 referendum, but the disaffection and disillusionment it expressed about our economic and social circumstances will not be allayed by Brexit. Instead, Brexit will make it much more difficult to address the many issues that impact most directly on our lives.

Welsh and Scottish Governments have argued that our respective countries require the softest form of Brexit, keeping us within the single market and customs union. They have not been listened to, and the so-called 'deal' being brought forward by the Westminster Government will secure neither of these objectives.

That *Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration* is not a finished deal, merely a line under the past. As for the future, the 'declaration' is a 27-page list of unresolved issues and often conflicting aspirations to be discussed over the next two, maybe four, years. It does not end the uncertainty, it prolongs it. It is no basis on which to abandon the security of our current EU membership.

This 'deal' will not pass. The government has no mandate to seek another, and it is unlikely that the EU would offer significantly different terms to a different government. A calamitous 'no deal' crash out of the EU is a real danger.

Far from 'taking back control', in a world of continental powers this deal would make us a perpetual supplicant. Thankfully, the European Court of Justice has opened a new avenue for us by declaring that we can, unilaterally, revoke Article 50 and thus stop the clock. A poll last week saw the overwhelming majority of Labour voters and supporters backing a new referendum.

**The gravity of our situation requires brave leadership and clarity from the Opposition as much as Government, as well as time to consult the public again. This is the only way out of the Parliamentary impasse.**

**You have already called for an extension of the Article 50 period beyond 29 March 2019, but we now urge you to use your new office to its utmost to demand - of both the UK Government and the UK leadership of your own party - a new People's Vote in which continued membership of the European Union would be an option on the ballot. This new public vote is necessary regardless of whether or not a General Election is called.**

## ***Signatories to the Open Letter***

**Tonia Antoniazzi MP** (Lab - Gower)

**Chris Bryant MP** (Lab – Rhondda)

**Geraint Davies MP** (Lab - Swansea West)

**Stephen Doughty MP** (Lab - Cardiff S. & Penarth)

**Jonathan Edwards MP** (PC - Carms. East & Dinefwr)

**Susan Elan Jones MP** (Lab - Clwyd South)

**Ben Lake MP** (PC - Ceredigion)

**Anna McMorrin MP** (Lab - Cardiff North)

**Madeleine Moon MP** (Lab - Bridgend)

**Albert Owen MP** (Lab - Ynys Môn)

**Liz Saville Roberts MP** (PC - Dwyfor Meirionnydd)

**Owen Smith MP** (Lab - Pontypridd)

**Jo Stevens MP** (Lab - Cardiff Central)

**Hywel Williams MP** (PC - Arfon)

**Rhun ap Iorwerth AM** (PC - Ynys Môn)

**Alun Davies AM** (Lab - Blaenau Gwent)

**Llyr Gruffydd AM** (PC - North Wales)

**Siân Gwenllian AM** (PC - Arfon)

**Ann Jones AM** (Lab - Vale of Clwyd)

**Helen Mary Jones AM** (PC - Mid & West Wales)

**Steffan Lewis AM** (PC - South Wales East)

**Dai Lloyd AM** (PC - South Wales West)

**Lynne Neagle AM** (Lab - Torfaen)

**Adam Price AM** (Leader, PC - Carms. East & Dinefwr)

**Bethan Sayed AM** (PC - South Wales West)

**Joyce Watson AM** (Lab - Mid & West Wales)

**Leanne Wood AM** (PC - Rhondda)

**Jill Evans MEP** (PC)

**Derek Vaughan MEP** (Lab)

**Jane Dodds** - Leader, Welsh Liberal Democrats

**Anthony Slaughter**, Leader of Wales Green Party

**Cllr Huw Thomas**, Leader, Cardiff Council (Lab)

**Cllr Debbie Wilcox**, Leader, WLGA & Newport Council (Lab)

**Cllr Anthony Hunt**, Leader, Torfaen Council (Lab)

**Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn**, Leader, Gwynedd (PC)

**Cllr Ellen ap Gwynne**, Leader, Ceredigion (PC)

**Cllr William Powell** – Powys CC, President, Welsh Liberal Democrats

**Lord Dafydd Wigley** (PC)

**Baroness Jenny Randerson** (WLD)

**Lord Mike German** (WLD)

**Baroness Christine Humphreys** (WLD)

**Lord Martin Thomas** (WLD)

**Most Reverend Barry Morgan**, former Archbishop of Wales

**Dr Hywel Ceri Jones**, Member of Welsh Government European Advisory Group

**Gwyneth Sweatman**, NUS Wales President



**Geraint Talfan Davies**, Chair, Wales For Europe

**Peter Frederick Gilbey**, Director, Wales For Europe

**Helen Wales**, Cardiff For Europe

**Sally Stephenson**, Vale of Glamorgan For Europe

**Stephen Cocks**, Gwent For Europe

**Shaun Thomas**, Valleys For Europe

**Rob Evans**, Bridgend For Europe

**Paul Willner**, Swansea For Europe

**Katie Powis**, Neath Port Talbot For Europe

**Chris Passmore**, Carmarthenshire For Europe

**Alistair Cameron**, Pembrokeshire For Europe

**Leena Farhat**, Ceredigion For Europe

**Cllr Jackie Charlton**, Brecon & Radnorshire For Europe

**Silas Jones**, North Wales For Europe

**Gareth Wyn Roberts**, Anglesey For Europe

**Martin Hughes**, Gwynedd For Europe

**Neal Cole**, Wrexham For Europe

**Tricia Skitt**, Montgomeryshire For Europe