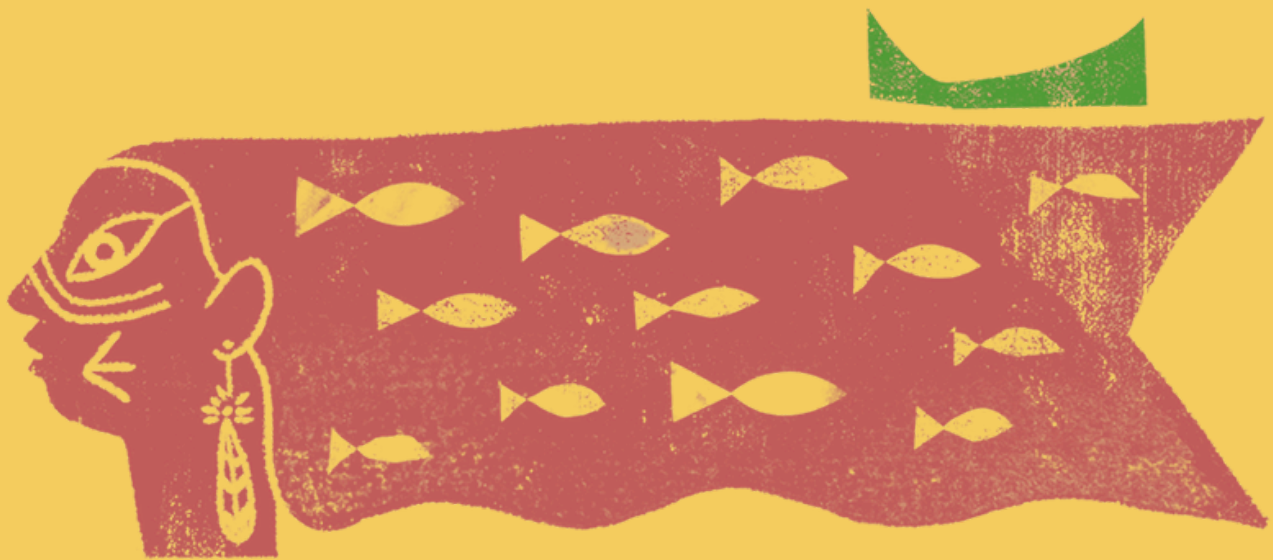




Wales and the Guarani

Together for tomorrow



Wrexham Speaker profiles

**Read on to find out all
about our exciting, inspiring
speakers**

JU KEREXU - TENONDÉ/EXECUTIVE COORDINATOR AT CGY



Juliana Kerexu Mirim Mariano Vilma was born in an Indigenous territory called Ilha da Cotinga in Paranaguá, Brazil. She made history by becoming the very first female chief in her area! Juliana does many incredible things—she is a Guarani teacher, poet, spiritual leader, crafter and an actress.

As an important female leader, Juliana brings women together through national gatherings, defends Guarani territory, the Atlantic Forest and Pampa grasslands. She works hard to ensure that future generations can grow up speaking the Guarani language and are connected to their spirituality, culture and struggle for life and land. Guided by the teachings of the nhaneramõi (Guarani elders), she keeps ancient traditions alive while solving today's problems. Her strength inspires her own village, as well as groups of Indigenous women and friends all across Brazil and the world!

VILMA VERÁ RIOS - REGIONAL COORDINATOR FOR WESTERN PARANÁ AT CGY



Vilma was born in the Pirajuí village, a protected piece of land for Indigenous Peoples. At 16, she moved with her family to the Guasu Guavirá Indigenous Land in Paraná. There, she realised how hard it was to live on land that people were fighting over. At 17, she gave her first speech about the struggles of Indigenous youth and women. This is how she became a proud **Avá-Guarani activist**.

Now, Vilma is famous worldwide for her hard work. She speaks out against large businesses taking land to grow soy, poisonous bug sprays, racism, and unfair treatment of women. Today, she teaches her mother tongue and is a regional leader in the organisation that represents the Guarani People - Comissão Guarani Yvyrupa (CGY).

MINDUÁ [JULIANA VILHALVA]- COMMUNICATIONS FELLOW AT CGY



Juliana grew up watching her father, grandfather, and wise elders fight for their land. Inspired by her cousin Patrícia, who makes films, Juliana discovered she could use the power of words, videos, and photos to help her community and amplify their voices. At just 16, she joined the organisation that represents Guarani People - Comissão Guarani Yvyrupa (CGY) to share the true stories of her people.

Today, she lives on the southern coast of São Paulo and travels to different states in Brazil to lead, share information, and bring people together. She is a proud young leader who uses media and storytelling, to protect her ancient culture and teach the next generation how to stand up for their rights.

KEN SKATES MS

WELSH LABOUR LEADER



Ken is the leader of the Welsh Labour party and represents Wrexham and Flintshire in the Senedd.

Ken was born and in Wrexham and grew up in Flintshire, attending Ysgol y Waun in Gwernaffield and the Alun School, Mold.

Before becoming a politician, Ken worked as a journalist.

One of Ken's previous roles was as Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure, this included championing homegrown supply chains, something we will be exploring in our workshops.

In his free time, Ken enjoys running, swimming and hiking - as well as Lego!

LILJA, YOUTH CLIMATE AMBASSADOR



I first became concerned about the environment in 2024. Before then I had never really considered the catastrophic impact that climate change has on people's daily lives all over the world, but after attending Youth COP that year I knew that it was essential that we all do whatever we can to save the planet before it is too late.

Since then I have had the privilege of discussing climate change with politicians such as the Minister for Net Zero in Westminster and members of the Welsh Parliament, including Rhun ap Iwerth. I have also learned lots about the social impact of global warming on communities from meeting representatives from the Mount Elgon Tree Growing Enterprise in Uganda and members of the Wampis Nation from Peru.

Despite the fact I only joined the YCA recently, I already look forward to our Sunday meetings as it is exciting to be able to get involved with a variety of projects with other young people and fight against the climate crisis together.

In my role as secretary, I take minutes for our meetings, help with some admin tasks and get involved with our current projects.

I sincerely hope that all the young people who attend Youth COP 2026 will be as inspired as I was in 2024 and that we will all do our bit to protect the environment and make the world a better place for everyone to live."