

Building a better Wales

250 achievements from your Labour Assembly Government

Contents

- More and better jobs
- NHS: Investment and reform
- Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
- Making our communities safer and stronger
- Environment and the countryside
- Culture and Sport
- A New Way of Government

More Jobs and Better Jobs

Labour is proud to be the party that has delivered unprecedented levels of economic stability and prosperity. We are proud too that today Labour is the party of business. By supporting good companies invest and expand we are helping more people than ever before into rewarding, well paid jobs.

The Welsh economy is strong with unemployment slashed and more people in work than ever before. On many indicators the Welsh economy is outperforming the UK economy as a whole – demonstrating the difference that the Labour Assembly Government is making.

More and better jobs

- At the time of devolution, unemployment was 30% higher than in the UK as a whole - now it's nearly 5% lower. Unemployment has fallen from 7.7% to 5.2% since the Assembly came into existence.
- There are 130,000 more people in work than at the time of devolution. The increase in the total number of people in work in Wales is 11% - far higher than the 7.7% increase in the UK as a whole over the same period.
- More than 100,000 people have been helped into work through the New Deal, including more than 40,000 young people.
- Wales is the only part of the UK where private sector employment has increased faster than public sector employment since 1999.
- Economic inactivity rates have fallen faster in Wales than across the UK as a whole. The number of people on incapacity benefit has fallen by 15,000 since 1999.
- Average Welsh earnings are up 23 per cent since 2001 – compared to

a 21 per cent increase for the whole of the UK.

Supporting business and enterprise

- Merged the Welsh Development Agency with the Assembly Government. This will give businesses a one-stop shop for world-class advice and support.
- More than £700m awarded in business support since 1999 through Regional Selective Assistance and the Assembly Investment Grant, helping to lever in more than £3 billion in private sector investment. This support is helping to modernise the Welsh economy and to create and safeguard jobs.
- Welsh companies are competing strongly in the global economy. Welsh exports are up by 44 per cent since 1999, compared to 41 per cent for the UK over the same period.
- Established International Business Wales, with a united team of trade and investment professionals to help boost inward investment in Wales.
- Launched the Knowledge Bank for Business – one of Labour's top ten manifesto commitments. This is providing tailored and focused support for 80 high growth companies across a range of sectors in Wales.
- Established Finance Wales to give business the investment support they need. Since being established, Finance Wales has made more than 1,000 investments.

Encouraging Enterprise

- Labour in the Assembly is implementing the first ever entrepreneurial action plan for

Wales. This is putting enterprise at the heart of economic development policy.

- Fostering a culture of enterprise in our schools. Over 1,500 primary and secondary schools are getting support through the Assembly Government supported Dynamo training.
- With Labour, Wales is a great place to start a business. Graduate business start-ups in Wales are rising and with just 5% of the UK population, Wales accounts for nearly 15% the UK's number of graduate business start-ups.
- Established the Knowledge Exploitation Fund to help Welsh businesses take advantage of the excellent research and technology at Welsh universities.

Promoting growth in West Wales and the Valleys

- Secured European Union regeneration aid for West Wales, the Valleys and most of North Wales between 2000 and 2006. Through this, more than £3 billion of investment has been allocated to more than 1,700 projects.
- Thanks to Labour's negotiations in the European Union, a further round of £3 billion of investment has been secured for West Wales, the Valleys and most of North Wales to cover the period 2007 to the end of 2013.
- Independent evaluation evidence has confirmed the impact of European Structural Funds programmes. Employment is up 40,000 in West Wales and the Valleys, with 85,000 people moved from inactivity to employment, education or training.

Investment in the future of communities

- Thanks to Labour's strong partnership at the Assembly and Westminster, Wales has secured the Defence Training Academy at St. Athan in the Vale of Glamorgan. This will create an estimated 5,000 jobs and help secure the long-term future of the South Wales economy.
- All-Wales Steel Taskforce established following Corus' job loss announcement. Assembly supported programmes from this include establishment of Newport Unlimited, investment to re-open the Ebbw Valley line and redevelopment of Ebbw Vale site.
- A £500m economic package, built around the dualling of the Heads of the Valleys, to regenerate the northern valleys. The programme will attract new investment and jobs, regenerate town centres and improve the local environment.
- Launch of the Mon a Menai programme. This is a long-term economic development package aimed at boosting prosperity and jobs in North West Wales.
- Delivered a £25million regeneration plan in the Cardigan, South Ceredigion and North Pembrokeshire area following the Dewhirst factory closures.

Improving transport in Wales

- Launched a 15 year, £8 billion transport strategy. Investment in transport has increased by 150% since 2001 – to annual investment now of over £500m.
- New powers given to the Labour Assembly to improve transport in Wales (through the Transport Act Wales and Railways Act).

- Started the dualling of the Heads of the Valleys Road, with Dowlais to Tredegar completed and Abergavenny to Gilwern under construction. This is opening up the Heads of the Valleys for investment and business.
- Establishment of the first ever Wales and Borders rail franchise, leading to the first ever frequent and direct north-south Wales rail service.
- Re-opening the Ebbw Valley rail line to Cardiff. Our £30m project will provide hourly passenger services between Ebbw Vale and Cardiff.
- The Vale of Glamorgan line re-opened in 2005 to improve links to Cardiff International Airport.
- Through Labour's Freight Facilities Grant there are over 25,000 fewer lorry journeys on Welsh roads.
- A £50 million investment in the Cardiff Valleys Network to relieve overcrowding on the Valley lines. This will mean extra rolling stock and a 20 per cent increase in capacity.
- Concessionary travel on the Conwy Valley Rail line and the Heart of the Wales Line introduced for pensioners and the disabled.
- Introduced free bus travel for pensioners and the disabled. This has benefited more than half a million people in Wales.
- Introduced a pilot scheme for free buses passes for young people in Bridgend, Wrexham, Denbighshire and Flintshire. Young people in these counties will be eligible for half price travel on participating local bus services.
- Labour's investment means more and more people are using local bus services, with nearly ten million additional bus journeys being taken every year.
- Labour in the Assembly has boosted community transport and local bus schemes through the Local Transport Services Grant.

Making our roads safer

- More than 330 20mph speed limit zones have been funded and established outside schools. This has led to a reduction in accidents of more than 86% in these zones since 2000.
- £22 million has been invested in the Safe Routes to Schools scheme.
- There are more than 100 safe routes to school schemes in place, and investment has been awarded for a further 50.

Networks of the future

- Established the Broadband Wales programme, a five year, £115m investment programme aimed at giving families and businesses access to the networks of the future.
- Today 99% of people in Wales can receive broadband – compared to just 18% in the Republic of Ireland.
- Through Labour's investment in new technology, there are 63% more businesses today with access to broadband. Labour is well on course to meet our manifesto commitment of 310,000 homes and 63,000 more businesses having access to broadband.

NHS: investment and reform

Labour is and always will be the party of the NHS. Labour has taken tough decisions to improve our nation's health, and today there are more doctors, more nurses, better patient care and falling waiting times.

Investment in the NHS

- Labour in Wales has delivered record increases in health expenditure – it has nearly doubled since 1999.
- Investment in new buildings and equipment is being trebled.
- We have more than met our manifesto commitment to invest in hospitals and GP surgeries. We promised to invest £550m in our second term, but we will actually deliver £700m.
- Seven new hospitals have either been built or are on the way.
- There are now over 8,000 more nurses and over 500 more consultants working for the NHS in Wales. Overall there has been a 28% increase in staff working for the NHS.
- The annual medical student intake has doubled since 1999. Today there are nearly 1,000 senior doctors in training for consultant posts.
- 1,000 more nurse training places in Wales since 1999
- Opened a North Wales Clinical School, helping to train staff and improve healthcare in the region.
- Labour's recent budget has allocated £2m of core funding to support the work of hospices.

Improving health

- The greatest single measure to improve health in Wales will happen

in April 2007, when smoking in public places will come to an end.

- Prescription charges have been cut to £3 – they will be abolished altogether in April 2007
- The Labour Assembly Government established the Health Inequalities Fund. This is supporting 67 projects that help to cut coronary heart disease.
- Developed an annual 'Keep Well This Winter' programme to help older people look after their health.
- Established the National Public Health Service as a national resource providing specialist public health services combined with local delivery of services.
- Provided water coolers to over 300 schools in Communities First areas in Wales. Investment in water coolers and fruit tuck shops as an alternative to sweets and fizzy drinks.
- Set up the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes, involving over 1,100 schools.
- Major investment in school sports launched to help meet our target of all secondary school age children doing 60 minutes of exercise at least five times a week. This will support extra-curricular activities such as rugby, football, netball, athletics, break-dancing and salsa.
- Extra funding for girls' sports saw a 70% increase in girls taking part in extra-curricular sports last year. This has helped to bridge the gap between boys and girls by 5%.

Cutting waiting times

- Waiting times are down. Today no one waits more than 12 months for hospital treatment.
- The majority of patients in Wales are now waiting less than three months for treatment; eight out of ten inpatients and nine out of ten

- outpatients, wait less than six months.
- The latest figures, at the end of 2006, showed the highest number of operations ever carried out in the Welsh NHS in a single month.
- Investment being delivered so that by the end of March 2007 no patient will wait more than eight months to see a consultant or receive treatment. By the end of 2009, no patient will wait more than 26 weeks from referral to treatment, including any diagnostics and therapies required.
- Introduced the successful second offer scheme to help cut waiting times. Since its introduction in 2004 more than 21,500 patients have been treated through the scheme.
- Labour's investment in social care has led to big falls in delayed transfers of care. They have fallen by over 40% since 2004.
- In 93% of practices, patients can see a member of the primary care team within 24 hours.
- Nine out of ten patients seen within 4 hours at Accident and Emergency.

Improving dental services

- Investment in dentistry has increased by 89% since 1999. This year an additional £30m is being invested to help train more dentists and improve patient care.
- 112 more dentists in Wales than in 1999.
- In the last two years, 12 new practices have opened and 50 practices have been expanded through Labour's Welsh Dental Initiative.
- Over 200,000 extra dental places created through Labour investment during the switchover to the new dental contract.

- New dental contract to help improve and retain local NHS treatment. More than 90% of dentists have signed up to the contract.
- Free dental examinations for people in Wales under 25 or over 60.

Cleaner Hospitals

- The number of hospital acquired infections is falling and Welsh hospitals have a better record than in the UK in tackling hospital bugs such as MRSA.
- New rules introduced by Labour mean that all NHS Trusts in Wales have to appoint a senior manager to be responsible for cleaning and tackling hospital-acquired infections.
- Labour in Wales changed the rules so that hospital cleaning staff are part of the clinical team, a move that has helped to make our hospitals cleaner.
- In our third term, we will end commercial tendering for hospital cleaning contracts so that in the future cleaning will be carried out by NHS staff.

Better care for the most vulnerable

- Led the way in the UK by establishing a Children's Commissioner for Wales and a Commissioner for Older People.
- Established a Carers Champion and extra support for respite services to give carers a break.
- A ten-year strategy launched for social services in Wales.
- Pooled budgets introduced so that the NHS and social care services can work together effectively.
- Introduced free nursing care in nursing homes.
- Additional investment of £76 million to reduce charges and improve

home care services for older and disabled people.

- £600,000 extra to improve the service for those who need motorised wheelchairs, dramatically reducing the waiting time for this essential equipment.
- Capital funding of £9m to support around 10,000 people with Telecare in their own homes, along with £12.5 million to improve community equipment.
- Infant mortality rates in Wales in 2005 hit a record low of 4.1% per thousand live births – much lower than in the rest of the UK.

Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

Education and skills are at the heart of our vision for a fairer and more prosperous Wales, and our plan is for every child and every adult to have the opportunity to realise their full potential.

The best start in life

- The Labour Assembly Government is leading the way within the UK on the introduction of the innovative Foundation Phase for 3 to 7 year olds, which places the emphasis on learning through play. The scheme is being piloted in 41 schools and nurseries
- More than 23,000 more childcare places in Wales since 1999.
- Free part-time early years provision for all three year olds.
- Nearly 16,000 children to benefit from Labour's ground-breaking Flying Start initiative. At the heart of the Flying Start scheme is free, part-time high quality childcare for two year olds. Labour is investing £46m in the scheme.
- Expansion of Welsh-medium early years provision. There are 450 more Welsh medium practitioners working today than in 1999. A further 300 are in training.
- 45 Integrated Children's Centres either opened or on the way.

World-class schools

- 1,700 more teachers and 5,700 more classroom assistants than in 1998.
- Class sizes are down. Virtually all infant and junior classes are now 30 or under. Increased funding for schools now means that the average class size is 25.

- In the last three years more than £630 million has been invested in 1,400 school building projects across Wales. This is part of the largest ever school investment programme in Wales.
- Free breakfast scheme launched for primary schools. By the end of our second term, nearly 600 schools will be participating. Results show that the scheme is helping children to concentrate in class and improving results.
- The Welsh Baccalaureate launched, providing a new, broader Welsh qualification for 16 year olds. The scheme is being rolled out to more and more schools across Wales.
- The Educational Maintenance Allowance launched. This provides young people with an incentive to stay on at school after the age of 16. Over 25,000 pupils are benefiting from the scheme in Wales.
- The Computer Clubs for Girls project being rolled out across Wales.
- Extra help for families to meet the costs of buying a school uniform. The School Uniform Grant is providing an additional £750,000 to help low income families buy uniforms for their children.
- Action taken to improve attendance and to tackle bullying in schools.
- School Councils in place in every school to ensure that pupils have a real voice in how their schools are run and in the decisions that affect them.
- Action to promote schools as resources for the wider community.
- Extending the number of school nurses across Wales.

Rising standards

- Since 1999, standards across all age groups have risen significantly.

- At the age of seven, standards have risen in all subjects. Over 80% of children are meeting the target standards set.
- 74% of 11 year olds achieve the expected levels in English, Maths and Science. This is an increase of 14% since 1999.
- Standards at GCSE are up. 52% of all pupils achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C – up 4 per cent on 1999.
- 82% of primary schools and 76% of secondary schools rated as having good or very good quality of teaching.
- The £15m RAISE programme launched to improve outcomes for children in the 550 schools across Wales.

Raising skills in the workplace

- Developed and implemented a Skills and Employment Action Plan to boost skills in the workplace and to make our workforce more competitive.
- Wales is out-performing other parts of the UK in the attainment of key skills. With Labour, our performance has been so rapid that Wales has a larger share of skills awards than any other region. 16% of all key skills awards are in Wales.
- With Labour, Wales is leading the way in the take-up of modern apprenticeships. Since 2002, the number of modern apprenticeships in Wales has increased by 4,000 – taking the total to 14,500.
- Launched the Wales Union Learning Fund to boost workplace learning. Since 1999, a total of £4 million has been invested to support 97 projects.
- Developed and implemented a Basic Skills Strategy to ensure that everyone, at all ages, has basic

literacy and numeracy skills. This is supported by a £40m investment.

- 7,000 Individual Learning Accounts established to help give more people the opportunities to learn.

Further and Higher education

- Developed a 14 – 19 year old pathway and strategy to give greater options and more flexibility to young people.
- No top-up fees for Welsh students studying in Wales.
- Launched major review of further education provision in Wales.
- Assembly Learning Grant introduced, benefiting students in both further and higher education.
- Investment and support to put Merthyr Tydfil and Ebbw Vale on the map as university towns.
- The overall number of 5-star departments in Wales has quadrupled since 1996.
- European aid funding used to bring about £100 million of investment in the Institute of Life Sciences and Institute of Advanced Telecommunications at Swansea University, the School of Management at Bangor and the 3-D Visualisation Centre in Aberystwyth

Making our communities stronger and safer

Labour's defining mission is social justice. Our aim is to widen opportunity and to regenerate those communities in greatest need. We are tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and making our communities stronger and safer for all.

Stronger communities

- New Small Business Rate Relief scheme, wholly funded by the Assembly Government, will provide relief to nearly 49,000 small businesses across the whole of Wales, with enhanced relief for small Post Offices from April 2007.
- Established a Post Office Development Fund to support post offices in rural and deprived communities. More than £4m has been awarded to 106 post offices.
- The Communities First programme has been launched to help regenerate the poorest 130 communities in Wales. Since 2001 more than £125 million has been provided in funding by the Assembly Government.
- 463 local community and voluntary projects have been supported through the Community Facilities and Activities programme. Through this, local community facilities are being improved and modernised.
- Over £33m has been invested through the Physical Regeneration Fund. Schemes benefiting from the fund include plans in Newport to improve premises for businesses and the regenerating Senghenydd town centre in Newport.
- More than £25m a year is invested in Renewal Area schemes. This is helping to regenerate housing and local communities in 18 local authority areas.

- Launched Communities@One programme to ensure people from the most deprived communities have access to new technology.
- Increased investment in local council services.
- With Labour, Wales has the lowest council tax levels in the UK.

Safer Communities

- Established a £127m Crime Fighting Fund to support practical measures to cut crime and to tackle anti-social behaviour, such as support for Operation Tarian and tackling environmental crime in Cardiff.
- The crimes most people experience are down by 35% in Wales since 1997. The chances of being a victim of a crime are at their lowest since 1981.
- Working in partnership with the UK Labour Government, there are 1,000 more police officers in Wales.
- There are nearly 300 more Community Support Officers in Wales, a figure which will rise to nearly 700 during 2007.
- New powers introduced to tackle anti-social behaviour. So far in Wales, more than 300 anti-social behaviour orders have been issued.
- Established Community Safety Partnerships to promote local action to tackle anti-social behaviour. They are backed by more than £16m of Labour Assembly funding.
- Youth Offending and Substance Misuse Strategies launched to help cut crime and the causes of crime.
- Domestic violence strategy launched. An extra £1.5m of investment has been announced in Labour's Assembly budget for next year to provide more refuges and sexual counselling services.
- Investment in alcohol and drug misuse services increased by 600% since 2002.

- Established an all Wales schools programme to help educate young people on the problems of substance misuse. More than 95% of schools participate in the scheme and more than 70 police school liaison officers are in place.

Improving Housing Quality

- Home Energy Efficiency Scheme set up to provide assistance for greater energy efficiency measures, such as central heating, loft insulation and cavity wall insulation for the elderly, disabled and families on low incomes. 64,000 households across Wales have been helped since the scheme was launched in 2000 - £74 million will have been made available by the end of 2006/07
- A 62% increase in the Social Housing Grant between 2005 and 2008. By 2008 the annual social housing budget will be £96m.
- Over the next three years the Social Housing Grant will provide an additional 3,000 homes for rent or low cost ownership.
- Welsh Housing Quality Standard introduced to improve all social housing by 2012. This will mean all homes will be well insulated, have up to date kitchens and bathrooms, and will be in safe neighbourhoods.
- Established the HomeBuy scheme to help first-time buyers get a foot on the housing ladder.
- Launched the Affordable Housing Toolkit to help raise the level of affordable housing across Wales.
- Revised planning guidance to make it easier to build affordable housing.
- In the last full year, the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme completed more than 3,200 Benefit Entitlement Checks identifying over £2m of unclaimed benefits for nearly 1,200 Welsh homes.

- Extra support for Care and Repair Cymru, so that can help pensioners and the disabled to remain independent and safe in their own homes.
- Launched the Rapid Response Adaptations Programme in 2002. The scheme helps to make improvements in older people's homes to allow them to return more quickly from hospital.

Tackling homelessness

- There has been a ten fold increase in investment to tackle homelessness in Wales. Today £6m is being invested to support over 130 projects.
- A national homelessness strategy was launched and new legislation introduced to end the use of bed and breakfasts as long term accommodation for vulnerable people.
- Labour's investment and action has seen homelessness fall by 35% since 2005. The use of temporary accommodation has fallen by 15% and the use of B&B accommodation has dropped by 30%.

Environment and the countryside

Labour's goal is to transform Wales into a clean, green and sustainable country. Since 1999 we have invested in improving local environments and opening up Wales' stunning natural environment to all. We have been a global voice in combating climate change, helping to put Wales at the cutting edge of the drive to a more sustainable future.

Cherishing Wales' environment

- Published an Environment Strategy and an Environment Action Plan to set out Labour's long term goals for improving the environment and tackling climate change.
- Opened up access to the Wales' countryside through the implementation of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act. 22 per cent of Wales' land is now available for walking – more than three times the amount when we came to office.
- Plans were announced in June 2006 to move ahead with a coastal access improvement programme - with extra investment to improve existing coastal paths and new routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
- Designated 90 sites which have habitats or species that are rare or threatened across Wales, as special areas of conservation.
- Launched a ten-year plan to conserve wildlife living along the Welsh road network. This sets out 250 actions to safeguard rare and attractive habitats and species alongside some of Wales' busiest roads.
- Announced proposals to strengthen the National Park Authorities so that they continue to protect some of Wales' most stunning landscapes.

- Pledged £3m to support the new Snowdon Summit Building.
- Increased the amount of the Welsh forest estate that is being re-generated with the planting of native, broadleaved trees.
- Meeting our target of delivering 770,000 cubic metres of home-grown timber to the market. More and more of this material is coming from thinning, helping forests to prosper.
- Established the Design Commission for Wales. This is a national organisation that champions better buildings and better public places and spaces.
- Tough new guidance to boost town centres as the best location for most retail and leisure activities. With Labour, town centres are receiving the investment and protection they need.

Tackling climate change

- Greenhouse gas emissions in Wales, in particular emissions of methane and nitrous oxide from agriculture and waste, have fallen by 3% since 1990 (the Kyoto benchmark year) as a result of agricultural restructuring and controls, and increased management of the waste sector.
- The Assembly Government has committed to a renewables target of 4 Terra Watt Hours of electricity per annum by 2010, and 7 TWhr of electricity per annum from wind , biomass, wave/tidal stream and solar sources by 2020.
- The Labour Government's last energy policy pledged to deliver a 20% reduction in carbon emissions (on a 2000 baseline) by 2020. This target was based on 20% of electricity generation coming from renewables, combined with a 20% reduction in energy demand through

energy efficiency measures and no increase in fossil fuel generation

- Plans in place to maximise the use of the planning system in securing more sustainable buildings. The Labour Assembly Government has introduced tough new rules, which mean local authorities have to cut carbon emissions in local developments by at least 10% below current Building Regulation standards.
- Consideration is being given to introducing a statutory requirement for planning applications to be accompanied by a design statement to encourage sustainable developments.
- Labour is taking action to encourage micro-generation equipment (such as solar panels and wind turbines) on residential properties.
- Support for the work of the Carbon Trust in Wales, resulting in annual savings of 160,000 tonnes of CO2 being identified.
- £93m extra funding from Labour in the Assembly to boost recycling across Wales. We are on course to meet the target of recycling or composting 25% of all waste by 2007 and of 40% by 2015. Local Authorities achieved a combined recycling and composting target of 19.4 per cent in 2004/5, the latest figures available.
- Over 1,300 schools in Wales are participating Eco-Schools, from nurseries to secondary schools, supported by funding from the Labour Assembly Government. Pupils are encouraged to make their schools more environmentally friendly and to think about how individual actions can affect the environment and climate. Activities include recycling, energy and water-saving, gardening and safe routes to school.

Improving water, rivers and beaches

- Welsh beaches, rivers and drinking water now of the highest ever quality. All beaches in Wales comply with rigorous European standards and a record 43 beaches have the prestigious blue flag status.
- Tap water quality in Wales is at an all-time high. Figures from the Drinking Water Inspectorate, the independent water watchdog, show that drinking water quality in Wales is meeting tough, new drinking water standards.
- Thanks to Labour's investment in sewage treatment and in tackling pollution, 95% of Welsh rivers are classified as of good quality – up from 86% in 1990. Since 2000 the percentage of Welsh rivers classified as being of very good standard has risen from 67 per cent to 76 per cent.
- Announced measures to assist water customers in Wales, including a customer dividend from Dwr Cymru, to help cut water bills by £18 per customer for each of the next five years.
- Established Flood Risk Management Wales as the new statutory flood defence committee in Wales.
- New streamlined processes introduced to improve local flood defences.
- Increased investment in flood defences to £32m a year.

Protecting communities from pollution

- Sustainable Aggregates Levy Fund has committed £8.3 million to support 145 projects across Wales in communities affected by quarrying.

- New regulations introduced to protect communities from the effects of opencast mining. As promised, we will impose a 250m buffer zone to protect homes and families nearest to developments.
- £5m funding announced to investigate and remediate potentially contaminated sites.
- Following negotiations by the Assembly Government's Labour Countryside Minister, exports of Welsh lamb to the United Arab Emirates are now allowed – for the first time since the ban was introduced in 2001
- Over 2,500 jobs created through the £40m Food Processing and Marketing Grant.

A thriving farming and food industry

- Reformed the way support is paid to farmers. The new Common Agricultural Policy payments will help farmers meet customer demand and will reward improvements made to the environment.
- Help for farmers to protect and improve local environments through the new Tir Cynnal scheme. In 2005 alone more than 5,000 applications to the scheme were received.
- Introduced the Organic Maintenance Scheme, which provides ongoing support to organic farmers.
- More than £23m in Farming Connect grants have been committed, generating a total investment in the infrastructure of the Welsh Farming industry of more than £62m.
- Labour supports the food industry in Wales. We have given grants totalling £40m, helping to generate over £105m in investment in the food industry. This has helped to secure or create over 2,500 jobs and has benefited more than 9,000 producers.
- We have secured protection of Geographical Indications for Welsh lamb and beef, enabling Welsh producers to obtain premium prices.
- Welsh beef is now supplied to all but one of the health trusts in Wales, and Labour is working with local authorities to get more Welsh produce into schools

Culture and Sport

At the heart of our approach to culture and sport is a commitment to offer opportunities to the many and not the few.

From day one we have demonstrated our commitment to the Welsh language with concrete and practical action. With Labour, the Welsh language is safe and will be given the support it needs to flourish.

Supporting the Welsh language

- An extra £28m invested in direct support for the Welsh language between 2003 and 2006, demonstrating Labour's continued support for a two language future for Wales.
- Iaith Pawb launched – the first ever national action plan for the Welsh language.
- Twelve local Language Action Plans established across Wales.
- The number of Welsh speakers is rising, bucking the international trend for minority languages. Approaching 1 million people live in households with at least one person who can speak Welsh fluently.
- For the third time in succession, census results show an increase in the number of people under 35 who speak Welsh. The figure today is 26% - up by 9% from 1991.
- Thanks to Labour's investment, there are seven more Welsh medium primary schools than just two years ago – taking the total to 455.
- There are 1,700 more children being taught in Welsh medium primary schools – taking the total to over 52,000.
- Launched a Language Homework Support Line to offer practical help to parents with children in Welsh-medium and bilingual education.

- Introduced the Welsh for Adults scheme, one of the largest adult learning schemes in Wales and demonstrating how the language is flourishing with Labour.
- Launched six dedicated language centres to support Welsh learning for adults.
- Labour Assembly Government funding to deliver the Welsh Language Board's Welsh First Campaign. Held in ten towns across Wales, 10,000 people and 200 businesses took part in the scheme.
- Labour investment is helping the Eisteddfod to flourish. In 2006, Labour in the Assembly gave nearly £500,000 in financial support to the Eisteddfod.

A vibrant, open culture

- For the first time ever investment in the arts, culture and sport has grown to more than £150m.
- Introduced free entry to museums and galleries in Wales. In the first year alone this led to an 87% increase in visitors – with these increases sustained over subsequent years.
- Funding and support for the Wales Millennium Centre, giving Wales an international icon for arts and culture. So far, more than 1 million people have visited the scheme and has attracted some of the most high-profile West End and Broadway productions.
- Funding to establish the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea and to improve the Big Pit coal mining museum. Backed by Labour investment both have become world-class attractions and showcases for Wales' industrial heritage.
- Extra investment in the visual arts in Wales. More than 4,000 artists have taken part in exhibitions over the last year.

- Capital investment has brought new venues across Wales such as Y Galeri in Caernarfon, and Riverfront in Newport – funded by the Labour’s “Arts Outside Cardiff” programme.
- Labour’s funding in the arts has seen successful local projects regenerated across Wales, for example in Merthyr Tydfil, Milford Haven, Aberystwyth and Cardigan.
- £100,000 pledged to a new art gallery in Anglesey dedicated to the work of Sir Kyffin Williams.
- Continued support from Labour in the Assembly to the National Botanic Garden, Hay Festival of Literature, Faenol Festival and Brecon Jazz festival.
- Introduced and funded the Night Out Scheme, to take professional productions into local communities. More than 7,000 people have attended from Communities First areas and there have been more than 30,000 attendances in total.
- Established the Dylan Thomas International Literary Prize, invested £140,000 in the first two Artes Mundi Competitions and supported the Wales Pavillion at the Venice Biennale.
- A £2.5m capital fund established to boost investment in our library network.
- Investment in the Library of Wales collection – the reprinting of a number of Welsh classics in English, making them available to a new generation of readers.
- Support for a new state of the art multimedia theatre at the National Library of Wales for films and live performances.

Tourism and creative industries

- The merger of the Wales Tourism Board with the Assembly Government will give the tourism industry the world-class business support it needs to be successful.
- Labour is building a successful creative industry in Wales, a sector which employs more than 17,500 people and contributes more than £400 million a year to the Welsh economy. We have published the first ever Creative Industries Strategy.
- Marketing by the Labour Assembly Government has generated more than £55m additional tourism revenue for Wales – far exceeding the target of £6.5m.
- 30,000 new buildings in Wales have been listed for their special architectural or historic interest.
- Since April 2003, £8.5 million has been given in grants to enable essential repairs for our historic buildings and ancient monuments.
- Funding for sensory interpretation at Plas Mawr in Conwy and Castell Coch to help people with sensory impairment enjoy our historic buildings.

A 21st century library service

- Labour’s investment and support has seen the library service in Wales continue to prosper. Since 2002 there has been a 22% increase in library visitors and a 45% increase in the amount spent on library materials.
- Over the last year there was an 84% improvement in the delivery of ICT resources and services.
- All libraries in Wales are now connected to the internet. They all deliver free electronic information services and free access to the online family history service from all Archive Services.

Sport and healthy lifestyles

- Introduced free swimming for pensioners in all local council swimming pools. As a result there has been a 20% increase in the number of people over 60 swimming. On average, there are 40,000 free swims every month across Wales.
- Free swimming in local councils during school holidays for school children. In the first summer holiday in was launched, there was a 108% increase in the number of free swims by young people and a further increase of 48% in 2005.
- A £4m investment from Labour in the Assembly to help to recruit and to train over 6,000 coaches across Wales. We are backing our elite athletes with £1.3m of funding every year to help them compete at the highest level.
- More than £1.2m assistance for Glamorgan Cricket Club over the next three years to help secure one of the 2009 Ashes Test Matches for Wales. This will put Wales and Cardiff on the map as a leading venue for international cricket.
- Labour investment helped to secure the Ryder Cup at the Celtic Manor resort in Wales in 2010. We have established the £2m Ryder Cup Legacy Fund to boost grassroots participation in golf.
- Climbing Higher sports strategy launched. Over the next 2 years this will be backed by a £12million investment in a series of programmes aimed at boosting grass roots community sports and activities and encouraging more people to lead healthier and more active lives.
- Major investment of almost £8 million in school sports launched to help meet our target of all secondary school age children doing 60 minutes of exercise at least five times a week. This will support extra-curricular activities such as rugby, football, netball, athletics, break-dancing and salsa.
- Labour Assembly and European regeneration cash has helped to create new mountain bike trails across Wales.
- More than £12m has been invested to develop local cycling and walking routes.

A new way of government

Labour in the Assembly has pioneered a new openness in the way government is run. We work closely in partnership with communities and groups across Wales and have thrown open our processes and procedures to the people we serve.

- A new Government of Wales Act secured. The Act gives more power to the Assembly to help improve the lives of people and communities in Wales, puts the voters in charge of elections by ending dual candidacy and makes Ministers more accountable.
 - Put in place a radical and innovative programme for reforming public services. Informed by the Beecham Report this programme requires that citizens will be far better served through public service organisations working across geographical and service boundaries. We are putting in place a performance management framework that will support reform and the achievement of better services.
 - Moved government closer to the people by establishing and running the Assembly Government roadshow. Just last year, it held 22 local events across Wales.
 - Established the unique Assembly Government open microphone session, giving people the opportunity to question Ministers face-to-face. Last year four sessions were held – in Wrexham, Bangor, Newport and Newtown.
 - Delivering open government by publishing the minutes of Cabinet meetings. People in Wales can see direct the decisions taken on their behalf.
 - Produce annual reports from the First Minister, on sustainable development, equalities, social justice and the Welsh language so that people can see what their government is doing on their behalf.
- New Assembly Government building opened in Merthyr Tydfil and new offices now under development in Llandudno Junction and Aberystwyth. Labour is spreading prosperity throughout Wales by locating civil service jobs outside Cardiff.
 - Support given to set up the Muslim Women Talk Wales group to help improve the engagement of women in Welsh society.
 - Support for the Minority Ethnic Youth Forum to help young people from black and minority ethnic communities in Wales to have a real say in government and in the decisions that impact on their lives.
 - Established the Faith Communities Forum, bringing together 11 different faith groups to improve community relations and improve dialogue with government.