

FOR FAIRNESS, FOR AMBITION, FOR WALES

Plaid Cymru Manifesto for the
Westminster General Election 2024



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Introduction

By Rhun ap Iorwerth MS

Plaid Cymru MPs have always been Wales's voice in Westminster, not Westminster's voice in Wales.

This is not as good as it gets for our nation. The following pages set out our party's vision of a fairer, more ambitious future where everyone can achieve their potential, regardless of circumstance or background.

Being tied to Westminster means all risk and no reward for our nation. Wales is languishing at the bottom of too many league tables, our economy is stagnating, our transport network is creaking, and the lack of control over our natural resources means that we are energy-rich but fuel-poor.

What sets Plaid Cymru apart is a record of not taking Wales for granted and always putting the interests of our communities and nation first.

After 14 years of Tory cuts and weak opposition from Labour, Plaid Cymru offers a real alternative for Wales.

We will fight every day for the billions owed to Wales from the HS2 high-speed rail project, and for a fair funding model which funds our country according to need, not population.

This will enable us to invest in our public services and better reward our workforce.

By supporting families and by devolving powers to ensure that more of the decisions that affect Wales are made in Wales, we will address the cost of living crisis and provide Welsh solutions to Welsh problems.

Our ambition can be seen in our confidence that Wales can and should run its own affairs as an outward looking independent nation.

Plaid Cymru is a party for the whole of Wales. Our candidates are rooted in their communities and passionate about overcoming the challenges facing our economy and public services.

Wherever you live, you can be sure that a vote for Plaid Cymru on 4th July is a vote for a Member of Parliament who will always stand up for Wales's best interests every day.



Rhun ap Iorwerth

FAIR FUNDING FOR WALES

- Secure the £4bn owed to Wales from HS2 to invest in improving our own public transport in all parts of the country and reversing cuts to local bus services.
- Demand a fair funding system for Wales, based around our needs, giving us the public services we deserve.

FAIR PLAY FOR PATIENTS

- Fair funding from Westminster, enabling us to invest in our NHS workforce and recruit 500 GPs into Wales after years of Tory cuts and Labour mismanagement in Cardiff.
- A new Cancer Strategy to ensure cancers are caught and treated earlier, and ending Wales's postcode lottery for treatment.

FAIRNESS FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Help 330,000 Welsh families to deal with the cost of living crisis by increasing Child Benefit by £20 per week. This will take 60,000 children out of poverty in Wales.
- Redressing economic unfairness; increasing windfall taxes and devolving the Crown Estate in order to create green jobs and build prosperity.

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The past fourteen years of Conservative UK Government have been economically very damaging for people, families and business in Wales.



Under David Cameron, the Tory government pursued a financial programme of devastating cuts to public services in the name of austerity. The UK's international trade was undermined by the hard Brexit pursued by both Theresa May and Boris Johnson. And then the economy was crashed completely by Liz Truss.

We are living with the legacies of all of these examples of the Conservatives' poor economic judgement, which are being echoed by a Labour Party that has already tied itself to their spending plans.

So long as Wales remains a part of the UK, Plaid Cymru believes that the role of UK Government in Wales should be to provide enough financial support for our public services and to create the conditions for the kind of sustainable economic growth from which all people and communities can benefit, rather than just those at the top of the tree.

This is not what UK Governments have delivered. Our public services are underfunded and have been hollowed out, and our economy has stagnated. These economic

conditions have led to wholly unacceptable rising levels of child deprivation, with a heartbreaking one in three children now growing up in poverty.

A Fair Funding Formula

Plaid Cymru believes that Wales should be funded according to our needs, not the out-dated Barnett Formula which instead provides funding proportionate to spending on England's needs. We want to see a new needs-based funding formula introduced in place of the Barnett Formula.

A Fairer Tax System

We believe that Wales should have full control of economic levers, in order to grow and green our economy in a way that will have the greatest positive impact upon our communities. We want the Senedd to have powers to set income tax bands and thresholds, as they already do in Scotland, so that we can create a system that fits Wales's circumstances.

At a UK level, we want to see the balance of the tax burden fall on those individuals and corporations with the broadest shoulders bearing a fairer share of overall tax paid, rather than those with less means.

In recent years, we have seen some industries substantially increase their profits because of market conditions and not as a result of their own investment and endeavours. These sectors, which have included oil and gas producers and energy companies, should

be appropriately taxed, particularly where there is an effective monopoly or cartel which controls the product. In particular, we think that energy companies should be subject to an increased windfall tax, and will close loopholes which they currently exploit to avoid this. At the same time, we will promote renewable energy investment as an alternative.

We would re-introduce the cap on bankers' bonuses.

Plaid Cymru would equalise capital gains tax with income tax, raising between £12bn -£15bn. We would investigate increasing higher earners' National Insurance contributions, and support introducing a wealth tax. We would crack down on tax evasion and avoidance, and abolish loopholes for non-doms.

Ambitions for our Economy

In the run up to the 2026 Senedd elections, we will set new targets for the Welsh economy so that we can better understand the impact of policy decisions and investment choices through their outcomes, rather than ticking boxes on process.

Recognising the inequality in economic performance of different nations and regions in the UK, Plaid Cymru propose an Economic Fairness Bill that will make levelling up a meaningful

phrase, rather than a political slogan, ensuring that the impact of fiscal decisions are considered on a wider level than just what is best for the City of London.

Recognising the challenge of regional inequalities within Wales, we will also ensure that the same consideration is given to all parts of Wales to be sure that everybody benefits from Welsh Government investment decisions.

Plaid Cymru campaigned in 2016 for Wales to stay in the European Union, recognising both the social and economic benefits which accrued from that membership. We respected the result of the referendum, but, with the Conservatives having led us down a path of destruction, we believe that the UK should re-enter the European Single Market and Customs Union at the earliest opportunity, in order to mitigate the impact of Brexit on Welsh business and reduce overheads and administrative costs. This will help us improve trade with our European neighbours, including the Republic of Ireland, assisting our Welsh ports at Holyhead and Fishguard amongst others.

A Welsh Green New Deal

Plaid Cymru believes that we need to retain the ability to produce primary steel in Wales. We oppose Tata's current plans for the closure of its blast furnaces in Port Talbot and the impact that these plans will have on jobs and communities in southwest Wales and beyond. The UK Government should look to nationalise the Port Talbot steelworks. Failing this, the Welsh Government should explore options for the compulsory purchase of the plant while future options for greening steel production – including through replacing coal with green hydrogen – are developed.

We will create a Welsh Green New Deal. This will create rewarding, meaningful and fair work in the emerging

green and net-zero sector, and includes re-skilling and supporting Welsh employees and apprentices into these sectors, meeting the need associated with demographic change in the manufacturing workforce and the skills shortages already identified.

As part of the move towards net-zero, we will establish a Just Transition Commission.

A Development Agency for Wales

We will establish a National Development Agency for Wales which is fit for purpose as we approach the quarter point of the 21st century. This means a forward-thinking approach that will meet economic challenges into the 2050s and beyond, recognising a world of innovation, understanding both Wales' needs and strengths,

and being agile enough to respond to changing business landscapes.

We recognise the importance of accessing capital, and will reform the Development Bank of Wales. Our aim will be for the bank to take and profit from greater equity shares in emerging businesses and invest in infrastructure projects, functioning more like a real national development bank. We will also ensure that Welsh Government has the power to develop a community bank to provide local banking services to customers in communities where private banking institutions, such as the Big Four of HSBC, Barclays, Lloyds and NatWest have left the market, building on the work already undertaken by Banc Cambria.

“We believe that Wales should have full control of economic levers, in order to grow and green our economy in a way that will have the greatest positive impact upon our communities.”.



Supporting our Businesses

The small business sector is the backbone of the Welsh economy. We want to support economic conditions in which Wales develops its own range of locally owned medium sized companies, which further develop Welsh supply chains and investment: retaining value created within the Welsh economy and leading to improved employment opportunities in high quality, high paying jobs.

We support the reform in Wales of Non-Domestic Rates, also known as Business Rates, in order to establish a system which better supports our small businesses.

We would reverse the reductions in support to small businesses as a result of Labour Welsh Government cuts this year, and amend the multiplier to better support high street business, such as retail and hospitality.

Procurement is an important part of the Welsh economy, creating additional jobs through the supply chain. We will work towards a target of 75% of Welsh public sector spend being with companies located in Wales, recognising that this promotes investment in quality goods within Wales and higher employment skills. We will

consider the obstacles that exist in reaching this target, e.g. the size of contracts or opportunities for Welsh companies to bid effectively.

Recognising the success of the Basque Mondragon co-operative, Plaid Cymru will promote co-operative, employee and community ownership models. This may be particularly appropriate in communities where private capital appears unwilling to invest but where services are locally valued and important. Equally, in sectors which are still establishing themselves, such as green industries, community ownership models may become the default investment model in Wales, rather than relying on extractive private capital from outside.

Digital

Our rural and valley areas continue to live with poor internet connectivity. Plaid Cymru would seek to invest in our digital infrastructure and guarantee a high-speed connection to every home and business.

This would in turn provide the necessary infrastructure for workers to benefit from greater flexible working as well as provide the infrastructure for Welsh businesses to participate in global markets.

Guaranteed high speed connections would also allow for the necessary conditions for greater participation in research and development around new technologies making Wales more of a go to location for technological innovation.

Our Ambitions for Apprenticeships

The Labour Welsh Government's decisions on Apprenticeships in its last budget was a backwards step, significantly cutting the apprenticeship budget. With a number of sectors in Wales highlighting the availability of skills as being a significant barrier, a skills strategy and industrial strategy is sorely needed.

As a step towards that, Plaid Cymru would seek to map out our skills needs by sector, identifying what is needed to fulfil those needs and create an environment where learners are incentivised to remain on apprentice courses by addressing student poverty.

This would be done by implementing an apprenticeship living wage and supporting colleges to deliver projects that reduce the financial burden on students such as free travel and free meals.

Fairness for Employees

We support the devolution of employment law to Wales, having seen the Conservative UK Government roll back on workers' rights from Westminster in recent years.

In a world of increasing threats to workers, employment rights desperately need strengthening. We would reverse the Tories' regressive anti-strike legislation. We would also support legislation to tackle insecure work, provide paid bereavement and miscarriage leave as 'day one employment rights', outlaw fire and re-hire tactics, abolish compulsory zero-hours contracts, establish the right to 'disconnect' (a right not to be routinely contacted about work outside normal working hours), and reform Shared Parental Leave.

Following the introduction of the Carer's Leave Act 2023 which provides a right to five days unpaid leave to care for a person with a long-term need, a similar provision for paid leave should be considered.

Fairness for our Planet

Recognising the climate and nature emergency in which we find ourselves, we need to think beyond economic growth in terms of GDP, and will call on the next UK Government to consider adopting alternative ways of measuring the economy.

We would introduce a Business, Human Rights and Environment Bill. This would mandate that private companies conduct due diligence in their supply chains to prevent human rights abuses and environmental harms. The mechanism for enforcement would be modelled on the 'duty to prevent', as seen in the Bribery Act 2010.

Fairness for our Post Offices

The impact of the Post Office scandal has been felt strongly in Wales, with sub-postmasters being under suspicion and wrongly convicted because of the failures of the Horizon system and the Post Office. These wrongs should be corrected and proper compensation given to those affected by the services failures. Plaid Cymru believes that the the Post Office should be devolved to Wales and in public ownership, reflecting the crucial role that Post Offices play in life across the country.

Plaid Cymru strongly believes in the principle of healthcare free at the point of delivery, funded through general taxation. We oppose the privatisation of services by stealth through out-sourcing, and will work to ensure that our NHS is properly funded through a new fairer and needs-based funding model for Wales.

Fairness for our NHS Workforce

Plaid Cymru believes that the NHS is nothing without its staff. We stand in solidarity with doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals who are undertaking industrial action on pay and wage restoration. We believe that wage restoration pledges for NHS staff must be implemented as soon as possible, to show that that we value and support our staff and to boost recruitment and retention in key areas.

In Wales we have seen a significant reduction in the numbers of GPs over the past decade. Plaid Cymru will reverse this trend by restoring funding for GPs to 8.7% of the Welsh health budget, and by recruiting an additional 500 GPs across the country. Given the time needed to recruit and train GPs, this will be a two-term pledge.

Plaid Cymru would increase the availability of degree apprenticeships in the healthcare sector to provide greater opportunities for young people to enter the profession and remain in Wales to work.



Unfilled vacancies within the NHS mean that agency spending continues to be at a high level. Better workforce planning and recruitment to posts will save money.

Plaid Cymru believes that shareholders should not be profiting from people's ill health, and that profits from private agencies would lead to a better service if it was instead re-invested into healthcare.

Nurses' contracts need to be made more flexible to reflect the age in which we live. Many nurses are part-time because they juggle other responsibilities, such as caring and learning, and need greater flexibility to achieve a work-life balance. Plaid Cymru would move towards an improved working contract for nurses, and recruit more nurses.

Plaid Cymru recognises the value of nursing and physician associates, but their introduction must not come at the expense of the overall expertise of the workforce. Any new roles should be developed with full consultation with the relevant trade unions.

Governance

Plaid Cymru will review governance of the NHS in Wales, looking to strengthen oversight and accountability so that patients receive a better outcome.

Crucially, this doesn't have to mean expensive or disruptive root-and-branch restructuring of our health service. Rather, we will focus on small but significant cultural changes – streamlining and standardising targets, making lines of accountability clearer and recruiting managers with more specialist and relevant knowledge.

Our reforms would mean that the special measures status of health boards in Wales would more accurately reflect health outcomes rather than being open to political influence from the Labour Welsh Government. Equally, we support greater independent oversight of health board managers.

We would also introduce a regulatory body for Senior Health Managers. Medical staff are accountable to their regulatory bodies, such as the GMC, but the same is not true of senior health managers.

Establishing a regulatory body for managers would help improve patient safety and empower staff by ensuring that every decision reflects the values of candour, honesty and integrity.

Public Health

Plaid Cymru believes that we should move public health towards becoming a wellness service that is geared towards keeping people healthy. A preventative public health strategy which rebalances resources to prevent people becoming ill would help the NHS overall by stopping patients entering the system earlier than necessary.

Health inequalities are an important part of this agenda, including those determined by class, race and gender. A review of the financing model for Wales should better consider the determinants of healthcare to meet our needs.

Infected Blood Scandal

Plaid Cymru welcomes the report of the long-awaited Inquiry into the infected blood scandal. This was an appalling miscarriage of justice which has taken decades to fully come to light because of a defensive culture of secrecy. We support the report's recommendation of a duty of candour for all public servants as well as full and immediate compensation for those affected.

Similarly, we support the proposals set out by the Patient Safety Commissioner in the Hughes Report to provide compensation and a duty of candour to mesh patients and those harmed by valproate.

Fairness: A Covid Inquiry for Wales

It is crucial that Wales understands the decisions made during the Covid Pandemic in order that we can better prepare for any future situations. We believe that Wales should have the powers to make its own decisions, and that our government should be held accountable for the use of those powers. There should therefore be a Wales-specific Inquiry into Covid, as the decisions of the Labour Welsh Government and impacts upon Welsh civic society cannot be considered in the necessary detail by a UK-level Inquiry. The Welsh Government should work together with UK Government to ensure better preparedness in future.

Similarly, we recognise that many people are affected by Long Covid, as a result of the illness, and appropriate support must be provided.

A National Care Service for Wales

Plaid Cymru has been working to deliver a National Care Service for Wales. We believe that social care, like health care, should be free at the point of use, and that the distinction between the two is artificial. Ending this distinction will also help with reducing Delayed Transfers of Care, the time that people remain in hospital rather than care settings. We will continue to work towards this goal, particularly to support those with dementia.

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We support John's Campaign for the right of people to be supported by their family carers and will provide clarity that it is a human right for family visits to care homes to support patients with dementia.

Also, in line with the National Care Service, Plaid Cymru is committed to the consultation on the elimination of profit in children's services provision. Our aim is to work towards the gradual expansion in capacity of direct provision, in both children's services and adult services to achieve this.

We support the health and social care workforce in Wales, whatever their country of origin. Restrictions on visas for care workers and dependents is counter-productive when we are looking to recruit additional staff to underpin our institutions. Instead, staff should be provided with the most appropriate support to allow them to integrate into Welsh society.

We will pay social care workers at least £1 above the Real Living Wage in order to make the job more attractive and improve recruitment, and make this index linked. This would ensure that a full-time worker was paid greater than £1,800 more than the Real Living Wage.

Dentistry

Plaid Cymru would open a new dental school in Bangor, as part of the new medical school to train more dentists to answer Wales's needs.

Plaid Cymru would scrap the dental charge increases.

Air Ambulance Provision

Plaid Cymru want to see a continuation of the current Air Ambulance provision at Welshpool and Caernarfon, alongside a rapid response vehicle on the A55.

Supporting Third Sector Organisations

In both health and social care, third sector organisations are an important part of the patient journey and support. These organisations are undervalued, but play a key role. In order to plan ahead for their activities, they need to have secure funding. We will support for multi-annual funding settlements where this is possible and appropriate, to allow these organisations to better plan their activities.

Cancer Contract / A Stop Cancer Strategy

Plaid Cymru's cancer contract, a Stop Cancer Strategy, would ensure no downgrading of urgent suspected cancer referrals, lower the sensitivity threshold for bowel cancer screening – as has already been done in Scotland and England – and increase rates of lung cancer screening, to ensure that more cancers are caught and treated earlier. A greater focus on prehabilitation would ensure that people are better prepared for cancer treatment to help with their recovery. We would invest in the workforce to recruit, train and retain more oncology staff.

We will support the creation of a national register of Barrett's oesophagus in Wales.

Neurodiversity

Waiting lists for neurodiversity diagnoses are far too long, meaning that children and young people fail to get the proper support they need. Plaid Cymru would ensure that support was made available as soon as an individual presents themselves as neurodiverse, whether this be through referral or self-referral. This support will be monitored and tailored to respond to the individual's need as the diagnosis process progresses.

Mental Health

We support reform of the Mental Health Act. Reform is well overdue, following an independent review of the Act in 2018 and a 2021 White Paper. We will press Welsh Government to make necessary amendments to the Code of Practice in Wales.

Alongside the transfer of full powers over policing to Wales, we would also transfer powers over the Mental Health Act.

Tackling Specific Conditions

Building on the Community Cardiology Diagnostic Vehicle in Betsi Cadwaladr which performs diagnostic tests within the community, we will consider which other services could benefit from this, e.g. audiology, diabetes etc. By developing pilots and best practice, we can reduce the number of people travelling to hospitals, while also increasing uptake by placing it in the local community.

We will reduce delays to diagnosis to Crohn's and Colitis, coeliac disease, and IBS by implementing the national primary diagnostic pathway for lower gastrointestinal symptoms.

As a result of our industrial heritage, Wales has the highest level of respiratory deaths in Western Europe, and nearly 1 in 5 people live with a lung condition in Wales. We will deliver an improvement plan to improve the lives of people living with lung conditions.

End of Life Support

Plaid Cymru supports a review of the impact of recent changes to the Special Rules for Terminal Illness. We would extend statutory bereavement leave and pay entitlement of two weeks to all people with a close relationship to a person who has died.

Community Pharmacies

Plaid Cymru supports our small community pharmacies. Sadly, the price of medication and the supply chain are endangering their ability to provide vital local services. We would support a change in the legislation on drug tariffs which has pushed up prices and a review into the supply chain to ensure that patients get the medication that they need, when they need it.

Education holds the key to Wales's future, and Plaid Cymru wants to create an education system where both learners and the workforce can thrive.

Fairness for Parents

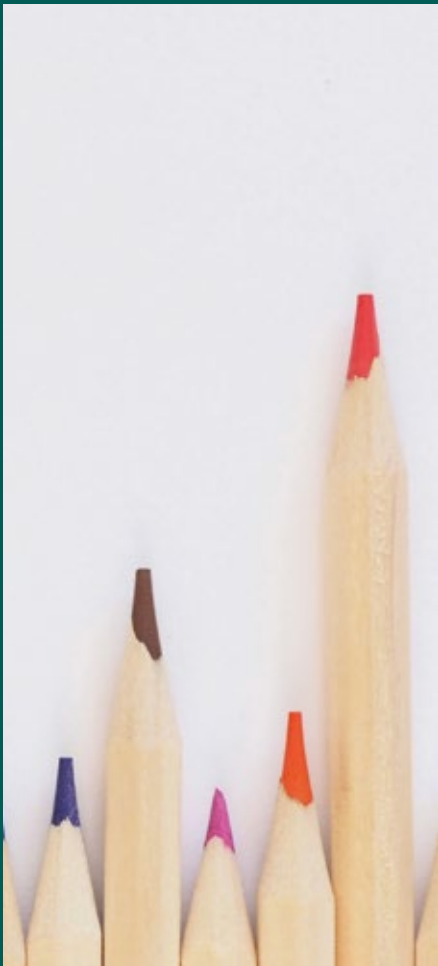
No child or family should struggle with the cost of education. No child should be hungry at school. It is only because of Plaid Cymru that all primary school children in Wales receive free school meals.. Our campaigning has also helped secure the extension of the Education Maintenance Allowance. We will continue to campaign for universal free schools meals

to be extended to secondary school learners, in years 7 to 11, ensuring all children attending school receive a nutritious meal every day.

Learners are also affected by the cost of the school day, including transport, uniforms and extra-curricular activities. Reducing these costs is essential. No learner should miss a day of school or miss out on opportunities because of their family's financial position.

Ambition for our Children

School budgets have been stretched to breaking point, and by securing fair funding for Wales, we will ensure schools are resourced to provide both the education and support our learners require in order to leave education equipped for their futures. This includes investing in additional learning needs provision and investing in mental health support.



Crucially, it also means investing in our workforce, ensuring both teachers and support staff are supported and valued in order to improve both recruitment and retention.

We would do this by:

- Reviewing all bursary schemes available to incentivise teachers, to ensure they attract applicants and help to fill recruitment gaps.
- Working with the teaching unions to reduce bureaucracy and workload.
- Recruiting and retaining 5000 teachers and support staff.
- Conducting a review of Initial Teacher Education and Continuing Professional Development to ascertain their relevance to the demands of the new curriculum.
- Appointing more non-teaching staff to deal with pupil needs beyond education.
- Develop a more attractive and formalised role for teaching assistants who currently do not have a clear career pathway

Plaid Cymru also believes that all learners should leave school able to speak both Welsh and English fluently, as well as at least one other language. The decline in the number of learners taking Welsh as an A level, or studying a modern language, is of concern, and doesn't reflect the fact that Wales is a multi-lingual and diverse nation.

Supporting Staff and Learners

The safety of both learners and staff at our schools is also a priority for Plaid Cymru, and we believe that by investing in both the workforce and the support available for learners, this will create a safer learning environment for all. Bullying, racism and homophobia within our schools – and wider society – must be stamped out.

Reviewing the implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales and the Additional Learning Needs Act is essential, to ensure consistency in terms of the education and support learners receive wherever they are in Wales. This also means providing training and resources to the workforce, to ensure that teachers and teaching assistants are equipped to deliver the changes needed. We will also continue to support capital spending on upgrading and building new schools. There is no reason why private fee-paying schools

should receive additional support from taxpayers. We would scrap private school charitable status and charge VAT on fees and remove the exemption from business rates.

Early Years

Plaid Cymru secured extended childcare provision through the Cooperation Agreement, but our ambition goes further.

Our vision is for a national and free Welsh-medium early years education and childcare service, Meithrin Cymru, providing high quality provision for children aged 12 months until they are eligible for full time education.

This requires an investment in the childcare workforce, including offering free Welsh language learning opportunities in the English-medium sector so they can be part of the scheme. Mudiad Meithrin would have a key role to play in making sure that Welsh language childcare is available in all parts of Wales.

Post 16 education

Plaid Cymru will place vocational education on the same foundations as academic learning in school and university.

An independently commissioned review of Vocational Qualifications in Wales was commissioned as part of the Cooperation

Agreement. It made 33 recommendations for the new Commission for Tertiary Education and Research and Qualifications Wales. We will ensure that these are taken forward.

Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

We will continue to support the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to fund and promote higher and further education through the medium of Welsh and for academics to conduct research in Welsh.

We will increase the funding for the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to enable it to fully develop its Further Education and Apprenticeship Welsh-medium Action Plan, and also to recruit and train a bilingual workforce, both in teaching and more generally -strengthening the use of the Welsh language in the workplace learning for 16 to 25-year-olds. This requires us to understand the needs and desires of Welsh speaking students before they enter Higher Education in order to contribute to workforce planning and the use of Welsh in the workplace.

Seren Network

Plaid Cymru will review the Seren programme, which aims to support Wales's brightest sixth-formers, to increase the access for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to take part in the Seren Network, and to better align it to the opportunities offered by Welsh Higher Education Institutions. We will offer summer schools at each Welsh university for Seren Foundation learners; expand the current partnerships with Aberystwyth and Cardiff universities and set up new pilots in other Welsh institutions.

Higher Education and Research

For years, Plaid Cymru has been raising concerns about the higher education sector, warning that it is in crisis and in need of urgent support. We have done so because we recognise the important role of universities within our communities, in attracting students and staff and supporting the local economy and supply chain through realising our young people's talents.

Recognising the severe challenges facing the sector, we will work to expand the numbers studying at Welsh universities, attracting greater numbers of

Welsh-domiciled students as well as retaining the current number of UK and overseas students will result in a net increase of overall students. We will work with the sector and the Coleg Cenedlaethol to support personalised and flexible pathways into Higher Education through increased recognition of learning achieved elsewhere, and through promotion of short courses. These new pathways will help meet workforce training needs and also offering enriching policies for lifelong learning and community renewal. In line with developments across Europe, we will prioritise areas that promote economic and social sustainability.

We will also increase Government investment in Research and Development. We would seek to devolve Wales's share of UK Research and Innovation expenditure and for a block grant to be allocated based on population, and overseen rigorously to ensure Wales's continued role as a producer of leading internationally recognised research with impact on life in Wales and beyond.

Our ambition remains to make University education free again for all, and we will work with Universities to develop a plan to make them financially viable so that this can become a genuine option.

Lifelong learning

To even up educational investment we need to commit to investing in lifelong learning not just paying it lip service. We need to start by creating a Lifetime Learning Allowance, this would consist of a mixture of grants, loans, and a right to free provision.

We would offer a grant of £5,000 to the Personal Learning Accounts of every individual over 25 to train or retrain, with added loans to cover more expensive courses and maintenance costs for those who want to take courses full time (repaid in the same way as student loans). They would be available to anyone regardless of what previous funding they have received. Initially, we will trial this with those who have been made recently redundant.

Tuition and maintenance loans at Levels 4, 5 and 6, including for vocational qualifications, will be made available to all adults aged 18 or over, and available in both further and higher education.

We would address the fall in part-time and mature study over the past decade. This may include more blended learning options and a move away from three-year full-time bachelor's degrees to a greater mix of part-time, shorter and more vocational courses. Our childcare offer would be available to those for whom caring responsibilities are a critical barrier to learning.



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Our Ambition for Criminal Justice Powers

Plaid Cymru support the full transfer of justice powers to Wales, as recommended by three independent commissions, including the Thomas Commission on Justice in Wales and, most recently, the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future for Wales.

This will allow us to develop a Welsh way of policing and criminal justice. It makes no sense that many of the policy levers for reducing crime in Wales are held in our Senedd, while others are still held by Westminster.

Scotland and Northern Ireland have full control of justice powers, and even devolved English regions, such as Manchester, have control over their policing.

As part of this transfer of powers, we would create a Minister of Justice in the Welsh Government, who would be responsible to the people of Wales, not Westminster.

A Plaid Cymru government would review the operation of criminal justice governance in Wales, and remove the role of elected Police and Crime Commissioners, as it would be the Minister for Justice who would be held accountable.



Fair Funding for Wales's Police Forces

By stealth, the Conservative UK Government has transferred the burden of paying for the Police from a central responsibility to local people. This is clearly unfair.

There has been a decade of Tory cuts in which Wales's police forces have been increasingly under-funded by the Police Funding Formula at Westminster.

Wales gets less than its fair share of police funding, per head of population. The impact of this is that we in Wales have had to increase the policing element of council tax by greater than inflation, just to maintain the same services.

While policing remains in the control of the Westminster Government, Plaid Cymru will make the case that policing must be properly funded in order to do its job properly of preventing crime as well as catching and convicting criminals.

Given Cardiff's status as a capital city, Plaid Cymru believes that there should be additional funding to recognise the higher profile events which take place there, and the security arrangements required to police these. This already happens in other UK capitals.

Supporting Victims of Crime

Plaid Cymru believes that victims of crime and anti-social behaviour should be at the centre of justice and police services.

By listening to those with lived experience of being a victim of crime, we can provide better services that are more responsive to people's needs, both in the immediate aftermath of crime taking place and in the longer-term.

Plaid Cymru would create a Victims Commissioner for Wales, who would be able to represent victims of crime and stand up for their rights so that they are not forgotten or ignored by decision makers.

Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls

Plaid Cymru recognises the scale and challenges of violence against women and girls and the need to prevent and reduce the harm that this causes.

There are great challenges in the criminal justice system to ensure that women and girls are believed, and that they get justice for crimes committed against them.

There is a need for specialist training and support officers around the issues of coercive control, stalking and an improved understanding of homicide risk.

We will work with Police and Crime Commissioners in Wales to further develop this support for women and girls.

The number of convictions for crimes against women and girls is very small. The Victims Commissioner could help increase the number of successful convictions of perpetrators, as part of a series of measures.

These include:

- Create a Domestic Abuse Register to protect women is a means of preventing death and injury because it enables the early identification of abusive men. This would shift the responsibility away from the potential victims (as happens under Clare's Law) and on to the authorities and the offender themselves.
- Stop abusers further harassing their victims through court proceedings and strengthen restraining orders and sanctions for breaching them.
- Following the recommendation of the Suzy Lamplugh Trust that there are specialist stalking training requirements for all professionals dealing with stalking cases, and a unified recording system to be used by the Police, the CPS, the Home Office, Ministry of Justice and National Probation Service to follow the journey of a victim of stalking through the criminal justice system.

- Ensure that laws relating to sexual images are always based on consent rather than intent - to close loopholes that see perpetrators get away with abuse, and
- Increasing sentences for domestic violence and stalking offences.

Prisons

Wales has the highest imprisonment rate in Western Europe, despite having no control over criminal justice policy.

UK Government prison construction is a factor. The construction of HMP Berwyn, near Wrexham, and a substantial increase in prison population at HMP Parc, in Bridgend, have contributed to the high in-country imprisonment rate in Wales over the past decade. Prisoner numbers continue to rise.

Plaid Cymru does not support private prison provision, which we believe is a responsibility of the state. We are alarmed by the recent number of deaths and criticisms of HMP Parc, which we feel needs full investigation and to be brought back under full public control.

At present, the prison estate is effectively full, posing a danger to prisoners, staff and victims. Sentencing policy should consider what works best to prevent criminals from re-offending and being a danger to the wider public.

This includes restorative justice, community based sentences for low-risk offenders and community-based prevention and rehabilitation.

Fairness for Women in Justice

Plaid Cymru believes that women are not well served by our criminal justice system.

Women's custodial sentences are served outside of Wales, with an impact upon travel time for the family, the provision of services in Welsh and a disconnect with their community.

Most women who serve custodial sentences are only in prison for a short period, which is less effective in reducing crime, but has substantial social impact.

We will focus on reducing crime through identifying the underlying reasons why women are involved in criminal behaviour and working with partners to resolve those issues, and review the effectiveness of short prison sentences for female offenders.

As part of this ongoing work to reduce crime, Plaid Cymru want to establish four community based women's centres across Wales to support female offenders. We will work with Police and Crime Commissioners in Wales to deliver this, with one each in the north-west, north-east, south-west and south-east of the country.

Probation

We are concerned that the probation service remains under-resourced and over-worked.

We support NAPO's calls for a strategic reduction programme, with safe workloads and a case allocation system. Manageable workloads are key to ensuring the protection of staff, offenders and the public.

Devolving the criminal justice system would ensure better collaboration between prisons and services which are already devolved, reducing homelessness upon release, improve health provision and address concerns about the privately-run Parc Prison.

Ensuring Justice for All

Plaid Cymru believes that everybody should have access to justice, within easy access of the community in which they live. Sadly, for too many years, this right has been reduced, either through deliberate closure of local court facilities or the reduction in funding or opportunities for legal support.

We would provide additional help to prevent these legal aid 'deserts' which means that individuals are prevented from accessing timely advice and support. This involves supporting the legal workforce to move into these fields of provision and making the whole field more sustainable.

Many parts of Wales were affected by court closures under both Labour and Conservative governments, making it difficult to access justice in the local community. Plaid Cymru would pilot a courts in the community scheme which visit areas of the country with an appropriate timetable to resolve local justice needs. This could also help reduce the backlog of court cases, which have become endemic within the system due to the under-funding by the Conservatives.

Transparency in Policing

As part of a move towards greater transparency in policing, Plaid Cymru support legislation at Westminster which will require police officers to declare memberships of clubs, societies and organisations to ensure that relationships outside of the workplace are transparent and above board. This will provide increased transparency and confidence in policing.

Policing Drugs

Plaid Cymru believes that drugs policing should focus on targeting supply lines and dealers in the organised trade, rather than individual users, if those people are causing no wider harm.

We recognise that some drug users are responsible for acquisitive crime in order to fund their dependency. They should be supported to stop their addiction. Many users are also dealers and are exploited as part of the crime network. This is a matter of particular safeguarding concern when it involves children.

Plaid Cymru believes that drugs policy is a matter of public health, and reducing the number of individuals with addictions has a wider benefit to society. Introducing drug consumption rooms across Wales will facilitate a more humane and sustainable approach to addiction issues.

It is clear that traditional methods of policing drugs and organised crime has not been successful and has led to a hostile and violent environment. Plaid Cymru would welcome an independent review of drug policy and how it is policed.

We believe that by introducing a policy of soft drugs decriminalisation which respects individual choices, we could better target policing resources towards organised groups who profit from misery and other people's vulnerabilities.

Alongside this, we believe that the UK Home Office should cleanse the criminal records of those cautioned or convicted of drugs possession where there are no further aggregating factors.

Policing Protest

Plaid Cymru believes that non-violent protest is an important mechanism in democracy to show public support of solidarity for a cause. We support the right of an individual to freedom of expression and assembly.

The rights of the individual should be respected, as should the rights of police officers not to be under threat of harm while carrying out their legitimate duties.

We do not support the legislation introduced by the Conservative UK Government which unfairly restricts opportunities for non-violent protest. Plaid Cymru would repeal these powers at Westminster, including the relevant parts of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 and the Public Order Act 2023.

Sadly, some groups frequently resort to violence in order to make their point, and this needs to be policed in a stronger manner than events which are non-violent in nature.

It is highly disappointing that large costs of more than £1m have been spent by Dyfed-Powys Police to police protests at Llanelli's Stradey Park Hotel for a misguided Conservative UK Government plan, and which were later dropped.

Plaid Cymru believes that Dyfed-Powys Police should be compensated for the cost of Westminster's mistake, rather than recoup that cost from local taxpayers in the area.

Supporting our Justice Staff

Plaid Cymru recognise that Police Officers, Prison Officers and probation staff all work hard for their communities to deliver the best possible services.

That can mean putting themselves in danger or under threat of personal harm through trying to reduce the threat of injury or harm to others.

We will continue to provide best practice support to serving police and prison officers to deal with the trauma and challenges of dealing with their everyday tasks, as well as unusual or particularly difficult circumstances which may arise in the course of their duties.

We will tackle staff retention issues in the prison and probation services by reducing the prison officer pension age down from 68.



Plaid Cymru believes that everybody has the right to a safe and affordable home in their community, and this should be the purpose of the housing system. We will introduce a Right to Adequate Housing which will underpin this.

An Ambition to Build Social Housing

Wales needs to ensure that the supply of housing meets community needs. This requires a significant expansion in the amount of social and municipal housing stock, a policy that would help to tackle private rental sector rent rises.

Plaid Cymru campaigned to end the scandal of the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy Scheme which saw local authorities send council house tenant rental income to Westminster rather than re-invested within local housing. As a result, eleven local authorities now have the opportunity to build their own council housing once again, and they and housing associations should be supported to develop further housing as quickly as possible.

In government in Wales, Plaid Cymru will develop a plan to deliver this significant expansion to meet local housing need in all parts of the country, accessing a mixture of public and private funding streams and working with communities to provide the correct mix of housing across Wales.

While planning these developments, we will factor in the needs of the local community for healthcare, education and transport, as well as sufficient green space and local play facilities.



Supporting Welsh Construction

Our 'Unnos' policy aims to support the Welsh construction industry as part of our proposals, creating centres of excellence in both new construction and retrofitting existing housing stock.

We will work with local authorities and housing associations to further develop Welsh local supply chains and skilled labour, so that the profits from the Welsh house-building industry can be kept within Wales, rather than exported by the large 'volume' housebuilders.

In further developing plans for house-building across Wales, we need to identify appropriate land, and properly align this with other community needs, including provision of healthcare, education and transport, amongst others. This involves strategic planning at national, regional and local levels to ensure delivery.

Tackling Homelessness

Meeting communities' housing needs and increasing the housing stock will also reduce the numbers of individuals and families facing homelessness in Wales. In the Senedd, we have prioritised tackling homelessness, and are

awaiting new legislation to be developed following the White Paper on Housing published last Autumn.

Using the Housing First model and rapid rehousing, we will look to end homelessness, recognising that much of the challenge is not just those sleeping on the streets or in allocated temporary accommodation, but those people who are staying with friends and family.

One of the challenges is tackling long-term empty or unused property that could be someone's home. Plaid Cymru's campaigning has helped increase council tax premiums on empty properties, which have funded grants to increase the supply of affordable homes. There is no good reason why so many properties are left empty when they could be housing individuals and families.

We believe that everybody has the right to live within the community in which they were raised. Plaid Cymru has also supported a package of actions to tackle the challenge of second homes and holiday homes within our communities, with a substantial impact felt in Ynys Mon, Gwynedd and Pembrokeshire in particular where they make up a large amount of the available housing stock.

We have introduced powers for local authorities to require registration of a change of use for a property into a holiday home and to introduce a cap on the number of second and holiday homes within a community.

Many local authorities in Wales have now introduced a council tax premium on second homes, where the additional funds raised are put towards development of social housing for local residents. We are also looking to close loopholes which allow holiday homes to pretend to be legitimate lettings businesses, so that we can ensure that genuine self-catered accommodation businesses can be protected.

Fairness in the Private Rental Sector

Within the private rental sector, we believe in a system of fair rents and rent control so that they are affordable to local people on local incomes, and that individuals and families are not priced out of the area where they currently live.

Our proposed Right to Adequate Housing Bill in Wales would include powers to introduce rent controls and other market interventions to make housing more affordable.

Fairness in Planning

The planning system is out-dated and needs an overhaul. Far too often communities are at the mercy of large developers who build executive homes for profit rather than build the required homes to answer the need. We know that there is huge demand for one and two bed properties in Wales, as well as bungalows for an ageing population, yet developers fail to build houses that answer community needs.

We will reform the planning system so that it is consistent with local needs and aspirations, rather than reflecting the interests of developers.

This means maintaining up-to-date information on housing need and ensuring that developments reflect this need. This would be supported by funding packages to assist local government to robustly enforce planning decisions ensuring that developers stick to agreements.

We will ensure that Local Development Plans are not imposed upon local planning authorities without their support.

Plaid Cymru recognises that the climate and nature emergencies are the biggest threat to mankind on a global scale, and reaffirms our commitment to reaching net-zero targets in Wales by 2035 and reversing biodiversity decline by 2030. This requires collaboration and planning to achieve a just transition.

We all have a part to play in tackling the global emergency. Forecasters have made clear that the world is on course to becoming an uninhabitable planet. Wales can and must play its part in ensuring that the world changes its course – and we must do this in a way that is equitable and just for generations now and in the future.

Plaid Cymru believes that greater investment is direly needed in green jobs and transitioning into new methods of construction, so that workers in Wales are not thrown on the scrap heap, but are supported into new, highly-skilled and well-paid jobs.

Plaid Cymru would prioritise work to alleviate the effects of climate change on our communities, and in ways that take account of the psychological as well as physical tolls of this crisis. The school curriculum should equip young people with an understanding of climate challenges and encourage a philosophy of engaging with climate change and the natural world.

We will ensure that both the Welsh Government and the UK Government takes their responsibilities to protecting households seriously by investing in infrastructure to prevent or mitigate flooding incidents.

As a result of their impact in increasing climate change, we will increase Air Passenger Duty and kerosene tax for private jets.



Control of our Natural Resources

When it comes to powers over resources, we believe that the people of Wales should have full control over all of our natural resources, our waters and our lands. We need to have energy independence for Wales so that we can achieve a fair green transition on our terms.

We believe that Wales should have full control over energy powers, without any upper limit or conditions set by the UK Government. It makes no sense for there to be a specific limit, currently 350MW of generation, meaning that there are two planning regimes in place and that major energy developments can be given consent by Westminster without the consent of people in Wales.

Plaid Cymru will ensure that Wales takes full control over the Crown Estate in Wales, which has already been devolved to Scotland but not yet to Wales.

Recent years have seen increased investment in Crown Estate energy projects in Wales's waters and the benefits from these investments should be returned to Wales. These projects should be developed for the needs of Wales, rather than for extraction, and should be aligned with the electricity grid, planning system and other factors, to maximise positive outcomes for Wales. This includes the use of Welsh local supply chains in future contracts

for renewable energy developments of the Welsh Crown Estate, developing and supporting our local industries.

This will become a Sovereign Wealth Fund for Wales, so that we invest the profits in our future generations.

Control of water in Wales would allow the Senedd to set higher environmental targets on water quality and lower prices, where possible. The current scandal of water quality must be resolved and it should never be allowed to happen again. We would enact section 48(1) of the Wales Act 2017, which would fully align the Senedd's legislative competence over water with the geographical boundary of Wales. We would also formally request powers from the UK over the licensing of sewage in Wales.

Developing our own Energy

Plaid Cymru has long made the case for the establishment of our own national energy company, Ynni Cymru, which we succeeded in establishing through working with the Welsh Government.

This will expand community owned renewable energy generation across Wales, and we foresee a greater role for Ynni Cymru, as it develops in line with our aims for a Welsh-based energy company to serve the needs of the people of Wales - helping us to take control of our own natural resources and lowering energy bills. Community energy is important in Wales. Plaid

Cymru would push for changes to how the National Grid is structured, so that communities can benefit directly from local energy projects.

Wales is currently paying the price for a legacy of decades of underinvestment in the grid, resulting in large bottlenecks for connection to distribution and transmission networks and will not achieve its carbon reduction targets if this issue isn't resolved.

We would push for changes to planning policies to give local communities a greater voice in determining what developments happen in their locality, and ensure that local voices are involved earlier in the planning stages of projects, so that local people have more say and ownership of these projects.

Preserving Wales's Natural Landscape

We believe that the beauty of Wales's natural landscape should be preserved. This means that large scale industrial energy generation developments should take this into account. Large scale pylon developments or solar scale developments should be considered in the context of their impact, and alternative methods for linking renewable energy to the national grid should be implemented, e.g. through the undergrounding of cables.

Plaid Cymru opposes the development of new sites for nuclear power stations, and

would oppose new licences for oil and gas drilling.

The legacy of coal mining continues to leave scars on our nation's landscape. Westminster benefited from the mining industry in the days before devolution, and they should bear the responsibility for making these sites safe. Plaid Cymru will push to ensure that Westminster pays towards clearing the coal tips that litter our valleys, and that site restoration does not have to be financed through the further extraction of coal.

The legacy of mining is also felt in the ongoing injustice faced by former miners whose pensions are benefiting the coffers of the Treasury, whilst some former miners live on only £10 a week. Plaid Cymru demands that the UK Government should relinquish its entitlement to the pension scheme's investment reserve, and that they should transfer the billions already taken from the miners back to those former workers and their families. The UK Government must commit to implementing the BEIS inquiry's own recommendations into the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme.

We would maintain the ban on fracking, are opposed to proposals for gas-fired peaking plants in Wales, and on new open cast coal mines. Opencast mine sites should be fully restored for the benefit of local communities, and should never be used as

a guise for private companies to undertake further coal extraction.

There should be stronger enforcement for the protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in Wales, so that the days of companies dumping waste on protected sites are a thing of the past.

Fairness for Energy

The increase in energy bills in recent years has hugely affected households across the country, through rises in the price cap. The privatised energy market has patently failed.

There is no good reason why households in Wales, which produces more energy than it uses, have higher standing charges than in England. We would look to reduce these charges, saving money for all households.

We want to see the introduction of a Social Tariff for Energy. Although prices are expected to fall during the Summer, when energy use is lower, it is anticipated to rise again in the Autumn and Winter.

Plaid Cymru would devolve the responsibilities of Ofgem to regulate the design of whole-systems energy grids and markets which serve Wales, while aligning with emerging UK, European and global standards.

As part of this work, we would establish a Welsh energy systems operator.

We support a long-term plan for retrofitting existing properties that would make them more energy efficient, thereby reducing costs and carbon emissions. This will require government support, particularly while households are in such economically challenging circumstances, and requires investment and commitment to developing a skilled workforce capable of delivering this programme of works across the country.

Tackling the Nature Emergency

The Nature Emergency is of great importance to Plaid Cymru, and our Senedd group led a debate in 2021 which resulted in our Senedd being the first parliament in the UK to declare a nature emergency. The loss of biodiversity and species will affect us all – and 1 in every 6 species in Wales is already threatened with extinction. We support a science-led plan aligned with the 2022 Kunming-Montreal agreement to ensure that nature loss is firmly in reverse as soon as possible. Plaid Cymru supports the introduction of biodiversity targets, to halt biodiversity decline by 2030, and ensure substantive recovery by 2050.

The climate and nature emergencies must be tackled together. We would ensure that planning projects have to have regard to the two emergencies, to avoid situations like wind farms being built on landscapes that provide habitats for endangered species.

Tackling Child Poverty

The increase in the number of children living in poverty under the Conservative UK Government is wholly unacceptable, and has left far too many of our young people struggling and with fewer chances in life.

We believe that any government should target the reduction and eventual abolition of child poverty as one of its major goals.

In the 2021 Senedd election in Wales, Plaid Cymru's number one policy was the introduction of Free School Meals for all young people in primary schools, so that they can be assured of having a healthy and nutritious meal whilst learning.

Having successfully implemented this policy, we will now push to increase this roll-out to also include secondary schools across Wales.

As part of our mission to reduce child poverty, Plaid Cymru will increase child benefit by £20 per week for all children.

Across Wales, this will help the 330,000 families and more than 550,000 children and young people who are eligible for this, boosting their life chances and helping families to deal with the cost-of-living crisis forced upon them by the Conservative UK Government.

Child benefit is received by 94% of children in Wales, so we believe this to be the most effective way of providing support to families. It would allow them to plan their finances and make responsible decisions in the face of a cost-of-living crisis that has forced so many into poverty.

We will scrap the Conservative policy of the 'two-child' limit on universal credit payments, one of the key drivers of child poverty, and end the benefit cap which stops families from claiming the full amount.



Guaranteeing Our Essentials

Under the Conservative UK Government, social security benefits have frequently failed to rise in line with increased prices. This has led to a situation in which nearly three-quarters of people in the UK experiencing destitution are in receipt of social security.

By linking core benefits with inflation, this maintains current amounts without further penalising recipients, and stopping future governments from using benefits as a political football.

Plaid Cymru support an Essentials Guarantee level to ensure that all individuals and families receive at least the minimum required for their daily life. The costs of this have been calculated by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation as being £120 for an individual each week and £200 for a couple.

By making this a legal minimum in Universal Credit, the standard allowance would be set so that any deductions do not take income below this threshold.

Keeping the Triple Lock

Plaid Cymru will keep the triple-lock pension increase, which means that the state pension will keep pace with price increases and the cost of living. We recognise that many in receipt of the state pension have no other way of increasing their fixed level of incomes, and believe that

this increase – the highest of inflation, average earnings increase, or 2.5% - is the fairest way of ensuring that their income keeps pace with the real world costs. We will also increase the income tax personal allowance for pensioners in line with the triple lock.

A Welsh Benefits System

Plaid Cymru believes that there should be a Welsh Benefits System, with a particularly strong case to devolve those benefits which are most closely aligned to existing devolved policy areas, such as health and housing benefits.

Wales could also control the administration of benefits which would remain reserved, such as Universal Credit, and the powers to create new benefits, such as a Welsh Child Payment, similar to that which is already in place in Scotland to provide further targeted support to families in poverty.

Improving Benefits Take-Up

Many people are entitled to benefits which they never claim, either because they are unaware of their eligibility or are not properly supported to claim by the system. A recently published report estimated this at £23bn per year across the UK.

We will review the provision of non-universal or automatic benefits to understand which can be made easier to access through

auto-enrolment or through informational campaigns, as well as assisting advice organisations and local authorities to better promote these benefits to people who may be eligible.

Stopping Benefit Sanctions

Plaid Cymru opposes the Conservatives' proposed changes to the Work Capability Assessment and their 'Back to Work' plan, which again appears to blame people for being unwell and unable to work as they would wish to do so. We reject the discourse of blaming people for the circumstances in which they find themselves.

Benefit sanctions and the delays in receipt of Universal Credit lead to hardship which does not help people in returning to work. The timetable for receipt of first payments of Universal Credit should be shortened so that individuals and families do not get into substantial debt, and repayments should operate on the basis of supporting people.

Fairness to Farmers: Universal Credit

The shift from Working Tax Credits to Universal Credit is taking its toll on farming families, self-employed people, and seasonal workers.

This is because Universal Credit entitlement is assessed based on monthly rather than annual incomes, with a minimum income floor, meaning that people lose out on vital support.

Plaid Cymru will support using alternative methods of calculating entitlement, including annual income, to ensure that everyone is treated fairly.

Local Housing Rate Allowance

The Local Housing Rate Allowance is the amount of rent which can be provided to help meet housing costs. Since changes to the Local Housing Rate Allowance were introduced, rental costs have substantially increased, meaning that renters are unable to cover their costs, with knock on effects on sustainable tenancies and rising levels of homelessness.

Plaid Cymru will ensure that the LHA is retained at the 30th percentile of market rents in each Broad Market Rental Area. In line, with the devolution of housing which already exists, the Broad Market Rental Area mechanism should be devolved to Wales, as housing already is a devolved area.

Increasing Statutory Sick Pay

Plaid Cymru support an increase in Statutory Sick Pay in line with Statutory Maternity Pay.

In line with the findings of the recent Work and Pensions Committee report, we believe that all employees should be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay, and not just those who are paying the lower earnings level of National Insurance.

Cold Weather Payment Reform

Plaid Cymru would amend how Cold Weather Payments assessments are made.

Cold Weather Payments are made when the temperature dips below freezing for seven days. However, the measuring stations in Wales are often near coastal areas which may be warmer than surrounding mountainous areas, thereby reducing those populations payment eligibility.

We are concerned that many vulnerable people are missing out on these payments because the weather in their location is substantially different to the area being measured by the Met Office.

Universal Basic Income Pilots

Plaid Cymru support the principle of a universal basic income and will support pilots.

In Wales, there has been a universal basic income pilot with care leavers, and we await the findings of that project.

Plaid Cymru believes that independence is the best way to deliver real fairness and ambition for Wales.

Independence would give us the levers we really need to grow and green our economy, and make governments in Wales fully accountable to the people of Wales for the decisions that they make.

An Ambition for Wales

Plaid Cymru will prepare a Green Paper on the path to independence, and create a National Commission. This Commission will work to improve the health of our democracy, research the full range of options for our political and economic future, and engage citizens in Wales in an ongoing discussion about these options.

The recently published final report of the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales found that an independent Wales would

be viable, and research previously commissioned by Plaid Cymru showed that Wales's fiscal deficit at independence would be £2.6bn. At 3% of GDP, this would be well within European norms. An independent Wales could create the conditions for green and inclusive economic growth.

Plaid Cymru will make the case that independence is not just viable, but desirable, and we will engage with the people of Wales to persuade them of its merits, recognising that recent years have shown a significant growth

in the number of people becoming indy-curious and indy-convinced, as shown in opinion polls and the growth of pro-independence marches in recent years. We will continue to take the argument for independence to every corner of Wales.

We believe that independence for Wales is a decision to be made by the people of Wales, and the power to call a referendum on the constitutional future of Wales should lie with the Senedd in Cardiff, and not with the UK Government.



Fairness for Wales

Within the current governance structures, Plaid Cymru would remove the anomaly of the Secretary of State for Wales, and transfer their remaining powers to the Welsh Government.

The Secretary of State acts as Westminster's voice in Wales, not Wales's voice in Westminster. Wales is not junior to Westminster, we have our own democratic institutions, and we do not need 'a seat at the Cabinet table'.

There should instead be a duty of co-operation and parity of esteem between the governments within the UK. This would prevent UK Government over-reach: stopping it from legislating or making decisions in Wales without the consent of the Welsh Government and Senedd.

As part of that, the Sewel Convention – under which legislative consent from Wales is required for Westminster to act in devolved areas – should be placed upon a statutory footing, to prevent the UK legislating in areas of devolved competence. Current constraints on Welsh Government finances – including limits placed on the Welsh Government's powers to borrow to invest – should be removed.

We will protect the Senedd's powers through a Government of Wales (Devolved Powers) Bill, which will require a super majority of two-thirds of Senedd members for any reduction in powers.

Plaid Cymru supports the transfer of further powers from Westminster to the Senedd in a number of areas, including criminal justice, broadcasting, natural resources such as water and energy, railway infrastructure, the Crown Estate and welfare, and expert groups should be established to facilitate this process. We will also transfer the powers to introduce gender quotas for Senedd elections.

Now that the Senedd in Wales has been increased to 96 members following the 2026 election, similar to the 90-member Northern Ireland Assembly and 129-member Scottish Parliament, we are better placed to innovate and scrutinise government once these additional powers are transferred.

Further Constitutional Matters

Decisions around the distribution and use of the Shared Prosperity Fund, which has replaced European Structural Funds should be made by the Welsh Government, not by the UK Government at Westminster.

Under the current constitutional system, we would welcome the introduction of voting at 16 for Westminster and Police and Crime Commissioner elections as we already have in Wales for Senedd and local elections.

At the same time, we would end the voter suppression at elections recently introduced through the requirement to show ID at polling stations, and instead focus efforts on ensuring that all potential eligible voters are on the electoral roll.

At UK elections, we would support proportional representation so that a greater proportion of votes are used to elect representatives, rather than wasted. We prefer the Single Transferable Vote electoral system, and will again push for this in Wales after the Senedd 2026 election.

Plaid Cymru does not support the House of Lords, and we will continue to make the case for its abolition. However, for the period in which that institution has legislative power over Wales, we will continue as a party to participate in debates there.

Plaid Cymru will make it a criminal offence for elected politicians to knowingly mislead the public. It would be an offence for an elected politician or a candidate to intentionally mislead by making a statement known to be false or deceptive.



Plaid Cymru has been on the side of Welsh farming as the sector has faced serious challenges from both the Conservatives at Westminster and Labour in Cardiff.

Fairness for our Farmers

Plaid Cymru's priority is to protect the future of our family farms. They are the backbone of our rural economy, they shape our environment and sustain our communities and culture.

Years of Tory economic chaos has contributed to huge rises in farm input costs and Westminster's post-Brexit trade deals have allowed more cheap imports to undermine our domestic markets. The Tories have also broken their promise of

“not a penny less” in farm funding to Wales, leaving Wales hundreds of millions of pounds worse off.

We will give Wales a veto over future trade deals that undermine Welsh agricultural communities.

We have opposed Labour's Sustainable Farming Scheme proposal for 10% tree cover on all farms demanding a more flexible approach. We have also called for a reduction in the universal actions required to enter the scheme, as well as

move away from the 'costs incurred/income foregone' funding model which doesn't provide sufficient incentive for farmers to join the scheme, to one which recognises the social value the agricultural sector makes to the Welsh language, culture and the local economy. Working with the farming unions and others we succeeded in ensuring that the plan will now be delayed for a year and reviewed to ensure it works for farming and for nature.



Plaid Cymru's motion to scrap the NVZ (nitrate vulnerable zone) regulations was narrowly defeated in the Senedd. We have nevertheless secured a delay in their full implementation until at least next year. We have also secured £20m funding to help farmers with infrastructure costs and persuaded the Government to undertake a full review of the regulations. We support a more proportionate and sophisticated approach to water quality regulations utilising updated technical innovations rather than a farming-by-calendar approach.

Plaid Cymru will introduce a broader approach to tackling bovine TB which includes controlling the disease in wildlife.

In the face of increased threats from new and emerging animal and plant diseases, we will also support steps to strengthen the UK's disease surveillance networks, including protecting the UK's scanning surveillance budget.

More must be done to tackle dog attacks on livestock. We will support the re-introduction of livestock worrying legislation that the Conservative UK Government failed to complete in the last Parliament.

We will look to introduce policies to improve transparency within the supply chain and strengthen the powers of the Groceries

Adjudicator to more effectively tackle unfair supply chain practices. We will ensure that food labelling accurately reflects country of origin, allowing consumers to choose food that is 'Welsh' and not just 'British' so that they can make an informed choice.

There is an extractive element to food production in Wales. Too often our primary produce is exported to be processed elsewhere, meaning we lose the added value that should be retained in our local economies. Plaid Cymru will continue to promote opportunities to develop local processing capacity and use procurement policy to shorten supply chains, cut food miles and create local jobs.

We will demand amendments to the Shortage Occupancy List to ensure primary producers in Wales have access to the workforce required to support the industry.

Fairness for our Rural Communities

Living in rural areas can cost more than living in urban areas, while services are less easily available. Our pledge to increase GPs in Wales will help communities to access the healthcare they need, while we will work to invest in local high streets to keep shops open. We will provide support to local communities to keep open important services, such as pubs and community centres, which are under threat due to rising costs.

We will ensure greater prominence and priority for rural areas to receive digital connections, taking a truly 'outside in' approach so that communities are not left waiting in order to access essential online services.

Plaid Cymru has previously called for the establishment of a Welsh Broadband Infrastructure Company. We have also called for the UK Government to release more Project Gigabit money increasing the investment to tackle the "very hard to reach areas" or the "total not-spots" where there is no fast broadband or 4G signal at all and bring the timescales forward. We will also push for more investment in alternative technology projects especially in the "very hard to reach" areas e.g. small cell projects / Fixed Wireless Access.

There has been a rise in rural crime in recent years, and would work to create a specialist all-Wales rural crime team, seeking to recruit officers from the farming community, building upon the work already done by Police and Crime Commissioners in the North Wales and Dyfed-Powys police force areas.

We have previously called for a reconfiguration of the Rural Fuel Duty Relief Scheme which, alongside existing parameters, takes into account access to local public transport networks, and a guarantee of inclusion

of Welsh areas within the scheme. We have also supported it being doubled to 10p per litre.

We will insist on alternative methods to avoid the un-necessary destruction of our beautiful countryside for large industrial scale solar farms and pylons. Communities should genuinely benefit from any developments in their area, rather than receive a pittance for extraction and use of our natural resources.

We recognise that some renewable technologies like heat pumps aren't suitable to rural properties. We could therefore support removing the tax on renewable liquid fuels, to make them more affordable for rural households who want to reduce their home heating emissions in a non-disruptive way. Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil is estimated to reduce carbon emissions by almost 90% compared to existing heating oil.



Plaid Cymru believes that Wales should be a sovereign independent nation, and a member of the United Nations, taking on the role and responsibilities of that membership.

We believe that Wales would be best served by re-joining the European Union at an appropriate point in time, recognising the failure of Brexit.

In the meantime, the UK should join the European Single Market and Customs Union as soon as practical. Wales should be enabled to participate in pan-European programmes, supporting our university and creative sectors in particular, and

allowing the Freedom of Movement which has been damagingly denied since leaving the European Union.

Until then, the Welsh Government should participate fully in the structures governing the current EU-UK relationship, under the Withdrawal and Trade and Co-operation Agreements. Wales should be at the table whenever decisions are made about and for us.

Plaid Cymru continues to support our sister-parties in the European Free Alliance across a range of European countries and support the right for self-determination for people across the world, to be achieved through non-violent and democratic means.



International Law

Plaid Cymru supports upholding of international law and organisations that maintain international law such as the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court. Governments and countries cannot pick and choose which international rules to follow based on their own self-interest.

Conflict in Gaza

Plaid Cymru has been consistent in calling for a peaceful ceasefire in Gaza, release of all hostages and a negotiated end to the conflict.

Our motion calling for an immediate ceasefire in November 2023 was passed by our Senedd.

We recognise the State of Palestine, as an essential step towards peace in the region.

Plaid Cymru condemns in the strongest possible terms the atrocities committed by Hamas on October 7th, the murder of tens of thousands of innocent civilians in the region, and the horrific genocide committed by the Israeli Government against the people of Gaza. Amnesty International classifies the State of Israel as an apartheid state, which has received the direct and indirect support of Western governments, including the United Kingdom.

Plaid Cymru further believes that Israeli Government Ministers responsible for war crimes, including genocide, should be held accountable by international courts for their actions. We will demand that the UK Government enforces all decisions made by the International Criminal Court, including acting on all arresting warrants it issues. We further call on the UK Government to expel the Israeli ambassador until such time as the Israeli Government ends its apartheid and illegal actions. We will also demand a ban on all arms sales to the state of Israel.

Plaid Cymru opposed and voted against the Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill which was aimed at preventing public authorities from participating in boycotts, divestment and sanctions campaigns.

Plaid Cymru supports all campaigns against oppressive states using any peaceful methods including boycotts, divestment and sanctions, and commit to protecting the human right to protest free of hindrance, crackdown or unfair restriction.

Conflict in Ukraine

It is now more than two years since Russia's invasion of Ukraine began.

Plaid Cymru believes that Ukraine's national sovereignty and the right of Ukrainians to live in peace must be upheld.

We believe that Ukraine has a right to defend itself from aggressive attack and invasion.

As the invasion continues, Ukrainian refugees have been welcomed into our communities and are making a valuable contribution to Welsh life. Plaid Cymru supports Wales as a Nation of Sanctuary for refugees fleeing conflict.

Defence

Plaid Cymru supports peaceful and negotiated outcomes to all conflict. We believe that our Senedd should be consulted before decisions are made by the UK Government to engage in military action.

We believe that the UK should withhold licenses to sell arms to countries which have poor human rights records, or where there is credible evidence to suggest that they will be used for repression of their own populations, or in violation of international law.

There should be a review of the arms export control system, and a clear statement of intent to withdraw from the international arms supply trade.

Plaid Cymru opposes the Trident nuclear weapons system and its renewal, which is estimated to cost more than £200bn, and supports the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We oppose increasing defence

spending, and believe that, if defence spending is required, then it would be better used on conventional defence and to peaceful ends, rather than weapons of mass destruction.

Veterans require substantially improved support upon leaving armed service and returning to civilian life. Plaid Cymru calls for an independent review of the medical discharge process and introducing an income disregard for the War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme so that they aren't considered as income for the purposes of benefits and pensions.

International Aid

Plaid Cymru supports the United Nations target for countries to spend 0.7% on international aid and calls on the next UK Government to reinstate that commitment as a matter of urgency. This funding should be used for internationally recognised aid purposes.

International Links, Diplomacy and Diaspora

Wales has an international identity and international recognition, despite being poorly supported by the UK's representation in other countries.

Wales is also home to citizens with birthplaces throughout the world, so we welcome international government opening Consulates-General and Consulates in Cardiff or elsewhere in Wales.

Welsh citizens and those of Welsh descent continue to have a global impact. Plaid Cymru would invest in developing and improving links with the Welsh diaspora internationally, and in nurturing relationships with others who have built links with Wales through education, culture or business.

Plaid Cymru strongly oppose the Conservative UK Government's proposals and attitudes towards asylum seekers and refugees, including deportation to Rwanda and the general hostile environment created. We believe that the UK should uphold the commitments made when it signed up to the Refugee Treaty in 1951.

The creation of an online programme which shows an indicator of a likely outcome for an asylum application would also help to manage this process.

We recognise that there has been an increase in major conflicts during the past decade, including those in Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Gaza, which have globally increased the number of displaced peoples.

We believe that those people affected by conflict, or through persecution in their home country, are deserving of our help and support.

Once here, we believe that responsibility for asylum seekers and dispersal should be proportionate across the UK.

We support a family reunification scheme for those caught up within the conflict in Gaza, with a clear right to return to their homeland when possible to do so.

Safe Routes

We believe that the UK Government has undermined that commitment through their failure to provide safe routes for asylum seekers and by deliberately failing to process claims quickly, effectively and humanely, leading to deaths at sea and un-necessary misery amongst already vulnerable people seeking safety.

Effective management of the asylum process would allow processing to take place prior to reaching the UK, in a third country such as France or at British embassies or consulates abroad.



Wales: A Nation of Sanctuary

Wales should have the powers and resources to make good on our pledge to become a Nation of Sanctuary. We were disappointed by Labour's recent removal of the Welcome Ticket in Wales which allowed free transport for refugees on public transport.

We oppose Conservative proposals to increase the skilled worker and family visa threshold and fee increases.

We support the Migration Advisory Committees' recommendation that the graduate route visa be retained. We are concerned that current proposals will detrimentally affect universities, including those in Bangor and Aberystwyth, with a knock-on effect upon local communities where universities are major employers.

We would support the repeal of previous punitive legislation which is part of the hostile environment, including the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 and the Illegal Migration Act 2023.

We believe that there should be changes within the system, including the ending of the 'No Recourse to Public Funds' clause and

restrictions on employment while awaiting decisions, both of which un-necessarily force people into poverty rather than providing support.

Plaid Cymru supports the UK remaining a member of the European Court of Human Rights and we support maintaining the human rights which we, collectively, hold.

We believe that, similar to Quebec in Canada, Wales should have greater powers over migration – including the ability to determine our own Shortage Occupation List and granting the Welsh Government the ability to manage its own visa schemes.

Migrants play an important role within our society, contributing to many occupations including social care and healthcare in particular. Their contribution should be welcomed, rather than criticised.

REFUGEES



WELCOME

Fairness for Transport

Plaid Cymru demands that Wales receives the £4bn of transport funding to which it is entitled under the Barnett Formula for money spent by the UK Government on HS2, which is clearly an England-only project.

Ambition for our Railways

We believe that rail infrastructure should be devolved to Wales, as it is in Scotland and Northern Ireland, allowing rail infrastructure planning for Wales to be decided in Wales.

Only 1% of UK Government capital spend is on railways in Wales, reflecting both current and historical under-spend. While London and major cities in Scotland were connected by electrified railway more than fifty

years ago, it is only in the past decade that Wales has even had a single mile of electrified track.

With that £4,000,000,000 additional funding, we could revolutionise our railway and transport systems, including properly connecting north and south Wales for the first time within Wales, reopening major railway lines closed under Beeching, electrifying the North Wales Main Line, improving existing railway services, and increasing and improving services west of Swansea.

To do that, Wales needs an ambitious travel plan that also considers public transport connections in the south Wales Valleys and other areas of Wales which do not have existing rail connections – including by use of trams or light rail.



“With that £4,000,000,000 additional funding, we could revolutionise our railway and transport systems including properly connecting north and south Wales for the first time within Wales”

Nationalising our Public Transport Services

On both a Welsh and UK level, we believe that the railways should be re-nationalised so that it acts on behalf of its users, rather than shareholders, and allows for greater alignment of services.

We would also favour the renationalisation of major bus services, and would seek to integrate bus and rail services so that they work for the benefit of passengers. We believe that bus routes should be determined by the needs of passengers, not only what is commercially attractive to private companies. As a first step, we support the regulation of buses.

In the context of climate change and changing people's transport habits, public transport services in Wales must be of sufficient quality to encourage people to use them – that means frequency of service, reliability in being on time and of high quality so that users feel safe and comfortable.

New housing developments around Wales need to show that they have sufficiently future-proofed for growth in public transport, both in terms of generating and responsive to demand.

Supporting our Bus Services

Bus services have been under-funded by the Labour Welsh Government following Covid, leading to major cuts in the past year.

In particular, this is an issue in more rural parts of the country, where local bus services are already infrequent, often finishing early in the day. We will review the cuts in subsidy to bus companies that has led to services cuts that make it difficult for people to go to work, shop or catch up with friends by bus.

This includes services such as the flexible on-demand Bwcabus in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire, and we will continue to support the TrawsCymru network which links communities where rail connections do not exist.

A Young Person's Bus Pass

We will keep the Older People's Bus Pass in Wales, and investigate a similar scheme for Young People, encouraging them to get used to using public transport, wherever they are in Wales.

Passenger Safety

Passenger safety is an integral part of public transport. We will place a statutory duty on public transport companies to guarantee passengers can get to the destination, or a place of safety. This includes developing more consistent and transparent systems for reporting and recording incidents of abuse that affect women and vulnerable people on public transport, and for improving lighting and bilingual audio announcements for all public transport services, on board and at stops/stations and in streets immediately surrounding train stations and major bus stops. We would fight to ensure that guards are kept on train services throughout Wales.

Active Travel

As well as investing in public transport, more active travel options have to be provided if we are to persuade people to make less use of their cars.

Plaid Cymru supports investment in active travel routes, and would ensure that changes to roads policy happen at the same time as increased investment in our public transport systems.

The need to change the way we travel is abundantly clear. Air pollution is leading to an increase in asthma and lung conditions amongst children and dementia in the older population. We support clear air zones near major centres of population, and traffic calming measures to increase road safety.

Road Safety

Road safety is a crucial part of daily life in Wales, whether as a driver of passenger. Unfortunately, many accidents on the road are due to careless driving. We will identify roads which have a higher than anticipated number of accidents and work with local government and Welsh Government, whichever is responsible, to make changes to make them safer and reduce accidents. This can include additional signage, changes to road layout, as well as investment in average speed cameras.

While Plaid Cymru supports the principle of the introduction of the 20mph speed zone across roads in Wales in order to reduce the number of accidents and

life-changing injuries, we believe that it was poorly implemented by the Labour Welsh Government. We support a review to ensure it is working successfully across Wales in reducing dangerous driving in urban areas. Lessons must be learned to ensure that the public understand the changes being made and involved in local decision-making.

Plaid Cymru will consider what other powers can be used to improve driver behaviour, particularly of younger drivers who are statistically shown to be involved in greater numbers of traffic collisions.



Fairness for our Arts and Culture

Plaid Cymru is deeply concerned and strongly opposed to the cuts to Welsh cultural organisations introduced by Labour in Wales, and the impact that this is already having on Welsh national life.

For many years, the funding for Welsh institutions has not kept pace with inflation and costs, meaning that they have been asked to continue to provide the same, or more, services without being properly funded to do so.

This has now reached a critical point that threatens the existence of vital cultural, heritage and arts organisations in Wales and safeguarding our national collections for future generations.

Having long recognised that Wales is under-funded by the UK Government at Westminster, Plaid Cymru support additional funding being provided that will directly assist these to carry out the roles that they are required to deliver.



Bank Holidays

Wales has the fewest number of Bank Holidays in Europe, and no power over when those Bank Holidays take place.

Plaid Cymru believes that the power to decide Bank Holidays in Wales should be in the hands of the Senedd, and that our national day, St David's Day, should be a Bank Holiday in Wales on March 1st each year.

Free-To-Air Sporting Events

While recognising the benefit of investment by broadcasting companies in many sports, the increase in subscription services has priced many people out of being able to watch their choice of entertainment and may contribute to reduced uptake in sport in future.

Plaid Cymru believes that sporting events of national importance to Wales, such as the Rugby Six Nations, should remain free-to-air on television.

Returning Welsh Artefacts to Wales

A number of important and significant Welsh artefacts are held outside Wales, such as the Mold Gold Cape, the Moel Hebog Shield and the portrait of John Ystumllyn.

Plaid Cymru believes that these should be returned to Wales and used in a way which benefits the nation from which they originate, rather than be held elsewhere.

We believe that this principle applies to other artefacts which were removed from their original country and are now hosted elsewhere.

Devolution of Broadcasting

Plaid Cymru support the devolution of broadcasting powers to Wales, including the power to regulate, oversee and secure accountability for broadcasting and communications within Wales.

We want to see the establishment of an independent Broadcasting Authority for Wales and see no reason why governance of S4C should be in the hands of Westminster, rather than our democratically elected representatives in Wales.

Promoting Access to the Arts, Culture and Heritage

Plaid Cymru believes that the arts are for everybody and that our organisations should continue to provide greater support and opportunities for everybody to engage with them and participate, irrespective of their background.

This requires partnerships between stakeholders to foster relationships between locally based cultural activities and our national institutions.

Wales should also be a host to high quality cultural organisations, which celebrate our history and heritage, and reflect the realities of life in Wales.

There should be no reason to sacrifice quality in order to ensure access for all.

We remain committed to the policy of free entry to our national museums. We will also work with the Urdd and Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru to ensure free tickets are available for low income families, exploring with them if this can be expanded in future years.

We support the better promotion of Welsh culture and heritage, including the Football Museum for Wales in Wrexham and the National Gallery of Contemporary Art.

Welsh Freelancers Fund

As proposed in our 2021 Senedd manifesto, we will instigate a Welsh Freelancers Fund to support the creative sector. We will apply the lessons learned from the Basic Income for the Arts scheme in the Republic of Ireland which has just reported the success of its first year of operation.

Eurovision

Plaid Cymru will continue to push for Wales to be represented on the international stage at Eurovision.

Sport

We will continue to fund Sport Wales to promote participation in community sport as well as elite level.

We look forward to Wales hosting the under-19 men's international football tournament and hosting the opening of Euro2028 in Cardiff.

We support the creation of a Welsh men's international cricket team.

Well-being

Playing sport and participating in arts and culture is a significant part of our well-being.

Recognising the positive effects that this has upon individuals and communities, we will promote participation and engagement, looking to fund this from cross-governmental sources.

Cultural Tourism

We will promote the culture, history and heritage of Wales, reflecting our linguistic and cultural diversity.

Creative Europe

Although Wales is not a member of the European Union, we will examine how we can participate and benefit from the international Creative Europe programme that aims to safeguard, develop and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and heritage, and to increase the economic potential of the cultural and creative sectors.

Wales is a bilingual nation, where Welsh and English are both official languages.

Enabling access to the Welsh language for all is vital to allow everybody in Wales to take advantage of economic and employment opportunities and participate and access all aspects of Welsh culture.

However, for the Welsh language to thrive, we need to ensure that it is used on a daily basis in all spheres across Wales – in the home, in the workplace and when socialising.

Powers to act on the Welsh language are devolved.

Plaid Cymru continue to commit to raising the status of and allocate additional funding for Prosiect 2050 to create a million Welsh speakers by 2050. As a central part of Government, it will be able to influence and guide policy decisions across all departments.

This will include ensuring Welsh for all through the education system, support for Adult Learners of Welsh, supporting Mentrau Iaith and Welsh language hubs to promote social activities in Welsh and a Menter Ddigidol Cymraeg to make sure that all digital media developments recognise and respond to the requirement for Welsh provision.

We believe that there should be a Welsh Language Education Act, working towards universal Welsh medium education. Working closely with local authorities, we would ensure that if targets for Welsh medium education improvements are missed, the cause is established and action taken to rectify failings.

We will ensure that all children have access to quality Welsh language teaching to enable them to achieve fluency through their school life. To do this, we will provide targets for increasing the number and percentage of subjects taught through the medium of Welsh in schools currently teaching mainly through English, as recommended by Professor Sioned Davies in her 2013 report One Language for All.

We will promote an increase in Welsh medium arts provision and activity, and the development of career pathways in the arts in the Welsh language, and will work to continually develop Welsh language services in healthcare, particularly in mental health, so that patients can receive care in their language of choice.

We will improve the rights to the Welsh language by extending the Welsh Language Standards to the private sector, including banks, car-parks and supermarkets, as well as to crown and other bodies that are the responsibility of the UK Government.



Women

Plaid Cymru support compensation for women who have been negatively impacted by the changes in pension provision, as highlighted by the Women Against State Pension Inequality campaign (WASPI).

We support compensation payments of at least Level 5 of the ombudsman scale for all 1950s women pensioners affected, amounting to between £3000 and £9950.

We have supported gender quotas as part of the reform of our Senedd, to ensure that women are ensured representation in decision making at the highest level in Wales.



LGBTQ+

Recent years have seen the Conservative UK Government attempt to sow division within society by creating a series of so-called culture wars which uses real people and real people's lived experiences against them.

We believe that there should be the highest respect for all people and communities.

We reaffirm our commitment to ensure that LGBTQ+ voices and experiences are heard and will continue to actively promote LGBTQ+ rights. We will promote LGBTQ+ inclusion throughout society, including all workplaces and participation in sport, as part of a broader effort towards healthier lifestyle.

Plaid Cymru would end so-called conversion therapy practices related to sexuality and gender identity.

We are concerned by the rise of hate crimes in recent years perpetrated against the LGBTQ+ community, in particular transphobia, and need to see this tackled by our Police forces.

Similarly, as part of their community outreach efforts, we would expect the Police to be promoting positive, affirming and trust building links with all minority sections of societies e.g. attending local Pride events and community diversity events.

We will continue to fight for equality for trans people. Having secured recurrent funding for a Wales Gender Identity Clinic so that people can receive support here in Wales, rather than traveling to London, we will work to improve the provision and ensure timely access to its services and support.

Plaid Cymru will seek the powers to present the Senedd with a proposal for simplified, demedicalised gender self-identification system.

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic People

Plaid Cymru abhors racism in all its forms. We recognise that people from the global majority are structurally disadvantaged, and proactive steps need to be taken to tackle and dismantle this structural racism. In fields such as criminal justice, youth justice, recruitment, progression through education, health care and mental health, minority ethnic groups continue to face unacceptable direct and indirect discrimination.

We support research into the barriers that communities face in accessing healthcare and how to combat these, addressing structural and institutional racial discrimination and Islamophobia where present.

Diversity makes for a richer Wales and can enable communities

to be represented and understood. All public facing organisations should consider their recruitment practices to remove these barriers and ensure that they represent various communities and understand their issues and concerns.

We support the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan (ArWAP) and will work to ensure it is implemented effectively and measurably.

Neurodiversity in the Criminal Justice System

We will provide better support for people with ADHD transitioning throughout the prison system, and upon leaving. This includes training for all prison staff in ADHD awareness and appropriate medication care plans, and ensure access to safe housing, tailored with local mental health and probation support.

Disability

We will adopt the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People into UK law to assure accessibility for all. This was ratified by the UK in 2009, but never introduced into law.

We will achieve this by working with the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, disabled people's organisations, disabled people's charities and disabled people themselves throughout the UK.

The voices of disabled people will be at core of this policy to ensure the full enjoyment by persons with disabilities in daily life with dignity, their human rights, and fundamental freedoms from poverty, social exclusion, discrimination, and negligence.

“We reaffirm our commitment to ensure that LGBTQ+ voices and experiences are heard and will continue to actively promote LGBTQ+ rights.”



