

Building a Better Wales

Welsh Labour Election Manifesto

2007



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Labour
Llafur
welshlabour.org.uk

Eleven for Eleven

1. 25,000 Apprenticeships
2. An extra Children's Bond for all children entering school
3. Maximum 26 weeks NHS waiting times from referral to treatment
4. Pharmacy-based NHS Drop-In Centres
5. 100,000 homes made energy efficient and 30,000 micro generation units
6. New not-for-profit nursing homes
7. Discounted rail travel for pensioners and 50 new train carriages
8. £20 million national fund for the youth service
9. 6500 new affordable homes
10. Tidy Towns - £16 million Clean-Up Fund for Welsh cities, towns and villages
11. Mobile Mammals - extra support for Child Care

Wales faces a choice of huge importance on 3rd May

A choice between a Labour Assembly Government which has created an extra 140,000 jobs in the Welsh economy, and an opposition which would undermine that strong and stable foundation.

A choice between a Labour Assembly Government which has brought hospital waiting times down to their lowest levels since records began, and an opposition which would abandon all targets and cut back on the investment programmes we have got under way.

A choice between a Labour Assembly Government determined to create safe, secure and prosperous communities in all parts of Wales, and an opposition which can't agree amongst themselves and would always funk the hard decisions needed to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

A choice between a Labour Assembly Government which can work to deliver the 5,500 jobs in the Defence Training Academy in South Wales and further wing investment at Airbus in North Wales, via a strong part-

nership with Labour in Westminster, or an opposition which wants to go-it-alone, treating the rest of Britain as the arch-enemy rather than a partner in Wales' progress.

A choice between a Labour Assembly Government ready to go with a full legislative programme, to make use of the new powers the Assembly will have from May 2007 onwards, and an opposition bereft of new ideas, addicted to whingeing and running Wales down, and with neither the experience or the competence to make the most of these new opportunities for Wales.

This manifesto is a grown-up programme for government for the 2007 – 11 Assembly term. People in Wales expect Labour to be both radical and responsible. This manifesto is responsible because every item in it has been costed and will be delivered if we are elected. It is radical because it turns with new vigour to tackle the major challenges we face now in Wales – new issues like climate change, and persistent problems like child poverty.

Voting Labour on May 3rd will ensure that prescription charges remain a thing of the past in Wales; that new £1.5 billion European funds remain available to West Wales and the Valleys for the next seven years; that massive new investment in health, education and transport brings world class public services to all parts of Wales.

But, I have to issue one warning.

If you want a Labour Government – you've got to vote for it.



It won't happen without your vote.

It won't happen if you leave the job of voting to your next-door neighbour.

The Tories in Wales are waiting to get back into government through the back door. They have spent the last four years plotting and planning with their allies in Plaid Cymru and the Lib Dems to put themselves back in charge of your health service, or your schools or your jobs.

You may think there is no way that could happen – but it could, if you just stay at home and let it.

In a democracy, there is a sure and certain way in which you can make sure that the progress which has been made in Wales over the past ten years continues.

Vote Labour – and then Vote Labour again.

Help us to make sure that our best days in Wales are yet to come.

Rhodri

The Tories would take Wales back

With Labour, Wales has made enormous strides since 1999. There are more people in work than ever before, record investment in our health service, free prescriptions for everyone and more help for older people.

This progress hasn't happened by accident. It happened because of the decisions taken by Rhodri Morgan and his team – and because of the strong Welsh Labour partnership at the Assembly and Westminster.

There is a clear choice on 3 May: forward with a strong Labour team at the Assembly and Westminster or back to a failed Tory past of cuts, recession and unemployment.

Whether it is tackling child poverty, helping more people into work or making our communities safer and stronger, Wales needs that strong Labour partnership to continue.



The alternative is the nightmare of the Tories back running our schools and hospitals. We don't need a crystal ball to know the damage they would do to Wales. Their legacy to Wales was a health service on its knees, crumbling school buildings, mass unemployment and communities and families with no hope for the future. The Tories haven't changed. They would take us back to unemployment, soaring waiting times and cuts to training. A vote for Plaid Cymru or a vote for the Lib Dems will help the Tories win.

Today, Wales has been transformed into a modern, vibrant country where we can be proud of our past but optimistic about the future.

Help Rhodri and his Assembly team build a better Wales by voting Labour on 3 May.

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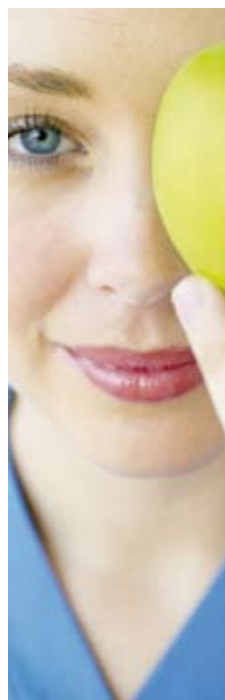
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Welsh Labour Election Manifesto

2007

Better Health For All



Introduction

Labour is and always will be the party of the NHS. We founded the NHS because of our belief in the principles of social solidarity and equity.

Some of the challenges now facing the NHS in Wales are greater than ever: an ageing population, advances in medical science and rising patient expectations. Our mission is to make the NHS the envy of the world: a health care system universally free at the point of need, with locally based services tailored to patient needs and healthier lives.

In 2003 we promised more resources for the NHS and improved access to services for patients. At this election we are proud to be able to stand on both our record of having doubled the NHS budget and increased NHS staffing by one third since devolution, including more than 8,000 more nurses and over 500 more hospital consultants. We have abolished prescription charges and waiting times longer than eight months are now virtually gone. And we will keep prescriptions free for all.

Improving health

We know that a modern health service is about much more than treating people when they are sick. It must also be about tackling health inequalities and giving people the practical support they need to lead healthier lives.

Labour in the Assembly has pioneered initiatives to help improve people's health through such diverse schemes as the free breakfasts in primary schools, free swimming for older people and Health Challenge Wales. We will build on this success by investing £190m in health promotion and improvement over a third term.

We will continue to implement a fairer health funding formula to improve health in our less well off communities. We will extend the scope of the Health Inequalities Fund to help improve treatment for



patients with complex and chronic health conditions, such as Parkinson's and heart disease. By 2012 we will cut deaths from cancer and strokes by 20 per cent.

As of April 2nd 2007 smoking in enclosed public places in Wales is banned. This measure alone will help to save an estimated 400 lives a year in Wales. We will build on this by increasing investment in the NHS smoking cessation service by 65% to help more people to quit and provide more locations where the service can be accessed. We will work with employers and trade unions to promote health and well-being in the workplace and following a review of the GP exercise referral scheme, where doctors can, for example, prescribe free entry to gyms, we will bring forward proposals to make the scheme more widely available.

To help improve the health of children in Wales we will improve the quality of food in schools, hospitals and other public premises, and increase investment in improving our school kitchens. By the end of our third term we will have invested £34m in improving school food standards. We will build on the success of the free swimming initiative, for example by providing opportunities for children in Wales to swim free in local council pools on the weekends. We will expand the school nursing service to encompass the well being of young people both within and beyond school hours.

In a third term, we will use the 2006 Government of Wales Act, to seek new powers to strengthen the law in relation to the protection of children and to reduce the rate at which children in Wales are removed from families and into local authority care by helping prevent problems from escalating into a crisis.

● To help improve the health of children in Wales we will improve the quality of food in schools, hospitals and other premises, and increase investment to improve our school kitchens

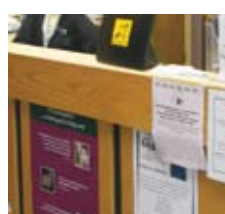
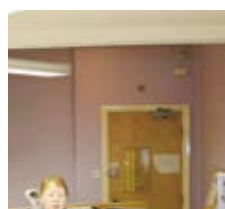
● By 2012 we will cut deaths from cancer and heart disease by 20 per cent

Improving Health

Labour has banned smoking in public places, a move which will help to save 400 lives a year.

- With Labour investment in the NHS has doubled since 1997

- Today there are **8,000 more nurses and 500 more hospital doctors**



Putting patients first

Primary care, such as GPs, community nursing and pharmacists, provide ninety per cent of all patient contact with the NHS. This is why, as promised, Labour has continued to invest in improving primary care services and improving patient access to primary care. We will put the patient first by making services flexible, accessible and responsive and by providing more treatment in the community and as close to home as possible.

The new GP contract is helping the NHS to identify and treat more patients with long-term illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, serious mental illness and asthma. Access to primary care has been improved, as evidenced by ninety-three per cent of patients seen within 24 hours of the request. We will continue to provide extra resources to help practices to offer pre-booked appointments with a doctor of a patients' choice and we will reform the out-of-hours GP service to make it easier for patients to access. We will work with GP practices and Local Health Boards to help them extend their surgery hours to evenings and the weekends.

We will increase the number of salaried GPs, so that 10% of the whole GP population is employed on a salaried basis, especially in areas where the challenge of recruitment and retention is greatest. We will expand the range of treatments and therapies carried out in GP surgeries and increase the number of nurses qualified and able to prescribe medicines independently and provide other services.

We plan a greater role for local pharmacists, particularly in carrying out routine checks for conditions such as type-2 diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. We will develop pharmacy-based NHS drop in centres to make health care more convenient for patients

Waiting times

By December 2009, no patient will wait more than 26 weeks for treatment from the time they are referred by their GP

Investment in local dental services has increased by ninety per cent since 1999 and a new dental contract has been agreed, with 98 per cent of dentists signed up. In 2006 alone over 200,000 dental places were created thanks to Labour's new dental contract. A third term will see continued investment in improving dentistry services and we will ensure that all people who want one can have access to an NHS dentist.

Huge progress has been made in cutting long waiting times for hospital treatment, with virtually no one waiting more than eight months for a hospital appointment or treatment and most people being referred within three months. Waiting times for cancer treatment, diagnostic tests and therapy have also been slashed dramatically. With Labour, by the end of 2009 no one will wait more than 26 weeks for the total patient journey from referral to treatment, including therapies and scans. Most people will be treated more quickly than this. In the first year of our third term we will halve the time taken to carry out diagnostic tests. The Tories would abolish all targets in the NHS, undoing years of progress and leaving patients facing long waits for treatment.

We will reform the way NHS Trusts are managed so as to end for good the Tory model of competition for patients and resources and improve Trust accountability to local communities. Collaboration, not competition, will define the Welsh NHS. We will commission an independent analysis of managerial capacity and administrative costs in the Welsh NHS, and use its findings to underpin our drive to move as much money as possible to frontline services.

Over our second term we have invested more than £700m in modernising hospital and primary care services, far exceeding the £550m, promised in our 2003 manifesto. Seven new hospitals have been built or are on the way from Porthmadog to Rhondda, Cynon Valley, Merthyr and Ebbw Vale and from Holywell and to Pembroke Dock plus a major new Mid Valleys hospital serving the borough of Caerphilly.



- Over our second term we have invested more than **£700m** in modernising hospital and primary care services, far exceeding the £550m, promised in our 2003 manifesto



In our third term we will invest over a billion pounds to continue the modernisation of NHS buildings and infrastructure such as ICT, diagnostic imaging, for example MRI scanners, and treatment equipment. This will help the NHS to respond to illnesses and conditions more quickly and less invasively than ever before. We will work with the voluntary sector and expert providers to increase the availability of home renal dialysis for patients who can be better treated at home.



All communities will have ready access to safe, quality assured, core hospital services. In addition, the range of specialist services available at local hospitals or in the community will increase. We will provide centres of excellence where the full range of specialist services will be available, wherever practicable in Wales. Labour believes that every patient is entitled to the best possible treatment – not just the best which might be available locally. That is the principle that will continue to guide our actions during a third term.



We will provide free parking at NHS hospitals for patients requiring chemotherapy, radiotherapy and renal dialysis and ensure better access to season ticket arrangements for others with cheaper rates for regular visitors. Working with patient groups we will also review telephone and TV services to ensure fairness and value for money for patients. To reduce the burden on patients and their families we will reduce the bureaucracy involved in claiming for travel expenses for treatment.

● We will end competitive tendering for hospital cleaning contracts to ensure that hospital cleaning staff are employed directly by the NHS and are managed directly by clinical staff on wards

We will end competitive tendering for hospital cleaning contracts to ensure that hospital cleaning staff are employed directly by the NHS and are managed directly by clinical staff on wards. We will use performance management systems, not cost and competition, to make sure services continue to improve.

In a third term Labour will develop and implement a Cancer Plan for Wales, including a commitment to achieve and maintain short maximum waiting times for diagnosis and treatment. This will include a commitment to the most up-to-date equipment, such as the new CT Scanner at Velindre Hospital, coming on stream in April 2007, new MRI scanners in Merthyr, Bro Morgannwg and Swansea, and new

linear accelerators at Velindre and the North Wales Cancer Treatment Centre. We will end the postcode lottery of care for cancer patients by ensuring the implementation of robust national standards by 2009. Alongside this we will provide £2 million to fund the core work of voluntary hospices in Wales, the first time help with running costs has ever been available.

Labour is investing in a radical programme of reform of the Ambulance Service and is working with patients and communities to ensure that they receive the service they need. Last year, Labour invested an additional £70 million to provide 116 new Emergency Ambulances and 67 Patient Care Service Vehicles as well as a state of the art radio-communication and vehicle location technology. Working with management and staff, we will transform our ambulance service from being the transport agency for the NHS into a genuine mobile health care delivery service.

Using the Assembly's new powers we will legislate so that patients and staff in Wales have a reformed and comprehensive system of redress, easier to understand, quicker to operate, and capable of learning lessons, to prevent problems from reoccurring in the future. As the independent voice of patients in the NHS, our Community Health Councils have a crucial role to play in making sure that our health policies are responsive to the needs of patients.

The NHS is a massive employer and economic force in Wales. We are committed to reducing the environmental footprint of these services through the promotion of an NHS sustainable development plan. By 2012 we will have ensured that the whole NHS estate is carbon neutral.

● Labour will develop and implement a Cancer Plan for Wales



Better for patients

We will provide free parking at NHS hospitals for patients requiring chemotherapy, radiotherapy and renal dialysis.



Investment in social care

Labour understands the importance of world-class social care services. This is why annual investment in social care has increased to more than £1 billion – a real terms increase of 27% between 2003 and 2007.



In our third term we will implement our long term vision for reforming and improving social services for the most vulnerable and at-risk in our society. We will develop a pattern of care which will provide protection, promote independence and which will facilitate service users achieving their full potential. It is crucial that we listen to and fully involve service users and carers in care plans and policy development in this key area.



In a third term we will increase the capacity of social care services by investing in the social care workforce. Backed by a national workforce plan, we will improve the skills and qualifications of people working in the social care sector regardless of their employer so that at least 50% of care staff in residential homes are qualified to NVQ level 2 in care, or its equivalent, while all managers of care homes are professionally qualified in social work or nursing and hold an NVQ level 4 in the management of care.

- To help people live independent lives in their own homes we will continue to modernise community equipment and telecare services

Even though 80% of the cost of home care services is met from the public purse, we realise further improvement is needed. We will further reform charging for home care services, making 10,000 disabled people better off and totally exempting 4,000 disabled people from all charges. We will also seek new powers to allow a third-term Labour Assembly Government to amend the law in relation to charging for domiciliary care, so that charges for similar services are made more consistent and less variable across Wales.

To help people live independent lives in their own homes we will continue to modernise community equipment and telecare services.

Building on the recommendations of the Beecham Review, Local Service Boards will be established covering each local authority area to bring together key public service delivery bodies. We will demand

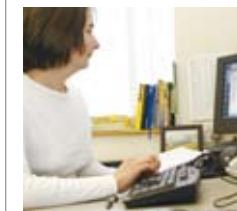
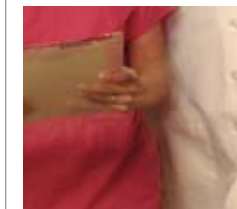
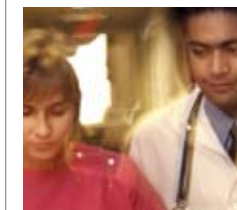
greater joint working and collaboration between different agencies, particularly in relation to the care needs of the elderly and of the most vulnerable. The work of the Boards will be backed by Local Service Agreements and by a set of national standards. This will ensure that people across Wales get the level of service they are entitled to.

Labour has succeeded in reducing substantially delayed transfers of care. This has helped to ease the pressure on hospitals and on the NHS, and ensured that people receive the care they need as close to home as possible. However further progress is needed and needs to be sustained over the long term. Reducing delayed transfers of care is an area where we will expect to see effective joint working and progress through Local Services Board. We will help develop new not-for-profit nursing homes to provide older people and their families with the security they need.

Carers play an invaluable role in every family and in every community in Wales. We will review our Carers Strategy to bring it up to date and to support the role of carers better, including additional investment in respite care services. We have recently provided an additional £3 million fund for carers who look after people with long term mental health problems and we will provide an additional £1 million for emergency respite care services. We will increase residential care services, including from local authorities and the private and not-for-profit sectors. Through investment and targeted action we will work to improve the health and well-being of carers. We will carry out an audit of the Welsh NHS with a view to preventing age discrimination, in terms of employment or treatment.



- We will re-view our Carers Strategy to bring it up to date and to support the role of carers better, including additional investment in respite care services



Quality jobs in a small, clever country



● More than £700m support for business since 1999

Introduction

With Labour in Government the Welsh economy is being rapidly transformed. Today in Wales there are more people in work than ever before and total jobs are up 140,000 since devolution eight years ago. Employment has risen much quicker and unemployment fallen far faster in Wales than in the UK as a whole. When Labour in the Assembly took office eight years ago unemployment was 30 per cent higher in Wales than in the UK as whole – today it is five per cent lower.

But there is much more to do to make sure that people and business in Wales can enjoy the fruits of success in the highly competitive and technologically advanced economy of the 21st century. With Labour, Wales will rise to the challenges of open markets, climate change and growing competition from the emerging giants of China and India.

A third term Labour Assembly Government will place innovation, skills and science at the heart of the Welsh economy. We will build a successful, sustainable economy by developing the modern infrastructure that business needs and by helping people fulfil their potential.

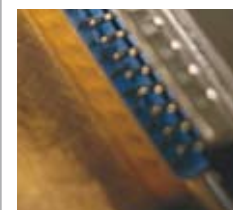
It was Labour that secured Objective One status for 2 million people living in West Wales, the Valleys and much of North Wales for the 2000 – 2007 period. The success of the scheme speaks for itself. Unemployment in the Objective One area has fallen faster than in the rest of Wales and household income has risen faster than in the rest of Wales and in the UK as a whole. More than £3 billion worth of investment has been secured and over 40,000 jobs either created or safeguarded. Labour has now gone on to deliver the successor programme to Objective One covering the period 2007 – 2013. East Wales will also continue to benefit from EU programmes. In our third term we will focus this support on projects that raise skills and that provide lasting high quality employment opportunities and support for business.

An economy fit for the challenges of the 21st century

The future success of the Welsh economy will be decided by how well we develop our skills, embrace new technology and use science as a driver of economic growth. In our third term we will put skills, science and innovation at the heart of our strategy for the Knowledge Economy.

To enable us to achieve this we have developed a distinctive science policy for Wales. This sets out our long term vision, and will enthuse future generations with a passion for science and technology. We will develop the learning opportunities for our young people so that we develop the skills and understanding necessary to support successful modern businesses. We will support the development of new, world-class National Business Research Centres at our universities.

We will foster ever closer ties between higher education and industry to help maximise the benefits of emerging technologies and innovations in the market place. Labour will place Wales at the cutting edge of technological advancement by continuing our financial support for enterprise, innovation and technology. Exploiting the expertise in our universities will be a motor for future economic growth and jobs. We will take steps to support the commercialisation of university research. We will place a new emphasis on creating a Digital Wales. Wales will be the first home nation to switchover entirely to digital TV signals. Creative Business Wales and the whole Assembly Government will ensure that Wales gets maximum benefit from these changes.



● New business research institutes at our universities

More people in work

Today with Labour there are more people in work than ever before with total jobs up **140,000** since devolution eight years ago.



Backing enterprise

Labour's record of support for business is second to none. Over the last eight years Labour has provided several billions in support for Welsh based businesses - securing and creating thousands of jobs and giving companies the stability and support they need to become more competitive and successful.

The merger of the Welsh Development Agency, Wales Tourist Board and ELWa with the Assembly Government is providing business with the seamless support service they need. We will drive forward reform and introduce a new model for business support which is customer-focused in every aspect of its work.

To support the new model we will introduce a Single Flexible Investment Fund of up to £200 million for business, with 200 customer relationship managers in place to provide the single point of contact between businesses and the Assembly Government. We will focus on helping good companies create more, higher value jobs, particularly through the Knowledge Bank for Business. Companies receiving financial support from the Assembly Government will be expected to implement high standards of corporate social responsibility.

- We will introduce a Single Flexible Investment Fund of up to **£200 million** for business

We will support and encourage Welsh based firms to compete successfully for the maximum number of contracts through the Sell2Wales website and Value Wales. We anticipate more locally based firms winning business from local authorities, the NHS and other public bodies.

Success through Partnership

Labour understands that businesses are successful where social partnership is strong. Alongside the considerable support we give to businesses we will establish a Union Modernisation Fund to help trade unions in Wales to play their role as modern partners in the Welsh economy and in the workplace.

Investing in our future

Labour will continue to invest in enterprise, skills, innovation and technology.

The Wales Union Learning Fund is a scheme which in our second term provided £4.6 million for 104 different projects. We will build on its success by providing more resources for the Wales Union Learning Fund, streamlining its processes to make it more accessible and by supporting the excellent work of Learning Reps. The other parties would undermine our economic success by cutting the Wales Union Learning Fund.

With Labour, manufacturing will remain a key part of our future economic success. Manufacturing in Wales has a sustainable future through investment in the key ingredients of its success – enterprise, skills, innovation and technology. Working in partnership with business and trade unions we will support the development of a Manufacturing Forum and Skills Academies in manufacturing and other fields. These will provide specialised training and research to help businesses to compete in the global economy.

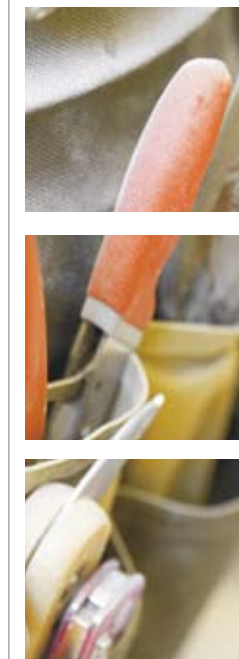
The strength of the Welsh economy lies in its increasing diversity. Manufacturing will continue to make a significant contribution to an ever more diverse Welsh economy. Labour will continue to invest in the future success of manufacturing and Wales other economic activities – investing in enterprise, skills, innovation and technology.

Delivering full employment

Under the Tories, Wales was plagued by sky-high, long term unemployment, three times higher than it is today. Generations of young people were consigned to the scrap-heap by a government and a party that believed unemployment was a price worth paying, to use the correct Tory phrase.

Labour's greatest success has been to reverse that Tory legacy. Labour will continue to support and fund the New Deal, a programme which has helped over 100,000 people into work. It is thanks to Labour's management of the economy and because of our support for business that there are more people in work today than ever before at 1,352,000, compared to 1,212,000 at the outset of devolution.

- Working in partnership with business and trade unions we will support the development of a Manufacturing Forum and Skills Academies in manufacturing and other fields





- We will introduce Career Ladder work schemes to support long term unemployed into vacant positions in the public sector and then onward to further advancement

The huge investment in the Defence Training Academy in the Vale of Glamorgan will provide a massive underpinning of the Welsh economy throughout the next decade and long into the future with 5,500 full-time jobs and 5,000 trainees on site in what will be the envy of the world in skills training.

Today, unemployment has fallen faster in Wales than in the rest of the UK. Our aim is to create a full employment society in Wales providing everyone with the opportunity to fulfil their potential through work and study and training.

Working in partnership with Labour at Westminster, we will continue to offer targeted and specialist support to help people move from welfare and into work and to tackle economic inactivity. Labour will extend the Job Match and Want to Work schemes to cover the whole of the Heads of the Valleys area. We will provide targeted support to help lone parents to find and stay in work, including support for co-operative enterprises which provide emergency childcare for women in work. We will work with the Labour Government at Westminster to help areas such as Rhyl to maximise the benefits of their Cities Strategy status.

We will work within European law to encourage all public sector construction projects to include clauses specifying work and training opportunities for the long term unemployed. We will support, including through public procurement, supportive employment workplaces for disabled people.

We will introduce Career Ladder work schemes to support long term unemployed into vacant positions in the public sector and then onward to further advancement.

We will sustain collaborative programmes like Healthy Minds at Work to help people overcome mental health issues which prevent them from entering or maintaining a place in the workforce.

Training

The huge investment in the Defence Training Academy in the Vale of Glamorgan will provide a massive underpinning of the Welsh economy.

Promoting Wales to the world

With outstanding natural beauty, a unique heritage and world leading venues, Wales is a first class tourism destination. The industry is already one of our most important sectors, generating an estimated £2 billion of revenue each year for the Welsh economy but it will require investment in skills, services and locations to remain successful in an increasingly competitive and global market place.

The merger of the Wales Tourist Board with the Assembly Government means better support to develop our tourism industry to meet new market demands. To deliver our vision of a profitable and innovative tourism industry we will market Wales as a leading tourism destination by showcasing what Wales has to offer through events such as the Ryder Cup 2010 and the Ashes Test 2009. Where practicable, we will ensure the benefits of these events are spread throughout Wales.

We will maintain our commitment to the tourism industry by promoting Wales strongly in external markets; and by strategic investments in facilities and employee skills. We will support the industry as the market increasingly moves towards shorter and activity-based breaks.



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Education and Opportunity for all in a Learning Country



Introduction

For Labour, education and lifelong learning has always been the route to greater prosperity and social justice. We are proud of our record of building an education and training system that is made in Wales to meet the needs of Wales. It is thanks to Labour's investment and reform that education achievements have risen, more childcare places have been created, free primary school breakfasts introduced, school councils established and workplace learning expanded. Today, Wales is once more a country famed for its passion for learning. Our commitment is to provide education and training opportunities as good as any in the world.

Excellence, opportunity and social justice are the values on which we will continue to transform our education system in a third term. In order to achieve this we will continue to increase investment in every area of education, lifelong learning and skills and improve standards. Teachers, lecturers, youth workers and other practitioners all play crucial roles in providing ever better education and training. We will continue to support their professional development and expect high quality contributions from them.

Best start in life

Every child deserves the opportunity to succeed in education and the best start in life to help them fulfil their potential. In our first two terms we introduced free part-time nursery places for three and four year olds, created an additional 23,000 childcare places, piloted the Foundation Phase and introduced Flying Start.

From 2008 we will roll out the pioneering, activity based Foundation Phase for three to seven year olds in schools and early years settings in Wales backed by £10 million of investment every year.

We will expand childcare provision across Wales, making it affordable and flexible to meet the demands of modern working life. In particular, through the Flying Start scheme we will provide free, part-time,

high quality childcare for all 2 year olds in our most disadvantaged communities, as well as increased health visitor support, parenting programmes and other services. This will assist those parents who are currently economically inactive to find employment and, thereby, to tackle one of the roots of child poverty.

World-class schools

The universal provision of comprehensive schools continues to be the cornerstone of our education system.

In the last three years alone we have invested £667m on over 1,400 school building projects. After years of Tory neglect we are building the world-class schools children, teachers and parents deserve. We will continue this momentum into a third term until such time as every school in Wales is fit for the purpose of the modern curriculum. All new and refurbished schools will be fitted with sprinklers, in line with the Fire Service recommendations. We will provide direct funding to local schools for projects which improve the school environment and make schools more sustainable. We will step up our drive to make all schools community schools, making available their premises and facilities, including childcare provision and after school clubs to all who live in the local area.

We will develop the curriculum for seven to fourteen year olds so that it is a distinct and coherent part of our education system, building on the approaches started in the Foundation Phase and preparing our young people for the key choices they will need to make before they proceed to their 14 to 19 education and training. In particular, we will ensure that they continue to make progress when they move from primary to secondary school.

We will extend the choice of courses available for 14 – 19 year olds, reforming the school curriculum and providing new vocational learning opportunities. In order to close the gap in education achievement between schools we will expand the targeted RAISE programme so that young people in our most disadvantaged communities can improve their level of qualifications.

● 790 primary schools now signed up to Labour's free breakfast scheme



● In our first two terms we created 23,000 childcare places and provided free nursery care for three and four year olds

- We will extend the choice of courses available for 14-19 year olds by reforming the school curriculum



- We will ensure that the opportunity to study for the Welsh Baccalaureate exists in all parts of Wales

The roll out of the Welsh Bac beginning in September 2007 will continue so that by 2011 all young people between the ages of 14 and 19 will be able to study for this qualification in schools, further education colleges and work-based learning situations. The Bac represents a major achievement by Welsh Labour over its first two terms. Schools and colleges from across Wales are now signing up in ever greater numbers to this exciting and innovative qualification, giving students the opportunity of a broader based qualification and learning experience. We will take an early opportunity to use the new legislative powers which the Assembly has already obtained to underpin Labour's new agenda for 14 – 19 year olds.

We will step up action to help all young people to realise their full potential. We will provide more support for pupils with additional learning needs, continue to develop our Anti-Bullying policies and give appropriate support for those who have been excluded. Action will be taken to address inequality in performance, particularly by boys and some ethnic minority groups.

We will offer dedicated professional support to young people aged 16 to 19 and not in employment, education and training, to encourage them to re-engage in education, training or in some form of volunteering. We will invest in the appointment of specially trained outreach youth workers to work with young people not in education or training.

We will actively encourage local councils to respond positively to rising demand for Welsh medium education. We will encourage English-medium schools to offer the choice of taking some subjects through the medium of Welsh.

We will take action to tackle the growing problem of childhood obesity and to improve the health of children in schools, including through more investment in 'green gyms' and safe exercise equipment in playgrounds. Welsh Labour has delivered its commitment to introduce free breakfasts in our primary schools with 50% of schools now signed up for the scheme and we will continue to expand it. We will also improve the nutritional standard of school food and

the quality of school kitchens, as well as expanding the number of Healthy Schools. We will continue to improve school sport and aim for young people taking part in at least two hours of school sport every week.

Learning for Life

A third term Labour Assembly Government will transform provision for lifelong learning in Wales. We will ensure all adults have the opportunity to learn new skills and gain qualifications, whether in a reformed post-16 sector, work based learning, community and adult education and higher education.

We will invest £20 million in the youth service to give more opportunities for young people and to support the development of our Youth Service Strategy. The youth service has a critical role to play in ensuring that our young people are offered opportunities within their communities to participate in learning and community development.

Following the completion of a major review into further education we will implement wide-ranging reforms to offer high quality provision to all our 14 – 19 year olds. We will invest in our further education institutions to make them centres of excellence for vocational and skills training. Following on the pay parity with teachers achieved in the second Assembly, we will ensure that the initial training and professional development of FE lecturers are of a similar standard to teachers.

Wales has seen an exceptional expansion of work placed learning and skills provision in recent years. Since 1999 the number of Modern Apprenticeships has risen by 7,000 and 104 projects have been supported through the Wales Union Learning Fund.

We will build on this success in order to rise to the challenge of the Leitch report on the skills the UK economy will need by 2020. We will seek to increase the number of Modern Apprenticeships to 25,000 per year and continue to improve work-based learning



- We will increase the number of modern apprenticeships to **25,000 a year**

- We will support the work of the University of the Third Age and offer free ICT courses to older people

- The Wales Union Learning Fund will be expanded



provision. The Wales Union Learning Fund will be expanded. We will develop a National Careers Service building on the work of our current Careers Companies.

We will continue to invest in raising the level of basic skills and we will establish Skills Academies covering most important employment sectors in Wales to help people in employment to upgrade their skills. These will involve networks of existing groups from major employment sectors, including the Sector Skills Councils and representatives of learning providers and trade unions.

Adult and community education also has an important role to play. We will support the work of the University of the Third Age and offer free ICT courses to older people.

Our universities are crucial to the future development of Wales and we need them to be strongly involved in assisting the growth of our economy, more closely linked to schools and further education institutions and to greatly increase participation in higher education from our most disadvantaged areas. This is why we want them to grow stronger through collaboration and, where appropriate, mergers and to develop their research and enterprise profiles.

The new funding arrangements that we have put into place for higher education and students from 2007/08 will support the sector in delivering for Wales. During a third term we will maintain this level of funding and monitor progress on widening access. We would anticipate reviewing these arrangements before the end of a third Assembly term.

Welsh Medium Education

We will actively encourage local councils to respond positively to rising demand for Welsh medium education. We will encourage English-medium schools to offer the choice of taking some subjects through the medium of Welsh.

Stronger, safer communities

Introduction

Labour believes everyone has the right to live in communities that are safe, clean and secure. Our aim is to build communities that are founded on mutual respect and on the responsibilities we owe to one another.

Side by side with tough measures such as anti-social behaviour orders, acceptable behaviour contracts and fixed penalty notices, we will also be tough on the causes of anti-social behaviour and the conditions that foster it. At the heart of all that we do will be a commitment to the rights we all enjoy and the responsibilities we all owe.

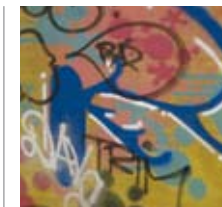
Alongside this we will invest in the long-term future of our communities. We will make our villages, towns and cities places where people want to live and places where people feel safe and secure.

Tackling anti-social behaviour

Too many communities are plagued by the problems of anti-social behaviour. It undermines the fabric of our communities and makes life a misery for some pensioners and hard-working, law abiding families.

Overall crime has fallen by over 30 per cent since 1997 and the chances of being a victim of a crime is the lowest since 1981. There are record numbers of police officers on the streets in Wales, almost 1,000 more than in 1997. These are backed by over 600 Police Community Support Officers, none of whom existed in 1997.

Working in partnership with Labour at Westminster we will renew our efforts to tackle anti-social behaviour by giving communities, police and local authorities the powers and resources they need. We will strengthen the role of Community Safety Partnerships and give local communities a greater voice in deciding local policing priorities and in directing resources to tackle specific problems of anti-social behaviour. We will establish an anti-social behaviour unit in every local



- There are almost 1,000 more police officers than in 1997, backed by over 600 Police Community Support Officers



authority area so that tough and co-ordinated action is taken in every part of Wales.

We will increase investment in the Safer Communities Fund to £24m over the whole Assembly term. This fund is targeted at providing support and action where communities suffer from anti-social behaviour.



The misuse of alcohol and drugs is a major threat to the quality of life in our communities. Over the past four years the Assembly Government has doubled its investment in support for the rehabilitation of drug addiction. In the next term there will be a four year fund of £75 million. This will help to tackle the effects of substance misuse, such as anti-social behaviour and crime, and help change attitudes towards alcohol by educating people and encouraging them to consume alcohol responsibly.



Labour councils throughout Wales are taking effective action against fly-tipping, graffiti, littering and dog-fouling. Only Labour is prepared to take the tough action needed to keep our communities clean and safe. Up and down Wales, Labour is listening to the people telling us they want to be able to take pride in their towns. They want tougher action against people who drop litter and rubbish and who take no pride in our communities and common spaces. We know that people want streets, riverbanks and open spaces that they can enjoy and take pride in.



● We will increase investment in the Safer Communities Fund to **£24m**

In a third term we will create a Tidy Towns initiative. This will involve concerted action to improve the state of our towns, villages and roads: increased fines for littering, graffiti and fly-tipping, new targets for local authorities to take action, establishing new requirements on businesses to maintain their properties and establishing a £16 million four year campaign of community action.

Using the new 2006 Government of Wales Act we will seek new powers to tackle all forms of environmental pollution, improve waste management and promote behaviour which protects our shared environment.

We intend a radical improvement of the youth service – a national strategy to ensure local authorities, the voluntary sector and the youth justice service all work better together to provide young people with the opportunities they deserve. We will take action to ensure that young people and communities can have access to facilities in schools. To make all this happen we will set up a £20 million capital fund to improve local youth services and continue to increase access to school facilities.

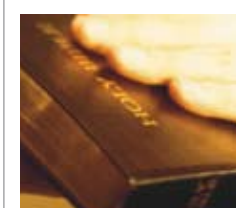
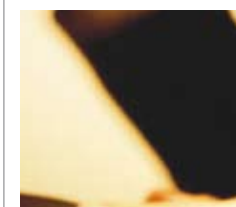
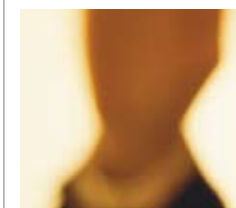
At the heart of our approach is a commitment to the three ‘R’s’ of safer communities: rights, responsibilities and respect. Young people deserve the respect of the other generations but in turn young people need to respect one another and the communities they are part of. There is no excuse for anti-social behaviour. However we recognise that more opportunities and services are needed to help young people to be more active, have fun and to develop that culture of respect for each other and other generations.

A vision for local government

Labour believes in strong and accountable local councils. Labour in the Assembly Government has been working closely with all local authorities, providing the money and setting the standards, to achieve improved local services. We believe in striking the right balance between giving councils the freedom they need to make their communities stronger and ensuring they are responsible in spending taxpayers’ money.

In a third term we will drive forward a strong vision for the future of local government in Wales. At the heart of this vision will be a demand that public services should work more closely together and that they put the citizen centre stage. In a local area this will mean local councils, the NHS and other services should work together to provide better services for people. Rigorous national standards will be introduced to make sure every service in every part of Wales is up to scratch.

● We will increase fines for littering, graffiti and fly-tipping





People in Wales need public services which are accessible and well coordinated in their local neighbourhood, community, town or village. They need to be able to engage with public service providers at this local level. Fully supported and effective councillors have a key role to play in engaging with local people and being a champion of their needs for public services. Labour will take steps to make local services even more responsive to local people and will ensure that local councillors are better supported to fulfil their role of engaging more fully with local people.



We will remain opposed to the introduction of proportional representation for local council elections. We believe that moving away from the current voting system would undermine the direct accountability of councillors to the communities they serve and would damage the effectiveness of local government.



Council taxes in Wales are twenty-five per cent lower, Band D for Band D, than in England because of the priority that the Labour Assembly Government has given to providing grants to local authorities. We will continue to provide the financial support necessary to allow council tax increases to be kept to a reasonable level. A reserve power to cap excessive council tax increases will be maintained.



Improving public services

Labour understands that we achieve improvements in public services when we work with the people who provide them. We will put in place a Social Partnership Agreement for public services in Wales in which the Assembly Government, the trade unions and employers commit themselves to partnership in achieving change and improvement.

We have more than delivered our commitment to invest more than £1 billion on modernising schools, hospitals and GP surgeries over the last four years. We will develop new ways of achieving needed capital development ensuring good quality services and good quality working conditions. We will establish a Strategic Capital Investment

Board to ensure that capital investment by the public sector and through not-for-profit organisations meets the needs of people in Wales and makes best use of the funding available.

Culture and Sport for All

Since 1999 Welsh Labour has delivered record investment in widening opportunities in arts, culture and sport. We have increased investment in supporting the Welsh language and given people free access to museums and galleries. Pensioners and school children can swim for free in public pools. Our capital city has a world class performing arts venue, The Wales Millennium Centre. Across the nation, we have built and refurbished cultural centres from Galeri in Caernarfon to the Waterfront Centre in Newport. A £2 million arts outside Cardiff fund has put more and better performances on the new and refurbished stages all over Wales.

Right at the heart of our approach to culture and sport is a commitment to opportunity to all. We believe in elite performances but not elite audiences. We are determined that opportunities to enjoy Wales' rich cultural and sporting activities are available to all. This is why, in our first two terms, we have given more people than ever before the opportunity to learn Welsh, given free access to museums and galleries in Wales and developed national free swimming schemes. Behind each one of these initiatives has been a determination to widening access and opportunity.

Labour is committed to a strong future for the Welsh language. It is a unique cultural asset of the nation and no party or pressure group has the right to claim ownership of it. Over the last eight years we have backed our commitment with investment, with Assembly spending on supporting the language rising by an additional £28m over the last three years.

Great progress has been made in helping more people to learn and to speak Welsh. Public bodies, quite rightly, have a legal obligation to use both our national languages. We will legislate to establish

- Pensioners can swim for free in council pools, young people can swim for free on the weekends

- We will legislate to establish a Dyfarnydd. There will be no legislation to compel private sector businesses such as factories, shops and banks to operate in Welsh



a Dyfarnydd, to be an impartial arbitrator of their Welsh language schemes, and to advise Government. There will be no legislation to compel private sector businesses such as factories, shops and banks to operate in Welsh. We believe that positive engagement and investment, not compulsion and sanctions, are the best way forward for the Welsh language.



The future of the language rests with children and young people. We will encourage local councils to respond positively to the rising demand for Welsh medium education. We will support English-medium schools to offer the choice of taking some subjects through the medium of Welsh. We will encourage Welsh speaking parents to pass on the gift of bilingualism to their children by funding a nationwide Twf programme.

● Building on the success of free entry for museums and galleries, we will give Welsh pensioners and Welsh children free entry to Assembly funded heritage sites

We will implement the recommendations of the Stephens Review into the future development of the arts in Wales. We will place a statutory obligation on local councils to promote culture and encourage them to work together and with other partners in the voluntary and private sectors to deliver high quality cultural experiences for their communities.

Building on the success of free entry for museums and galleries, we will give Welsh pensioners free entry to Assembly funded heritage sites. We will continue to offer free entry to school parties and we will provide vouchers for free entry to children and their families. To ensure the contribution of working communities to history and development of Wales is never forgotten, we will establish an all-Wales Collection of People's History, backed by a permanent curatorial staff with responsibility for the promotion and the development of the collection.

Working with local councils we will establish a major programme of capital investment and refurbishment of our public library network. We will continue to invest in improving ICT in libraries, including maintaining free, universal public access to the Internet, to help bring them into the 21st century. We will introduce more flexible and convenient library services for users. We will support local museums and archives with grants to improve their services.

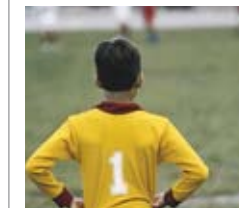
The free swimming schemes for older people and school children were the first national schemes of their kind anywhere in Europe. The success of the scheme has been phenomenal, with huge rises in the number of older people and school children taking up the opportunity of swimming. We will continue to fund the schemes in our third term. We will significantly extend the children's scheme by giving all children the opportunity to use a sport or leisure facility or a swimming pool free of charge at weekends.

We will increase investment in school sport and boost after-school activities, including the continued support of Dragon Sport and schemes to improve the participation of girls. To help boost grass-roots sport we will train additional coaches to the latest UK standards and ensure that school children undertake at least five hours of physical activity each week.

As part of the run-up to the 2012 Olympics, we will deliver a successful UK Schools Games in Cardiff, Swansea and Newport in 2009, which will provide a platform to help our young athletes to deliver their full potential. We look forward to hosting the Ryder Cup, the highest profile golfing tournament in the world, in 2010. We will ensure the benefits of these events are spread throughout Wales. We will create more fun and healthy opportunities for mass participation in walking, cycling and running events. In a third term, we will work with Supporters Direct to help give Welsh fans of all sports a greater say in how their clubs are run.



● The free swimming initiative for older people and school children was the first national scheme of its kind anywhere in Europe



A fair Wales

Tackling child poverty

The most corrosive and enduring legacy left by the Tories was the level of child poverty in Wales. The legacy of Thatcher and Redwood was of talent wasted and of children denied the opportunities to have fulfilled lives.

Since 1999 there has been a twenty per cent fall in the number of children living in poverty in Wales. A decade ago, the level of children living in poverty in Wales was well above the UK average. Today the rate in Wales has fallen to match the overall level in the UK. This improvement has happened further and faster in Wales than other parts of the UK.

While child poverty reduction has made great strides forward in Wales, there is still a long way to go, with 170,000 children still in poverty, over twenty-five per cent of the child population.

By 2010 we will bring down child poverty numbers in Wales to half the level inherited from the Tories in 1997. By 2020, we will have eradicated it altogether. This can only be achieved by a Labour – Labour partnership working together at Westminster and the Assembly.

Labour has always backed its vision with practical action, with free school breakfasts for primary school children being introduced and this is why we are targeting investment to raise standards in our schools. In our third term we will continue to take practical action to make a real difference to the lives of children.

For every child entering full-time compulsory schooling we will introduce a £50 top-up to the Child Trust Fund, rising to £100 for children in low income families. This will help to boost the savings of children in Wales and improve opportunities later in life.

Labour understands that tackling child poverty is about more than just raising incomes. Our focus will be on raising the aspirations of children from the poorest backgrounds by providing opportunities and experiences normally denied to them. We will therefore boost



● Since 1999 there has been a **20%** fall in the number of children living in poverty in Wales

investment in the youth service and we will help schools to build creative partnerships with musicians, artists and sports clubs to make sure every child in Wales has the opportunity to take part in a rewarding extra curricular activity. Beyond school age we will monitor participation in further and higher education to promote the take-up in those areas where the fewest young people remain in education.

Because all our children deserve the best start in life we will provide a free, part-time nursery place for every two year old in deprived communities in Wales through the Flying Start scheme.

Using the new powers of the Assembly, Labour will step up our efforts on behalf of children in Wales by seeking the power to reform the law in relation to vulnerable children in Wales, including action on child poverty. This will place a legal requirement on public agencies, such as the NHS and local government, to make and to demonstrate their contribution to tackling child poverty. Alongside this we will initiate a policy of child poverty proofing all Assembly Government initiatives. That means, testing every Assembly initiative against our mission to eradicate child poverty.

We will implement programmes to help the poorest families in Wales to maximise the income they receive and to protect them from unscrupulous money lenders. To achieve this we will expand benefit and debt advice services, improve financial education and ensure access to credit union membership for every secondary school student in Wales.

Only Labour in the Assembly, working in partnership with Labour at Westminster, has the commitment and the ideas to eradicate child poverty in Wales by 2020. It will be a flagship of our third term in office and a political commitment to make Wales a truly fairer country.

Action on child poverty

Using the new powers of the Assembly we will take action to tackle child poverty and to support our most vulnerable children.

● By 2010 we will have halved child poverty in Wales from the levels we inherited in 1997. By 2020, we will have eradicated it altogether

● For every child entering full-time compulsory schooling we will introduce a £50 top-up to the Child Trust Fund, **rising to £100** for children in low income families



Breathing new life into our towns, cities and villages

Labour is committed to strong, vibrant communities. We want our towns, villages and cities to be safe and clean, and places where people want to live and work. Our first and second terms kick-started the process of regenerating our communities through the innovative Communities First programme, European structural funds, renewal areas and through the Heads of the Valleys investment. In our third term we will continue to prioritise investment in the regeneration of communities in Wales.



Housing is crucial to community regeneration. In our second term we increased investment in the social housing grant by 64% and introduced new planning guidance to increase the availability of affordable housing. In our third term we will invest £450 million in new social and affordable housing to help build an additional 6,500 new affordable homes.



● In our third term we will invest £450 million in new social and affordable housing



We will seek new legislative powers to be able to retain the pool of housing available for rent in areas of high housing need as one measure to improve the availability of affordable housing. Alongside this we will identify and make available publicly owned land for the development of low-cost housing to help first-time buyers get a foot on the housing ladder. All new housing developments and buildings will be subjected to new green rules which will dictate the highest possible standards of energy efficiency.

The Heads of the Valleys programme is the largest regeneration scheme of its kind in Britain. In our third term we will continue the dualling of the Heads of the Valleys road, the regeneration of a series of town centres starting with Abertillery, Blaenavon, Bargoed, Merthyr Tydfil and Ferndale as well as capitalising on the potential of a £700m housing redevelopment scheme. These regeneration schemes will provide additional employment, meet the highest environmental standards by minimising the carbon effects of the schemes and build homes and communities that are sustainable and energy efficient.

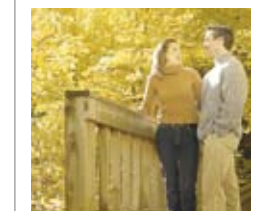
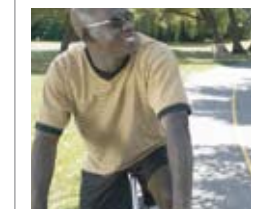
Labour has always understood that regenerating communities requires a long term commitment from government and the public sector. This is why, in our third term, Labour will continue funding for the regeneration of the least well off communities in Wales through a Communities Next programme.

We will maintain a programme of regeneration to advance the opportunities of people and communities. We will maximise European regeneration funding to help breathe new life into our disadvantaged communities. We will provide funding to help set up farmers markets in towns across Wales. This will help draw people into our town centres and give farmers the opportunity to sell their produce direct to local people. We will promote Wales as a fairtrade nation.



● Labour will continue funding for the regeneration of the least well off communities in Wales

● We will provide funding to help set up farmers markets in towns across Wales



A green Wales

Introduction

In our first and second terms Labour pioneered action to promote sustainability and to make our communities greener and cleaner. In a third term we will implement practical policies to tackle climate change and improve the local environment. We are determined to leave a clean, green and sustainable Wales for future generations and not a legacy of pollution and non-sustainable development

Labour is playing a key role on the international stage in finding global solutions to the challenges arising from climate change, from the recent European Union agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, to the G8 summit due to take place later in the year. At the beginning of March, Labour published the Climate Change Bill which will make the UK the first country in the world to introduce legally binding targets to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 60% by 2050. Welsh Labour have been working at the heart of government to ensure that a proper contribution is made from Wales towards delivering these overall UK targets.

A small country like Wales has a responsibility to reduce our carbon emissions and show how we can reduce energy wastage and live within our energy means. A Labour Assembly Government will continue to give strong leadership to the public and the private sector in our common effort to tackle climate change.

Wales: a world leader in renewable energy

Labour will rise to the challenge of climate change by putting sustainability at the heart of our economic strategy. We will help businesses in Wales to embrace the opportunities that increasing demand for environmental technology will offer and provide increased support to companies to help them reduce their carbon emissions and move to sustainable energy use.



In a third term we will give continued support for renewable energy, especially marine and wind power. We will expand the work of the Welsh Energy Research Centre to help put Wales on the map as a leading developer of renewable energy and technology. We are supporting the Sustainable Development Commission study to the development of a Severn Barrage and we will give careful and active consideration into the recommendations. We recognise that nuclear power generation remains an option in the debate on reducing carbon emissions in any future mixed energy supply.

We will take forward plans contained in the Wales Energy Route Map to ensure a balanced and sustainable energy supply, including a viable future for the coal industry in Wales that is both safe and clean. Labour in the Assembly will provide support for the development of clean coal technology. We will finalise new planning guidance introducing a buffer zone around opencast sites.

Key to tackling climate change is harnessing the enormous potential of micro-generation and energy efficiency. To help achieve this we will take forward a micro-generation strategy to increase the amount of domestic and business energy produced through renewable sources. We will work towards making 100,000 homes energy efficient and towards 30,000 solar power and other micro-generation units on buildings across Wales by 2012. We have introduced new guidance to ensure that all new developments and premises are required, under planning law, to generate a proportion of their energy from renewable sources such as wind turbines and solar panels and we will take this further by working towards our aspiration that that all buildings built from 2011 onwards will be zero carbon. In order to underpin consumer confidence in new technologies we will establish a comprehensive energy advice network.

The role of the public sector in Wales to tackling climate change goes beyond bringing in regulations for others to follow. Over the next four years, with Labour, the public sector in Wales will increase the amount of energy generated in public buildings from micro-renewable sources. New public sector development will be required to generate a proportion of its energy requirements from micro-



- We will ensure that all our government buildings are carbon neutral by 2012

- We will work towards 30,000 solar power and other micro-generation units on buildings across Wales by 2012



● In a third term we will place sustainability at the heart of the national curriculum, increase opportunities for outdoor learning and increase the number of Eco Schools across Wales

generation and to meet the highest energy efficiency standards. We will increase investment to make existing public buildings more energy efficient and by 2012 we will ensure that the government estate in Wales is carbon neutral. Long-term this will help to reduce Wales' ecological footprint and to make savings for the public purse.

A cleaner and greener Wales

Unlike the Tories our commitment to the environment is backed by action. This is why, in our third term, we will focus on practical action to improve the quality of the Welsh environment. New rules will be introduced to protect and improve green spaces and action will be taken to halt the decline in Welsh biodiversity. This will include action to enhance our marine and coastal environment and work to look at marine reserves.

Tough new regulations will be introduced to cut the use of harmful farm pesticides and we will continue to promote sustainable farming in Wales. We will review all agri-environment schemes with a view to introducing a simpler single scheme, one which is both less bureaucratic and better value for the tax payer. Wales will continue to implement the most restrictive possible policy relating to GM crops.

One of the challenges for this generation is to prepare the next for the decisions they will have to take to safeguard the future of the planet. In a third term we will place sustainability at the heart of the national curriculum, increase opportunities for outdoor learning and increase the number of Eco Schools across Wales.

Today, because of Labour action to open up our countryside, more land than ever before is now available for walking. We will build on the Countryside and Rights of Way Act by further opening up our stunning natural environment by developing open access to the coast through an all-Wales coastal path. We will also investigate creating a statutory right of coastal access.

In our first term we established the Design Commission for Wales which plays an important role in delivering sustainability throughout our built

environment. In our third term, we will look at placing the Design Commission for Wales on a statutory footing. We will continue to work to make the planning system more responsive to local communities.

New powers for a safe, green transport system

A modern transport infrastructure is an essential platform for a successful economy which benefits all parts of Wales. In our second term we launched an £8 billion, 15 year transport plan. Our investment is already bearing fruit through, for example, progress on the dualling of the Heads of the Valleys, the soon to be re-opened Ebbw Valley railway, an express busway in Swansea and a new gateway to link the port and town in Holyhead. We will take forward the provisions of the Transport Act (Wales) 2006.

In a third term Labour will continue to prioritise investment in our transport infrastructure, including further improvements to North - South rail links and the Valley Lines. We will modernise our strategic road and rail routes and provide sustainable transport solutions to meet our future economic and environmental needs.

Under the new powers granted to the Assembly Government, we will develop the Traws Cambria route into an all-Wales Network for Rail and Bus Travel in Wales, helping to give passengers and communities the joined up, integrated transport system they need. There will be improved links and journey times for the thousands of users of this service.

As part of our 15 year transport plan we will improve the A40 west of St Clears in Carmarthenshire, we will strengthen the strategic role of Holyhead, and we will consider options for a link between the M4 and Cardiff International Airport and the Defence Training Academy at St Athan.

Linking people

We will develop an all-Wales road and rail network to help join up people and communities.



We will offer convenient and accessible alternatives to the car by investing in our public transport network including an additional 50 new passenger carriages for the Wales & Border franchise. We will seek to extend discounted off-peak rail travel for Welsh pensioners on Wales & Border services. By 2011 we will extend the availability of the Smart Card to all bus journeys and all Wales & Border rail journeys in Wales. We will improve local bus services by giving local authorities greater power to work with private bus companies to ensure greater integration and a better service for passengers.

We will designate sustainable travel towns which will include pilots for demand responsive transport for heavily congested destinations. We will promote new opportunities for walking and cycling and provide public transport alternatives to the car.

Community Transport has a vital role to play as part of a modern integrated transport network. We will increase investment in community transport and extend schemes to help provide more opportunities for people to work. We will ensure that the voice of users of all transport services in Wales is heard by establishing a Transport Passenger's Committee for Wales.

We will improve passenger safety by working with the UK Labour Government and with transport companies to increase the policing presence on our public transport network and by improving lighting and security at stations. Using new technology we will improve passenger information services in an integrated way across the road and rail.

In our third term we will expand upon the success of the Safe Routes to School scheme by establishing a new enhanced Safe Routes in Communities scheme which will serve schools, leisure centres and other facilities. We will establish a £100 million road safety fund. As part of this major package we will expect to see further significant increases in the number of 20mph zones and road safety schemes.

Tragedy has taught us that school transport services are not always as safe and well regulated as they should be. Using the Assembly's new powers we will bring forward early proposals to strengthen the regulation and inspection of school bus services. Labour will prioritise school transport in a third term legislative programme.



● Labour will prioritise school transport in a third term legislative programme

