

# 2020: Pandemic and Positif Changes

## Diolch / Thank You

**2020 has been a strange year to say the least.** It’s been a turbulent time with a lot of instability and all of us having to adapt to changes in our lives and the way we work. We want to take this opportunity to thank all of our clients who have continued to support us through this time and we will continue to support you all in your work as we look to the future.

As you all know, Positif is a one of a kind organisation and we’re really proud of the business we’ve built and developed over the past 14 years and hopefully will continue to grow in years to come. The last few months have given us all the time to reflect on the future and what we want Positif to look like moving forward....

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## Changes at Positif...

**With that in mind, the founder of Positif and our Managing Director and Chair, Daran Hill has decided to hand over the reins of the company from September 2020 to new Joint Managing Directors, Rhodri ab Owen and Naomi Williams.** But don’t worry, Daran will continue to play a key role in the company as a Senior Consultant moving forward and supporting key client accounts.

On his decision to step down, Daran says: *“For the past three years I have reduced my share holding in Positif and tried hard to help my friends and colleagues rise to new challenges in terms of not just working at Positif and growing Positif, but to be responsible decision makers too. Everyone I work with has risen to the challenge and I am confident Positif can move forward under new, fresh and innovative management.*

*“Having worked in public affairs for over two decades, and managed the company for*

*almost fifteen years, I have been planning for quite some time to make changes. As many people know, the death of Carl Sargeant hit me very hard and has made me re-evaluate a lot of things over that same three-year period. I had originally planned to make big changes tied in with the 2021 Senedd elections, but the Covid crisis and the collective and considered response of the team means I decided to make these changes earlier.*



*“I will continue with Positif Politics for the foreseeable future and offer advice when needed but I don’t drive and I don’t like back seats. It’s over to other people now to keep growing Positif who can bring the enthusiasm, imagination and appetite the company needs. I’ve led for almost fifteen years and I hope they can match or surpass my record!”*

## The new shape of things at Positif

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### **New Joint Managing Directors: Rhodri ab Owen and Naomi Williams**

**Taking over the helm from Daran and jointly leading the company to the future will be Positif stalwarts Rhodri ab Owen and Naomi Williams, who have worked with Daran and colleagues over the past decade to take the company from its small, early beginnings to the successful public affairs company it is today.**

Both Rhodri and Naomi have been company Directors and Shareholders at Positif since 2017, with Rhodri having first joined in 2010 and Naomi joining not long after in 2011. You'll know Rhodri as the Head of Monitoring since 2015 and lead on health and social care clients and Naomi as Senior Consultant across numerous policy areas but with key client focus in infrastructure, housing, the environment and education.

On taking on their new roles, Rhodri and Naomi said, *"As the founder of Positif over 14 years ago, we know that taking the decision to take a step back has not been taken lightly by Daran and we want to thank him for the faith he has shown in us as we take Positif forward."*

*"Positif is nothing without our clients and we want to reassure you that whilst the world around us might be turbulent and unstable, these changes only mean continued stability and continuity from Positif and the services you receive from us."*

*"Both of us, along with the whole Positif team have worked hard in recent years to double the number of clients we have and develop Positif into the public affairs company with the biggest number of clients in Wales and look forward to building on what Daran has built in the future."*

## What else is changing?

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**Susan Bowen**

### **Company Chair & Office and Events Manager**

Susan has worked in Positif since 2008, with her role changing to match her work life balance. She also became a Director and shareholder in the company from 2017 onward.

She continues as the Office and Events Manager for the company but also becomes the Chair of the Board of Positif, allowing her to focus her considerable organisational and management skills on company growth and development.



**Dafydd Huw**

### **Head of Monitoring and Director**

Dafydd joined Positif in 2016 (but it feels much longer!) and has proven himself as a highly valued and highly professional member of the team. He took on additional responsibilities in terms of managing the monitoring output in 2019, and from September 2020 becomes the new Head of Monitoring.

Dafydd also becomes a shareholder and Director of Positif. He's an experienced researcher and on top of all that, he's a talented organ scholar!



**Beryl Wichard**

### **Consultant**

Beryl Wichard has been a faithful staff member at Positif for many years and continues as a part time Consultant within the company.

She is a linguist by training and speaks six languages fluently. Her work experience includes many years in the academic, union and public sectors including the Open University, Cardiff Students' Union and Cardiff City Council.

## New Services, New Opportunities

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With a new term and new structure we have some new services to offer for both new and existing clients. For a full list of our services, head over to our [website](#) or get in touch with any member of the team.

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### **\*NEW\*** 'Bore da' – Daily Political update

This is a **brand-new service** offered by Positif - a **general round-up of political events** in Wales daily, which will also include a forecast of what will be coming up the next day.

Considering the difficulties currently facing many organisations, we believe that a generic round-up of key developments will be of great value to some organisations. This service will be launching this September.

Get in touch with [Dafydd Huw](#) for more information.

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### **\*NEW\*** Reach out to help out – and help yourself!

Positif highly values our current clients, whilst also wishing to increase our ever-expanding client base.

Our clients are our best ambassadors, so for every new client you successfully refer to us, you'll could receive a **saving of at least 20% on your monitoring fee** or **a pro-bono consultancy day** and commitment of no-uplift on that fee for the remainder of the Sixth Senedd term!

Get in touch with [Rhodri](#) or [Naomi](#) to discuss.

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### **\*NEW\*** The Positif Senedd Election Package

May 2021 is fast approaching. Whether it's our databases, our informative events or our guides and predictions, the Positif Senedd Election Package is here to help guide you along the way.

A new and exciting addition to this election package is access to our **Senedd Election 2021 portal**, which is **exclusively available** to those who sign up to our package where you'll find election package documents and more all in one place.

Email [Naomi](#) for more information or to sign up today.

## EVENTS

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### COMING SOON:

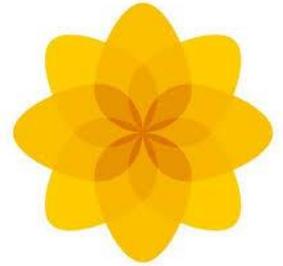
#### Q&A with Sian Gwenllian MS, Plaid Cymru

**Monday 21st September 2020**  
**10.30am-11.30am**

In May 2021, Wales will go to the polls to elect the first Senedd Cymru. And, whilst political parties continue to deal with the current crisis that we face, work is still ongoing behind the scenes, preparing for that election next May.

The next year will be crucial for political parties as they adapt to the consequences and implications of Covid19 on society and prepare policies to respond to them. Positif will be joined by Sian Gwenllian MS who is leading the Plaid Cymru manifesto compilation at a virtual briefing event. Join us for a one to one Q&A session, where you will have the opportunity to put your questions to her directly.

**Sign up for Free** via [Eventbrite](#).



### PAST EVENTS:

#### Q&A with Darren Millar MS, Welsh Conservatives



Back in May, we held the first of our Senedd Election 2021 events and first out of the blocks was Darren Millar MS from the Welsh Conservatives.

As you all know, Positif is accustomed to holding regular, informative events whether as part of our free Positif Thinking series or as part of cyclical election packages. Of course, Covid has thrown our old hosting methods out the window! Nevertheless, Darren was able to join us from his impressive library at home in north Wales for an

extremely informative discussion on how the Welsh Conservatives are approaching policy development ahead of next May's election as well as answering some of your pressing policy questions too.

We're looking forward to the next event with Sian Gwenllian soon.



## And finally...

### Bigger and Better – the new Positif office

And finally, if you've managed to keep up with all the changes so far, well done, but we have one more to add into the mix!

We would never have planned it this way... but Positif moved offices within the Regus building during lockdown. We had already decided to adopt a bigger office space and so from the start of July we honoured our contract and moved down the corridor in Regus to a bigger office space. This isn't just handy for social distancing at work but for clients to pop in too as we continue to have the ability to hot desk if pre-booked.



**With social distancing measures in place, the Positif team will start working in the new offices from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September, but we will also be instituting a new policy that encourages people to work from home for at least part of the week if they are able and comfortable in doing so (which Daran was doing long before lockdown!). Our postal and visiting address remains as previously – Regus House, Falcon Drive, Cardiff CF10 4RU**

## Get to know....



*In every newsletter, we call on either a member of staff or one of our clients to reveal a bit about themselves in our 'Get to know' series. This time, we're getting to know former Special Adviser **Jonathan Davies, who is now the Head of Wales for The Law Society***

**If you could go back to one place in the world, where would that be?**

Dallas, Texas, grassy gnoll, 22nd November 1963

**Who would play you in a film about your life?**

James Dean Bradfield

**Favorite album?**

Abbey Road, The Beatles

**What are you reading at the moment?**

Neil Young autobiography – Waging Heavy Peace

**What would be your last meal?**

Starter – Scallops in brown butter

Main – Lamb shank in red wine with roast potatoes and seasonal veg

Dessert - Tiramisu