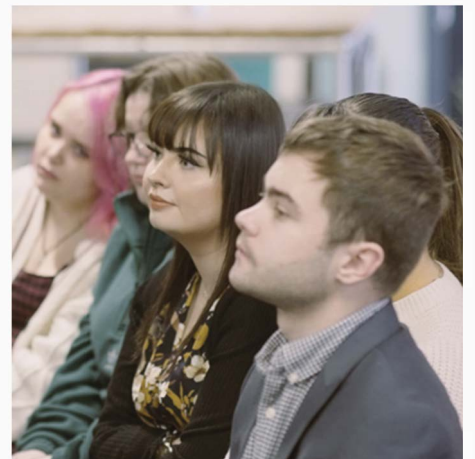
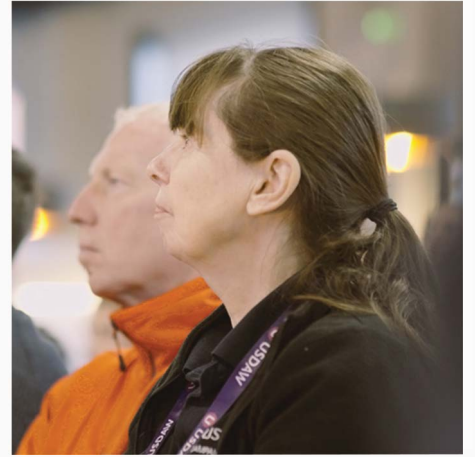


Vaughan Gething

For **Wales**, for **Labour**, for **you**:

The 2024 Welsh Labour Leadership Manifesto





For Wales, for Labour, for you.

FOREWORD



I am proud and deeply honoured to be putting myself forward to serve our country and our party as the next Welsh Labour leader and First Minister of Wales.

This manifesto sets out a vision for a fairer future for Wales we can build together, based on our common values - a future where everyone, no matter their background or what they look like, has the opportunity to succeed.

Our shared Welsh Labour values of equality and fairness have guided me all my life, and they are at the heart of the policies outlined here.

Reading newspapers on my teenage paper round, I was inspired by stories of Nelson Mandela's resilience and dignity, and at 17 I joined Labour to campaign for our great party – a tried-and-proven engine for social justice.

From there, I've spent my life fighting for fairness. From leading Students Say Yes during the 1997 devolution campaign, to choosing to become a trade union lawyer representing working people – women and men suffering from exploitation, bullying and discrimination.

The reason I got up in the morning when I was a trade union lawyer – to stand up for people – is the same that drives me every day in my current role as Economy Minister. It's also why I'm standing to be First Minister.

This is a high stakes moment for Wales - a Tory cost-of-living crisis has pushed many to the brink and we're facing a must-win General Election. We need a Welsh Labour leader and First Minister ready to lead from day one in the job.

As Health Minister during the pandemic, I was tested under the toughest circumstances. While Tories partied in No10, Mark Drakeford and I worked round the clock keeping Wales safe, putting people first - no VIP lanes for PPE; no payday for political pals.

We worked together with our brilliant NHS, local government, Welsh businesses and trade unions. In those darkest of days, we held fast to our Welsh Labour values.

We know there are difficult days ahead, but I'm optimistic for the future we can create together.

As a black Welshman born in Zambia to a Zambian mother and a white Welsh vet from Ogmores-by-Sea, I know what it's like to experience prejudice, to have your place in your community questioned. I don't want anyone in Wales to feel that way. I want young people across Wales to look to the future with hope for the happy, fulfilled lives they can build here - a future where we grow the economy to support public services that are a source of pride and properly funded, where good, meaningful work helps to lift people out of poverty and tackles the climate emergency, where we work to spread opportunity to all and understand that only by working together can we deliver for everyone.

This manifesto outlines ideas and policy innovations rooted in Welsh our shared Labour values:

- For a healthy nation: A Welsh NHS, safe in public hands and always the budget priority. Services focused on improving both physical and mental health and social care fit for our future.

- For green prosperity: Green job creation at the heart of protecting Wales' future. A just transition that tackles poverty and protects our planet, with good jobs and community wealth.

- For a place called home: Accelerating social housing construction. Reliable, affordable public transport. Working in social partnership, with powers and funding devolved to local government.

- For ambitious futures: Educational opportunity at every age and stage of life. Putting the weight of the First Minister's office behind achieving excellence in our schools and colleges, working with teachers and school support staff.

- For a stronger Wales: More powers for Wales and across Wales. An ambitious, progressive nation taking its place on the world stage with a thriving future for Cymraeg.

Taken together, I believe these priorities and policies meet the challenges Welsh Labour members should demand of their future leader. They are rooted in our values and history - and with your support, they will deliver a brighter, better, fairer Wales for our future; a future built by all of us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Vaughan Gethys". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

FOR A HEALTHY NATION:

A Welsh NHS, safe in public hands and always the budget priority. Services focused on improving both physical and mental health, and social care fit for our future.

Good health – mental and physical, throughout every stage of life – is essential for a good life, for people, communities, and our country. Aneurin Bevan understood this in founding the NHS, and it was clear to me every day as Health Minister, working alongside Mark to lead Wales through the pandemic – the hardest challenge of my professional life.

We rose to that challenge by holding true to our shared Welsh Labour values – no crony contracts, no VIP lanes, no parties in our Welsh Government offices. Those values would underpin our approach to health and social care policy if I'm elected as First Minister, with core principles embedded in a Welsh NHS Covenant. We would ensure NHS Wales is safe in public hands, with per head spend on health and social care never falling below that in England, ready to meet the challenges of mental and physical health as equal priorities. We would also move Wales towards the National Social Care Service we desperately need.



NHS

We would introduce a new **Welsh NHS Covenant**, based on Bevan's principles, and a new ambition for our health service. NHS Wales will always be safe in public hands; under my leadership, NHS services would never be sold off. It would be run to Welsh priorities, on Welsh Labour values. It would be a truly distinct NHS Wales focused on patient outcomes. It would always be the budget priority, with per head Health and Social Care spend never falling below that of England. We would publish a new partnership agreement with the service, patients, unions, and local government to meet the challenges across health and social care, together.

NHS Wales would prioritise **patient outcomes**, right across the country and throughout every part of the healthcare pathway. Learning from international best practice, we would use our resources wisely to get the best possible outcomes for patients, reducing waiting times, helping people to manage chronic conditions, and prioritising mental health alongside physical health.

To make good on that ambition we need to support and promote **innovation in healthcare**. Our government would continue to work with universities, third sector and commercial partners to support the cutting-edge developments needed to improve our cancer survival rates. As soon as finances allow, we would invest in the medium term in a new cutting-edge digital pathology centre to speed up diagnosis.

We will continue to **invest in technology** to streamline processes, avoid duplication and ensure critical information is available to support patient care wherever it is delivered.

We would also extend digital monitoring for specific health conditions including COPD, heart failure and glucose monitoring.

I am committed to working with our NHS staff and with patients to ensure the NHS App is widely available, easily accessible and responds to patients' needs and to rollout digital prescribing to every GP and pharmacy.

We must **tackle health inequalities** to make sure the NHS is a service that works for everyone. Our Welsh Labour Government would ensure that equalities are routinely considered throughout health services – something I was committed to as Health Minister. We made PrEP widely available in NHS Wales via sexual health services in 2017 – over three years before it was routinely available in England.

Going further on health inequalities would mean addressing the socioeconomic inequalities that mean someone born in our most deprived areas can expect to die seven years earlier than someone from a more affluent area. It also means a **gender-sensitive and culturally competent health system** which acknowledges the unique health needs and experiences of women, and black, Asian and ethnic minority people. We would take decisive action on racial health inequalities, beginning with examining outcomes in maternity and mental health services, as well as reviewing disciplinary processes for staff and improving data collection.



Women's voices are too often not taken seriously enough in healthcare and our government would be a passionate advocate to rectify this issue, including by introducing a **Women's Health Plan**.

We would continue our programme of dental reform, extending the skills mix in dentistry by increasing the number of dental therapists and ensuring that the dental contract delivers for both patients and the dental profession. We would ensure lifelong support for dental health, building on schemes from primary schools (Design to Smile) all the way through to care homes (Gwen am Byth/Smile for Life).

Social Care

Our government would make further progress towards a fit-for-purpose **National Care Service** meeting the needs of those who receive care, and supporting care workers.

We know how important it is for people to feel in control of the care they receive and the choices they make for themselves and their loved ones, and so we would explore the expansion of **community-led care models** such as social care co-operatives.

We know too that behind our formal, professional care system in Wales is a network of friends, families and others supporting loved ones. We would ensure we properly **value and support unpaid carers**, with guidance for NHS professionals to identify and signpost them to support networks.

Alongside this, our government would make more - and better - use of technology-enabled care to support people to live well and safely at home for longer. This includes extending the use of digital monitoring for care home residents, enabling early intervention and reducing unnecessary hospital admissions.

Mental Health

We would continue to **prioritise investment in mental health**, building on the significant steps we have taken to achieve parity between our approaches to mental and physical health.

Our government would deliver our existing pledges and go further, building on our nationwide 24/7 '111, press 2 for mental health' service and our whole-school approach to supporting children's and young people's mental health.

Recognising the importance of the first 1,000 days of a child's life, we will focus on developing services for our very youngest children and babies. We will redouble efforts to ensure all mental health services are equipped to respond to the needs of people who are neurodivergent.

FOR GREEN PROSPERITY:

Green job creation at the heart of protecting Wales' future. A just transition that tackles poverty and protects our planet, with good jobs and community wealth.

The economic challenges facing Wales have changed fundamentally since we campaigned for devolution in 1997. Then, our central problem was chronic, stubbornly high unemployment following the Tories' reckless pit closures. Since then, the Welsh Labour Government has succeeded in cutting unemployment. Today, we face a different challenge.

After 14 years of failed, Tory, trickle-down economics, our focus must be on relentlessly driving down poverty by driving up job quality. At the same time, we must tackle climate change - the biggest collective challenge of our generation.

We can do both, together.

As First Minister, achieving climate justice and social justice would be our twin economic missions.

We would harness Wales' advantages in industries such as clean energy and advanced manufacturing. Our Welsh Labour Government would help shape the kind of economy we want to see. Wales would join the wave of countries recognising governments must take more active roles in private markets to secure better results for citizens and bolster industries providing good jobs.

Wales once led the world into the Industrial Revolution; now we must lead the way in the Green Industrial Revolution. We would use the tools of devolution to ensure it helps us build a stronger, fairer, more sustainable future. The next generations rely on us to deliver. Together, we will.



Industrial policy for green growth

As First Minister I would continue to fight for our vital steel sector to have the strong future it deserves. We will do whatever it takes to stand up for our steel workers – and our Government **will never agree to transfer Welsh steelworkers' jobs and emissions overseas.**

Our Welsh Government would continue to build on our Economic Missions and take an **active green industrial policy** approach that has the whole weight of government behind it. We would task Net Zero Industry Wales with identifying where Wales has a comparative advantage and targeting support to ensure that we are at the forefront of the competitive industries of the future - creating good, local jobs in sectors from semiconductors to tidal power. In doing so, we can steal a march on the industries of the future, despite a Tory government in Westminster held back by chronic UK centralism and an ideological commitment to failed laissez-faire economics. And if Labour wins the next General Election, we would use the Welsh Government's seat on the new UK Industrial Strategy Council to ensure that funding is leveraged to the industrial and economy priorities we set for Wales.

Securing good jobs means making **bold, systemic reforms to the planning and investment frameworks to unlock green growth.** Our government would review our planning system to give greater speed and certainty to decision-making for major projects that bring good jobs to Wales – especially on renewable energy.

We would also review our inward investment pathways with the aim of streamlining the process and making it even easier to invest and bring good jobs to Wales. This review would look at the best practice strategies adopted elsewhere in the world to ensure Wales is an attractive place for companies to locate high quality employment.

While attracting more green investment, we would also limit public investment that contributes to climate change by supporting local authority pension funds divesting from fossil fuel.

A vibrant private sector is essential to meeting my twin economic missions, and our government would **support Welsh businesses and Welsh workers to adapt to, and thrive in, the transition to net zero,** ensuring that workers are the priority during this process.

We would create a National Manufacturing Institute for Wales and deliver new **Clean Growth Hubs** – clusters of environmentally-friendly businesses powering local growth and better jobs – building on those that I have supported as Economy Minister. We would also extend Green Business Loans, helping businesses decarbonise and lowering energy bills for good.

While looking to secure and create jobs in the green industries of the future, we would never neglect our vital **everyday economy** that provides the everyday goods and services we all rely on. It supports so many jobs and livelihoods and makes a huge contribution to our overall economy, and also has potential to increase quality of life for everyone. We would focus on



improving the quality of jobs in the everyday economy, including in sectors like care, food, and manufacturing. We would nurture our everyday economy to support local businesses and build stronger community wealth. We would also embed foundational economy principles across public bodies, explicitly linking all public investment to better outcomes for local economies.

Our government would harness our natural assets like wind and tidal power, while delivering nature protection. **We would ensure renewable energy generated here benefits people in Wales.**

We would push for an end to UK Government inaction on strengthening the grid in Wales to enable the transition to net zero.

Better jobs and higher living standards

We would create a new **Fair Work Fund – ‘Gwaith Teg’** – open to bids from projects seeking to support fair working practices. Examples could include better progression opportunities in low-paid work; helping pay workers a Real Living Wage; improving management standards; increasing trade union membership among young people and the private sector; encouraging greater trade union involvement in policy development and delivery; and combating discrimination in the workplace including by tackling the gender and ethnicity pay gaps. The funding would come from returned post-EU development funding under a UK Labour Government and the fund would be co-developed with the Social Partnership Council.

We would empower workers and their unions through initiatives as diverse as greater support for remote and flexible working - especially where it empowers disabled people and parents - and the introduction of a living wage for agricultural workers. This would sit alongside a review of the operation of the Agricultural Advisory Panel to ensure it is truly independent and has the confidence of unions and employers. We would **implement a key recommendation of the recent Wales TUC Devolution and Work in Wales report** by creating a fair work milestone alongside trade unions and businesses to ensure we are measuring and seeking to improve fair working practices.

We would aim to again **double the number of worker-owned businesses in Wales**, after my commitment as Economy Minister to do just that looks set to be met early, and we would **direct more public procurement spending towards co-operatives and social enterprises.**

We would work alongside an incoming UK Labour Government to **accelerate the rollout of banking hubs** and urge Cash Access UK to prioritise rural and underdeveloped areas so these hubs reach the most important areas more quickly. We would also explore expanding the Development Bank of Wales’ work to more easily provide business finance to people wishing to establish or expand businesses outside our big towns and cities.

Rural and natural Wales

Wales has some of the most beautiful landscapes in the world, from coastlines to mountain ranges, enjoyed and cared for by people across the country.



We have an opportunity to ensure nature-friendly farming becomes the norm. A new **Nature Positive Bill** must be developed alongside the Sustainable Farming Scheme which better connects families with affordable, nutritious food. We would set strong statutory targets for the protection and restoration of nature and include payment for farmers in exchange for public goods. By 2030, 30% of our land and sea would be protected and we would lead by example in sustainably managing and expanding woodland.

Our Welsh Labour Government would strengthen **enforcement action to protect our environment**, starting with the creation of a fully-functioning environmental governance body, filling the gap left post-Brexit. The pollution of our rivers and watercourses has been one of the great scandals of the last 14 years of Tory rule, and we would introduce stricter penalties for those who break environmental rules. We would also invest to protect communities from flooding, coastal erosion and other impacts of the climate emergency. We would do all we can to ensure the UK Government works with us – especially if we have a constructive Labour administration in Westminster – to bring about overdue action on unsafe coal tips, which are only likely to be made more dangerous by more frequent and intense storms.

We would **make Wales the leader on animal welfare standards in the UK**, by giving RSPCA officers additional enforcement powers and introduce an outright ban on pets being given as prizes, as many Welsh Labour local authorities have already done.

FOR A PLACE CALLED HOME:

Accelerating social housing construction. Reliable, affordable public transport. Working in social partnership, with powers and funding devolved to local government.

Home is more than the place we live, it is a cynefin – a place where we belong, connected with the people and places around us into a strong community. Home is the centre of our day-to-day lives: our homes, high streets, local transport networks, and local government services.

We can restore that sense of belonging, of connectivity and community.

That is why, if I'm elected as First Minister, we would accelerate building social housing. Constructing green homes across Wales will help tackle the housing crisis and create good quality jobs.

How these homes are connected to each other matters too. Improving the links within and between our communities brings people together and ensures growth and opportunities reach every community.

We also need to ensure more of those journeys are made by public transport - possible with reliable, integrated, affordable services.

We must also empower communities by devolving power within Wales. We would establish an agreement with local leaders on economic development to drive our economy forward and create new jobs.



Housing

Building more social housing would be a priority for me as First Minister. It is one of the most powerful tools in alleviating poverty and helping people to build better, more secure futures. We would use the existing Social Housing Grant to boost innovation in this next generation of social housing. Latest construction methods and modular housing offer sustainable and cost-effective means of delivering new homes. New homes that help to meet the climate crisis challenge and lower energy bills. We would prioritise Welsh supply chains and work with the housing sector to ensure our workforce has the skills to fill these opportunities, including through apprenticeships. Our government would also increase the number of accessible homes for disabled people.

To **tackle the housing crisis**, we need to slash planning backlogs. Local authority planning departments have suffered from 14 years of austerity. With our Government, an Affordable Homes Taskforce would fast-track major developments.

We would prioritise new developments close to town centres to support local high streets and reduce dependency on car travel. We would ensure that all new build housing has gigabit capable connections so that new housing in Wales is fit for the future.

To cut carbon emissions and household energy bills, we need to embark on an ambitious programme of **retrofitting existing housing stock**. Our Government would work with the sector and private finance to roll out this programme at the pace and scale needed. The commitment to more apprenticeships would help ensure we have a pipeline of skilled people to carry out the work as part of a wider green jobs revolution. We would pilot the creation of local retrofitting networks bringing together small-scale providers and sole traders into a co-operative, with access to public sector retrofitting contracts – giving contractors opportunities to grow. Welsh Labour has a proud record of **improving security and rights for tenants** through the Renting Homes (Wales) Act, which simplified the process of renting a home and created a new system for tenancies. We would also look to strengthen those rights so renters can make their house a home – including by ending unreasonable ‘no pet’ clauses. We would examine national and international evidence on **rent controls**, ensuring that rents are fair for tenants, in a way that doesn’t reduce the number of homes available to let.

Our Welsh Labour Government would work towards a **radical overhaul of the leasehold system** so existing leaseholders can collectively purchase more easily and move to commonhold if they wish. I am also keen to simplify the process for leaseholders to establish the right to self-manage or to better hold to account estate managers. We would continue to treat **tackling homelessness** as a national issue, collaborating with local authorities and charities to take a strategic approach to ensure that expertise is pooled across regions, sharing best practice in delivering much-needed temporary accommodation. We can support people off the streets and to build more sustainable and secure futures.

We would continue to **support mortgage holders** who have been impacted by the Tory mortgage crisis through the Help to Stay Wales Scheme.



Transport and Travel

Our Welsh Labour Government would pass **legislation to regulate the bus network** before the end of this Senedd term. Introducing franchising would ensure services meet communities' and people's needs – especially those who rely on buses, such as some elderly and disabled people.

Franchising would also allow **for better-integrated public transport**, with bus schedules linking better with each other and train timetables, with more availability of single tickets for trains and buses.

We would **explore fare reduction schemes** as finances allow, including free-at-the-point-of-boarding bus travel. Our Welsh Labour Government would review the application process for bus passes for disabled people, to ensure everyone entitled to a bus pass can navigate the application system.

We would continue to work with the sector to increase the use of electric buses and support hydrogen bus trials.

Alongside more electric vehicles, it is vital the necessary infrastructure to **support EV charging** is ready. We would work with delivery partners to build a reliable and efficient national charging network, in line with the existing strategy.

Cardiff Airport is a vital economic and transport resource for South Wales. We would continue to support innovation and growth. We would work with the aviation industry to use the airport as a catalyst for lower carbon air travel.

Active travel is the cheapest, greenest form of transport, but people choose to walk or cycle for their commute if they feel safe. We are committed to active travel infrastructure improving safety.

We would broaden the body of advice that Welsh Government relies on to formulate transport policy and empower citizens to have a greater role in policy planning. We would also make the necessary infrastructure improvements to relieve pressures on the M4 corridor and strengthen transport links across South East Wales by delivering on the Burns Commission. This includes by co-ordinating bus and train timetables, with integrated ticketing.

We would increase the presence of Transport for Wales in North Wales, improving transport connections, including pressing the UK Government to deliver a credible and properly funded plan for railway upgrades so we can deliver reliable metro services on key routes. We remain committed to developing a Swansea Bay and South West Wales Metro, to improve public transport connections within the region.



More powers for local government across Wales

Our future Welsh Labour Government would develop a **package of powers for local government in Welsh regions** through Corporate Joint Committees. For North Wales, this package of powers would be developed by the Minister for North Wales, reporting to the First Minister.

Devolution of powers cannot come without resources. We would develop a list of jointly agreed priorities across each region that can be used to leverage in key drivers of good jobs and higher living standards such as private investment, UK Government investment, and research and development funding.

These measures are aimed at devolving powers from Welsh Government to Corporate Joint Committees, not moving powers currently held by local councillors into Welsh Government. We would also develop a stronger role for all local councillors within Corporate Joint Committees meaning that democratically elected **local councillors will have more powers as a result of these changes, not fewer.**

Councils have been at the coalface in dealing with the harsh realities of Conservative austerity. Our government would work in a partnership of equals with Labour councillors to take on the shared challenges we face.

Culture, Heritage, and Sport

The growth of our creative sector has been one of the great success stories of Welsh devolution. Creative industries make a growing contribution to our economy, providing employment in good jobs. However, the industry is reporting shortages in skills and missed employment opportunities. We would work with partners in the sector, to deliver skills training by establishing **Creative Academy Cymru.**

Working with our national cultural, heritage and sporting organisations, we would improve the energy efficiency of their estates, helping to reach our net zero targets and reduce running costs. We would give greater priority to health and wellbeing within arts, culture, heritage and sport sectors through the **Wales Wellbeing Bond.**

We would ensure there is greater protection for buildings of local or cultural significance by reviewing frameworks around the preservation of historic buildings.

We would call on the UK Government to amend the listed events regime to include events of national significance in Wales, such as the Six Nations, on free to air television. We would also champion grassroots sport for the mental and physical health benefits.

We would support the continuation and growth of the **National Plan for Music in Wales.** We would also work to safeguard live music venues of all sizes, including promoting co-operative ownership models.



Alongside this, we would investigate the potential for introducing a cultural passport for under 18-year-olds, to ensure that young people from every background can access arts, culture, and creative opportunities.

We would continue the work to deliver a National Contemporary Art Gallery, and complete work on Theatr Clwyd, The Museum of North Wales and The Football Museum. We would also work with the tourism sector to promote Wales as a land of adventure and sustainable tourism.

Our Welsh Labour Government would also be a strong advocate for a City of Culture bid in Wales.

FOR AMBITIOUS FUTURES:

Educational opportunity at every age and stage of life. Putting the weight of the First Minister's office behind achieving excellence in our schools and colleges, working with teachers and support staff.

Learners of all ages should have ambitious futures in Wales. Our Welsh Labour Government would lead a new national mission to ensure everyone has the essential life skills they need for the future. To achieve this, we must work together in partnership – government, the education sector, trade unions, and businesses from different industries – to radically improve education and career pathways in Wales. Despite the pressures they face, our teachers' and school support staff's dedication is inspiring. Staff in schools and colleges are increasingly providing emotional and mental health support to learners whose families are struggling financially, and in other ways. We will always be there for our dedicated school staff.

In the rapidly changing world of work today, learning and skills development does not end at the school gates. We would recognise the need for tailored support at different ages and stages of people's lives through post-compulsory, community and adult learning. We want people to have flexible, timely reskilling opportunities at any time of life. Achieving this requires political will and a whole of society effort. This is a vital tool in ensuring that people have dignity and reward in their working lives, while best positioning Wales to tackle the climate emergency and adapt to AI and automation.



Childcare

I am determined that together, we will give **all children in Wales a strong start**, no matter their background, while also enabling parents to work or learn as they choose. The cost of childcare should not be holding people back. Our Welsh Labour Government would renew our focus on the first 1000 days of a child's life. We are committed to expanding our offer as resources become available.

Education

We want to see Welsh schools consistently delivering **excellence in education** for our children and young people. Welsh schoolchildren are still feeling the learning and social impact of the Covid pandemic. We are committed to closing the attainment gap and addressing the rise in absenteeism and disruptive behaviour in schools by focusing on support for families. We would work with local authorities, schools and parents to promote access to Welsh medium education and to support children and young people with Additional Learning Needs.

In a rapidly changing economy, it is vital our **education system prepares young people for the world of work**. Pre-16, in-school employer engagement, with a particular focus on supporting pupils to map career paths according to their ambition and skills is essential. Our government would also expand the Tech Valleys Hive to more schools in the Valleys. At the same time, we need to ensure young people know their rights when they enter the workplace. We would promote the Wales TUC Unions and the World of Work programme and reform the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales to include a short online module on working rights for all apprenticeships.

It is more important than ever that we continue to ensure that **equality and diversity form a key part of our schooling**, so that our children grow up with a perspective on different walks of life. We would support measures to ensure that pupils gain a wide experience and understanding of diverse communities throughout their time at school, and also ensure that homophobia, sexism, racism, and ableism are not welcome in our education system.

Skills

Our Welsh Labour Government would make **reinvesting in more apprenticeships** a priority for EU replacement funds, which the next UK Labour Government would repatriate to Wales – a commitment I secured. At the same time, we would increase the diversity of industries providing work-based training apprenticeships to meet demand for skilled jobs in emerging sectors. We would review the delivery of Essential Skills Wales in work-based learning apprenticeships and target higher and degree-level apprenticeships to those areas with the highest demand for skills.

We would place a major focus on strengthening Wales' vocational and technical education and training offer, developing a strategy for government, employers and trade unions. We will continue to invest in the successful Wales Union Learning Fund.



Our government would **support further education colleges to train people in the green skills we need for the future**, following our Net Zero Skills Action plan covering construction engineering, manufacturing, and much more. We would also want to ensure all learners are supported as they make the transition into work and that we are strategic in our approach to cross-sector issues. This means encouraging better coordination between our various education sectors as well as structuring the Commission on Tertiary Education and Research to focus on cross-cutting themes such as lifelong learning and green skills.

We would collaborate with partners to raise awareness and increase access to the full Adult Community Learning partnerships offer and promote the value of multilingualism. We would also broaden the Welsh Government's Economic Contract with businesses to include an education and employment exchange.

As part of our determination that everyone should feel they have the prospect of an exciting future here, we would do more to **retain and develop diverse talent and skills across the nation**. We would bolster work-based learning opportunities and promote green career pathways for people of all ages, working with local authorities, businesses, and further and higher education institutions to develop regional, sectoral skills centres for excellence. I would prioritise **free, flexible learning for workers on low pay**, mainstreaming our personal learning accounts approach. Building equity into the industries of the future is essential, and we would support equal access to green skills and jobs so that current inequalities are not replicated or worsened as we transition to new industries.

FOR A STRONGER WALES:

More powers for Wales and across Wales. An ambitious, progressive nation taking its place on the world stage with a thriving future for Cymraeg.

Together, we can build a stronger, fairer future for Wales where everyone has the opportunity to succeed. The first 25 years of devolution are proof of what we can achieve together, for all of us. I'm proud to have led Students Say Yes in 1997, alongside so many people in our movement, and to have campaigned for more devolution in 2011. Now it's time to secure more powers for the Senedd and to

strengthen the devolution settlement by sharing powers out across Wales. We can spread power out of Cardiff and put it into the hands of people so that every region of our country has a say, and feels a strong connection to our Senedd.

As a Welshman born in Zambia, I know what it's like to face prejudice and to have your place in your community questioned. I don't want any young person in Wales to ever feel that way. Wales is stronger through benefitting from the talents of all our citizens, which is why this manifesto contains strong commitments to equalities. We would continue the Welsh Government's good work in this area and strengthen provisions on equality for women, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people, and ethnic minorities. However, our commitment to equality is not just contained within this section, but throughout this manifesto.

We are also committed to a thriving future for Cymraeg in our communities with our mission to reach a million Welsh speakers. Like so many of us across the country, I'm learning Welsh myself. Having a dysgwr as First Minister would be a positive signal to people across Wales learning the language and encouraging everyone to use the Welsh you have.



Equalities

Our government would be committed to building an **anti-racist Wales**. We would support the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan to the end of the current two-year period in June 2024, then build on our learning for the next two years with a renewed set of ambitious actions. Gwaith Teg – our new Fair Work Fund - would provide support for a fairer economy, including action to tackle racial and disability discrimination and the gender pay gap and ethnicity pay gap.

We would support making Wales the most **LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe** and continue to support and see through the actions of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales. We would continue to support the new RSE curriculum and the production of more supportive materials for teachers and schools to implement it. We would also continue to support the right of trans people to self-identify as the gender of their choice.

We would continue to push for a Wales that **strives for the rights and equality of all disabled people** by continuing to assess the feasibility of implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People (UNCRPD) into law.

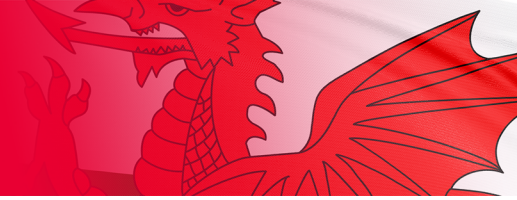
We would lead a feminist government that **advances gender equality** in a Wales that continues to support the findings of the Advancing Gender Equality in Wales Plan, strengthening and updating the provisions where necessary. Tackling violence against women, domestic abuse, and sexual violence would remain a strategic priority for the Welsh Government.

Welsh Labour has taken great strides forward in gender equality, and most of our Members of the Senedd are now women. However, we know we still have more to do. Our government would therefore always continue to have a **gender balanced cabinet** as we seek to develop the leaders of the future.

We will explore new approaches to create safer workplaces. We will drive up leadership standards needed to prevent abuse and deliver robust, consistent accountability at work. Where needed, we will revisit the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act to strengthen these priorities.

We would consult on plans to drive **higher standards in public bodies**, with an option of placing a stronger standard on sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination for public bodies on a statutory basis. In recent years we have seen too many instances of improper behaviour in our public bodies.

We would continue to tackle child poverty and progress work on a **Welsh Benefits System**, streamlining the benefits the Welsh Government currently offers - increasing awareness and ease of use among potential users. As part of this work, we would examine how to bring services together to **create a digital pass for public services**. This would make it easier for people to access support on which they rely and opportunities they deserve. Making access easier for all is a tool for social justice – one that can build greater trust. We would ensure analogue options are retained for those who struggle to use digital services.



Our government would also keep eligibility thresholds for Welsh benefits under review, to ensure vulnerable families who rely on provisions such as Free School Meals do not find themselves without our support without any increase in their living standards. This will form part of our work to continue to tackle issues such as holiday hunger.

Our government would proudly retain **Wales' Nation of Sanctuary status**, welcoming refugees fleeing war and persecution, and oppose narratives and voices that peddle division and hate.

Constitution and Democracy

As someone who campaigned for devolution in the referenda of 1997 and 2011, alongside so many others across our movement, I'd continue to advocate for stronger powers for the Senedd. We would support the devolution of the Crown Estate to Wales, in order to allow us to utilise our natural resources to bring good quality, green jobs to Wales.

We would also support the devolution of youth justice and probation as recommended in Gordon Brown's report, and the **devolution of justice and policing powers**, as is established Welsh Labour policy. We'd also support the **devolution of prudential borrowing powers**, which would reduce the cost of infrastructure building projects in Wales, allowing us to achieve more.

Our support for devolution would also extend beyond more powers to the Senedd. Alongside our regional devolution proposals outlined earlier, our government would give **more power to the Minister for North Wales**, including an office in North Wales and a team of officials based in North Wales from across key Welsh Government departments.

Our government would have a relentless focus on the bread-and-butter issues that matter to people, and we would **establish a new Office of the First Minister focused on delivery**. This office would ensure that core government priorities are progressing. It would also have a remit focused on cross-governmental priorities such as a fair work, climate change, and mental health, helping Ministers in these areas to deliver their agendas.

HS2 is clearly an England-only project that has been classified as England-and-Wales to deny us funding that we are entitled to. I back creating an independent secretariat to ensure the UK Government cannot continue to mistreat devolved nations.

Welsh language and culture

Like many of you, I am a Welsh learner. The Welsh language is an essential part of our national identity and I'm committed to ensuring we **reach a million Welsh speakers by 2050**. We would promote work-based and lifelong learning opportunities with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. We would roll out the innovative Arfor Programme to more Local Authority areas, to support and grow the Welsh language alongside local economies. Our government would also expand the Perthyn Project to provide specialist support to more communities who want to develop Welsh language co-operative initiatives.

For Wales, for Labour, for you.



Our Welsh Labour Government would champion of our great **Welsh cultural assets**, including pushing for the Eisteddfodau to receive UNESCO protected status through the UNESCO register of intangible cultural heritage. We would use all Welsh Government levers to promote a high standard and sustainable level of Welsh language media and broadcasting. We will support adapting Ofcom's remit to require Welsh language commentary for specific events.

Welsh Labour would push for tailored support to encourage Welsh-speaking Labour members to stand as candidates for elections.

**For Wales,
for Labour,
for you.**