

AT A GLANCE WALES POLICY GUIDE

Labour  Llafur

At a Glance - Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide candidates and key campaigners with an at a glance guide to key policy issues for the 2010 General Election in Wales. 'At a glance Wales' is based upon an online resource produced by the Labour Party but amended to reflect Wales, our key election themes and devolution.

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A Future Fair For All - Wales

In the coming election, the people of Wales and Britain will make a big choice about the kind of future we want for our country.

It is a choice between building a future that is fair for all, or a change that puts the recovery at risk, threatens public services and makes life tougher for families.

- We will secure the recovery - not put it at risk.
- We will support new industries and future jobs.
- We will protect frontline services - not cut them.
- We will stand up for the many - not the few.

Faced with a global recession and the worst financial crisis in 60 years, the British people were not simply going to let the recession take its course - and neither were we.

Our choice was to take action, with job-boosting measures and extra help for families, businesses and homeowners. Today the economy is still recovering so we must maintain our support - not risk the recovery by cutting support now.

As the economy recovers, we will halve the deficit over four years and we will do it fairly, protecting the key public services that people value.

The Conservative approach is very different. The Tories threaten an age of austerity - a change you can't afford. Their plan for immediate cuts would choke off the recovery, leading to a decade of low growth and austerity. The Tories not only pose a risk to the recovery now, they have no credible plans for jobs and opportunity for the future.

So this year's election will be a big choice about the kind of future we want for Britain. The Conservatives threaten the wrong kind of change - a change you can't afford. With Labour we can secure the recovery and build a future fair for all.

Our Pledges for Wales

We pledge to:

Secure the recovery and halve the deficit through economic growth, fair taxes and cuts to lower priority spending,

Protect frontline investment in policing, schools, childcare and the NHS, with every cancer patient in Wales provided with a key worker,

Strengthen fairness in communities through an Australian style points-based system to control immigration; guaranteed education, apprenticeships and jobs for young people; and a crack down on anti-social behaviour.

Raise family living standards, keeping mortgage rates as low as possible; increasing tax credits for families with young children; providing new help for first time buyers; and restoring the link between the state pension and earnings from 2012.

Build a high tech economy, supporting businesses and industry to create 1 million more skilled jobs and modernising our infrastructure with High-Speed Rail, a Green Investment Bank and broadband access for all.

At a glance -Working Families

When Britain was hit by the global recession, the Labour Government faced a choice - it could let the recession run its course, or it could actively intervene to support the economy and help families through the downturn.

Labour chose to act, with job-boosting measures and extra help for families on middle and modest incomes, including tax cuts, increased child benefit and tax credits, and expanded support for the unemployed. We also provided support to keep businesses afloat through a range of different schemes. Government support to help people move back into work, combined with a dynamic and flexible labour market, has helped over 4 million people to leave unemployment benefit since December 2008.

50p tax rate

We are ready to **make the tough decisions**; we have already committed to halving the deficit by 2014 and introduced a new 50p rate of tax for income over £150,000 on April 6th 2010. But we will also continue to support families through these difficult times.

Stamp Duty Holiday - we will give a two-year Stamp Duty holiday for first-time buyers on residential property transactions up to £250,000; funded by a new 5 per cent rate of stamp duty for transactions over £1 million from April 2011.

The **fuel duty rise for 2010** will be staged, with an increase of one penny per litre on 1 April 2010 and one penny per litre on 1 October 2010, then 0.76 pence per litre on 1 January 2011.

Consumers will be given a new right to a basic bank account, and to encourage saving we will launch the **Saving Gateway**, where the Government adds 50 pence for each £1 saved by working age people on low incomes, in July 2010.

To give more help to families we will increase the child element of the **Child Tax Credit** of £4 per week for families with children aged 1 and 2 years old from April 2012. From April 2010, there will be additional annual payments of £100 into the Child Trust Fund accounts of disabled children. Severely disabled children will receive £200 per year.

In Wales this is additional to the announcement made by the Welsh Assembly Government (January 2010) of a Child Trust Fund Cymru with a 'top up' of £50 to eligible children and £100 for the least well off children.

We are guaranteeing a job, training or college place to every 18-24 year old out of work for more than six months - we do not wish to see the patterns of past recessions repeated where temporary job losses led to whole communities becoming long-term unemployed.

We will continue to help those who have lost a job or income stay in their homes, for example, helping them with interest payments or through **the Labour-led Assembly 'Mortgage Support scheme for Wales**, which helps them reduce and defer mortgage payments until their financial circumstances improve. The decisions we have taken on mortgage protection and employment support have been welcomed by leading charities such as Shelter as necessary steps in the face of recession.

We want to help people get on the housing ladder. So we are doubling the stamp duty limit for first time buyers from £125,000 to £250,000, for this year and next, funded by an increase on the most expensive properties.

Pre-school and primary school planning - We want to make sure we are providing a good start for all our children and have provided 9,000 additional free early-years places, and at least half-time nursery places for all three-year-olds. Our integrated centres are helping to provide early-years education, childcare, community/parent training and open access play to communities in disadvantaged areas and offer parents and children essential services. We have also introduced a foundation phase of education for 3-7 year olds, which will help to improve their learning experiences and provide them with a stronger basis for future learning.

The Genesis Cymru Wales phase 2 was launched in 2008 with £35million from the European Social Fund to increase childcare provision.

Over 1,000 Cymorth projects are receiving funding across Wales to help disadvantaged children, young people and their families get the best start in life and there are now 47 Integrated Children's Centres in Wales, with at least one in every local authority area.

In Wales over 1,000 schools take part in Labour's free breakfast scheme.

We provide school children aged 15 or below in Wales with the opportunity for **free swimming at local pools**. All 22 councils take part in the scheme at 120 pools. The scheme also applies to over 60's.

Labour's Record:

- The New Deal has helped over 2 million people across the UK into work.
- All parents can get help saving for their children's future with the Child Trust Fund, with the most help going to the poorest children and children in care. Over 4.8 million Child Trust Funds have been started.
- An extra 9,000 additional free early year places.
- At least half time nursery for all three year olds.
- The Working Tax Credit provides help with childcare, up to a maximum eligible amount of £300 per week (£175 per week for one child).
- New mums now have 9 months paid maternity leave and maternity pay is up to £123 a week, while all dads now have the right to paternity leave. Parents and carers also have the right to request flexible working.
- As a result of the tax credit system, 4 in 10 families - over 3 million families - now pay no net tax.
- Free school breakfast scheme at 1,000 schools in Wales.
- Free swimming scheme for children 15 and under and the over 60's.

At a Glance - Economic recovery

Over the last two years, the world has faced an unprecedented financial and economic crisis. Labour made the choice not to let the recession run its course but to intervene to stabilise the banks, to protect savers and to support the economy, businesses and the family finances of those worst affected. Now that the country is moving back into growth, we will continue to support the recovering economy.

The decisions we took during the recession were designed to support the economy and to prepare the country for recovery. We chose to invest, stepping in to keep the economy moving and avoid choking off recovery. We targeted support at families - bringing forward increases in Child Benefit and Child Tax Credits; at pensioners - increasing the State Pension and the Winter Fuel Payment; and at businesses - deferring tax payments and increasing investment allowances. Due to our success in keeping inflation low, the Bank of England has been able to keep interest rates low, in contrast to previous recessions, where interest rates rose as high as 15 per cent. This has made it easier for homeowners to meet their mortgage payments - and we have introduced and expanded mortgage protection schemes to help people stay in their homes if they lose their jobs. Our decision to invest through the recession will help us to cut the deficit in the long term, because keeping people in work and in their homes helps to avoid higher unemployment and benefit bills. Doing nothing, as some proposed, would have deepened the recession and delayed the recovery.

In Wales we have the ReAct and ProAct schemes. ReAct is now giving the training people need to re-skill or up-skill and rejoin the labour market sooner rather than later with almost 15,000 workers helped so far.

ProAct has committed almost £24 million so far, supporting around 200 companies and protecting the jobs of over 9100 people in Wales.

But the recovery is still in its infancy. There are equally tough choices ahead - choices that will shape our economy and society for decades to come. The task now is to bring down borrowing in a way which does not damage the recovery or the front-line services on which people depend.

Nothing is preordained about continued recovery. We will continue supporting the economy to strengthen the recovery and take the action necessary to promote growth and jobs. It

would be a huge mistake to cut support while the economy is still recovering but we have been clear, that as the recovery strengthens we will take action to reduce the deficit, more than halving it over four years.

Reducing the deficit will come from a combination of tax increases, spending cuts and economic growth.

We will act fairly, so that those who are most able to bear the burden make the greatest contribution. That means tax increases for those who can afford them, with a new 50p top rate for those who earn over £150,000. For people with incomes over £100,000 a year we will gradually remove the value of their personal allowances. Tax relief on pensions will be restricted from next year, but only for those with incomes above £130,000 a year. Looking across the tax rises since the beginning of the global economic crisis, 60 per cent of them will be paid for by the top 5 per cent of earners.

Spending will be tighter in the years ahead. We will protect schools, the NHS and the police at the frontline, but we will cut costs, inefficiencies, unnecessary programmes and lower priority budgets. At all times, we will be guided by our values: prioritising families and businesses in the mainstream middle, and the public services which they rely on.

A stronger economy is key to reducing borrowing. So we will provide targeted support for businesses as the economy recovers, laying a foundation for sustainable long-term growth, opportunity and enterprise.

Labour's Record

In the last year:

- 22 million people across the UK have benefited from tax cuts that have raised real incomes at a critical time.
- Up to 500,000 jobs have been protected that might otherwise have been lost without the action taken by the Labour Government in conjunction with the Bank of England.
- The Time to Pay scheme has allowed over **10,070 businesses in Wales to defer over £147 million pounds of payments.** (part of 200,000 businesses, which collectively employ 1.4 million people across the UK, to delay more than

£5 billion in business taxes on a timetable they can afford). This scheme will continue throughout the next Parliament.

- **Over 11,000 jobs in Wales have been created in Wales through the Future Jobs Fund.** (across the UK we are creating 120,000 new jobs through the Future Jobs Fund, part of our guarantee of a job or training place for all 18 to 24 year olds out of work for six months). We are also guaranteeing a place in school, college or training or an apprenticeship for all 16 and 17 year olds.
- **Nearly 17,000 orders made in Wales under the car scrappage scheme,** where owners scrapping an old car receive £2,000 off the price of a new car. This has assisted with 380,000 orders being placed across the UK, keeping the automotive industry and its supply chain on its feet.
- The Enterprise Finance Guarantee scheme has helped **425 companies in Wales being offered over £33 million worth of loans.** (part of almost 9,000 businesses access loans totalling over £900 million).
- We supported manufacturing by doubling capital tax allowances meaning firms receive tax relief when they invest in plant and machinery.

There are 98,000 more jobs in Wales today, even after the recession, than there was in 1997 and latest figures show that employment is rising.

Compared to the last recession the claimant count in every single local authority area in Wales is lower than 1992. In Wales overall it is 42% lower than under the Tories.

Long term unemployment in Wales is over 40% lower than it was in 1997 and over 75% lower than it was in the early 1990's.

At a Glance: Business

Labour has taken action to support businesses during the global downturn. Now that the economy is moving back to growth, the priority is to secure a strong recovery. We know that economic recovery will be driven by firms and individuals across the whole economy, competing in a diverse range of sectors and markets. It is critical therefore to equip businesses with the support they need in an increasingly competitive globalised economy.

It is not an option for the UK to simply stand aside and allow other countries to capture these rapidly expanding markets. We will need to attract inward investors and buyers for what the UK sells.

Locking in the recovery requires an active industrial strategy to invest in the UK's fundamental strengths. Labour believes there is a role for Government to play in giving industrial sectors the necessary support to allow them to flourish. We will therefore invest in the industries of the future, such as low carbon, biotechnology, advanced bioscience and cutting edge advanced manufacturing.

The UK has the lowest barriers to entrepreneurship of all OECD countries and last year was ranked fifth in the world by the World Bank for 'ease of doing business'. We will make further progress in cutting the costs of regulation on growing businesses, especially the smallest. Labour's aim is to make the UK the best country in the G20 in which to set up and run a business, and become one of the most attractive places in the world to invest.

Labour will create an enterprise environment that gives active support to those who wish to start their own business. We will ensure that innovative businesses can access the finance they need to grow, for example, by establishing the Growth Capital Fund, which will support small and medium-sized businesses. We believe that maintaining a strong science and research base, represented above all by our world-class universities, is essential so that this knowledge can be transformed into innovative new products. We will support people, regardless of their background, so that everyone has the skills to prosper in the jobs which these new industries will create. To underpin all of this, we are committed to strengthening our physical and digital infrastructure so that every part of Britain benefits.

Labour's record:

- We cut corporation tax to 28 per cent - the lowest rate in the G7.

- We doubled the capital tax allowance to encourage business investment in 2009/10.
- From April 2010 the Annual Investment Allowance will be doubled from £50,000 to £100,000 providing further incentives for SMEs to invest in their businesses.
- The Enterprise Finance Guarantee scheme has helped 425 companies in Wales being offered over £33 million worth of loans
- The number of businesses claiming R&D tax credits has continued to rise. In the eight years since the introduction of Research and Development (R&D) tax credits, about 44,000 claims have been made across the UK and nearly £3.9 billion of relief claimed, supporting more than £40 billion of research and development activity by companies.
- The Time to Pay scheme has allowed over 10,070 businesses in Wales to defer over £147 million pounds of payments (200,000 businesses, which collectively employ 1.4 million people in the UK, to delay more than £5 billion in business taxes on a timetable they can afford). This scheme will continue throughout the next Parliament.
- The Strategic Investment Fund, worth £950 million, is providing investment in advanced industrial projects, where specific market failures are preventing otherwise viable developments.
- Car scrappage scheme, where owners scrapping an old car receive £2000 off the price of a new car, has assisted with over 17,000 orders made in Wales (380,000 orders being placed across the UK), keeping the automotive industry and its supply chain on its feet.

At a Glance: Older people

Nowadays we are fortunate enough to be able to expect to live healthy and fulfilling lives for longer than even a few decades ago. As a result we need to make changes to ensure that we have choices about how we want to live as we grow older - choices about how much to work, how to access the healthcare that will keep us fit for longer, how best to stay engaged with our communities and how we can be supported far better so that we can remain at home - even when frail. Labour has always believed in providing dignity and security in retirement and we are delivering real help and support for pensioners, especially those on lower incomes.

We will continue working to create a pensions system that provides security and decency for all, which encourages and rewards saving, and is financially sustainable. Pensioners will be helped with a 2.5 per cent increase in the basic State Pension from April 2010 - this will benefit over 12 million pensioners. We will re-link the basic State Pension to earnings in the next Parliament and are reforming the basic state pension so that more women who have brought up children or care for others can claim. Almost half a million extra women currently between 49 and 59 will be entitled to a full basic State Pension thanks to our reforms.

People are increasingly choosing to work for longer - over 1.3 million people over State Pension age now have a job. They have been the fastest growing group in employment and report high levels of job satisfaction. To make it easier for those over 60 to receive Working Tax Credit, we will reduce the minimum number of hours they need to work to be eligible - from 6 April 2011, people aged over 60 will qualify if they work at least 16 hours a week, rather than 30 as currently.

We want to continue to make it easier for older people to work if they want to. We will conduct a review of the retirement age looking at allowing people to retire later if they wish to. We are looking at options which include scrapping the Default Retirement Age, raising it, or giving employees stronger rights. Labour have outlawed age discrimination in the workplace and our Equality Bill will make life fairer for older people by requiring public bodies to think about the needs of everyone who uses their services or works for them, regardless of their age. It will also outlaw unjustifiable age discrimination outside the workplace, for example in insurance.

Because we recognise the importance of the Winter Fuel Payments for many pensioners we will guarantee it will be at the higher rate of £250, and £400 for the over-80s, for another year. This will mean that 690,000 pensioner households in Wales (9 million pensioner households across the UK) will receive at least £250 this winter to help with their fuel bills.

Labour will always work to protect and support our National Health Service. Improvements in the NHS such as thousands more doctors and nurses and huge reductions in waiting times for treatment have helped ensure that people living longer are having a better quality of life and three quarters of these extra years are spent in good or fairly good health. Labour wants to help families to make the most of longer and healthier lives and we will continue to support older people with the practical measures we have brought in such as the Winter Fuel Allowance, funding free insulation for the most vulnerable, free TV licenses for over-75s and free bus travel for over-60s. There are also free prescriptions for all.

As more and more of us are living longer, more of us will need care in our old age. We want to give people real choice over their care, making social care fairer, simpler and more affordable, ending the postcode lottery. We are reviewing the way social care is funded to ensure users and carers have fair access to the support they need and the dignity they deserve. Older people should be able to retain their independence.

As a starting-point, we have acted to ensure fairer charging for non-residential care for the elderly across Wales. Since 2007 over 11,000 people have been taken out of charging or had their charges reduced. And from April 2010 nobody in Wales will pay more than £50 per week for their non-residential care.

As a result even frail older people will be supported at home, with less need for care elsewhere. Accessible and collaborative local health and social care services will mean that - instead of having to go into hospital unnecessarily for minor illness - older people will be well looked after at home. And better support through advancing physical or mental frailty will, for many, cut down the need for admission to a care home.

Labour's record:

- Nearly 690,000 pensioner households in Wales are benefiting from UK winter fuel allowance.

- With targeted measures like the Pension Credit, we have lifted 900,000 pensioners out of relative poverty since 1998 and ensured that no pensioner need live on less than £130 per week (compared to £69 per week in 1997). This is an increase of over a third in real terms.
- From April 2010, Pension Credit will be £132.60 a week (or £202.40 for couples).
- We are spending around £13 billion more on pensioners in real terms than under the Tories.
- We have helped 164,030 welsh pensioners with the pension credit.
- We have brought in the Winter Fuel Allowance, £250 this year for the over 60's and £400 for over 80's..
- Free bus travel for over-60s
- Free TV licences for over-75s.
- Free swimming for pensioners.
- We have legislated to tackle unfair age discrimination in the workplace.
- Under Labour the basic state pension has risen 12% above earnings since 1997.
- We have introduced a Carers Measure to promote the well-being of carers and support their provision of care.
- From April 2010 nobody in Wales will pay more than £50 per week for their non-residential care

At a Glance: Women

Labour is the party of equality for women. We have led the way on gender equality fighting for a fair deal for women in the workplace, in the home and in society as a whole. Today we are pledged to continue to fight for women's right to a fair deal.

Labour has more than doubled maternity pay and increased paid maternity leave to 9 months. We have given millions of people the right to request flexible working including parents with children aged 16 and under, those with disabled children aged under 18, and individuals who care for a family member or someone they live with. We are planning to allow fathers and mothers more choice and flexibility in how they use maternity and paternity leave during the child's second six months allowing mothers to return to work with fathers staying at home if families prefer.

We have substantially increased the value of tax credits. Because it is in the early years that children's life chances are often shaped, the latest extension will help the parents of one and two year-olds by increasing the money paid through Child Tax Credit from 2012 by £4 a week. This will be paid for all children who need it, whether their parents are married, living together, or living apart.

Because people who are suffering from cancer need quick diagnosis and treatment and in particular women with breast cancer or other life threatening cancers - with Labour you will see a specialist in a record time. Next we will provide each cancer patient with a support worker to provide ongoing support to co-ordinate the patient's care and promoting continuity. The support worker will help the person navigate the care system, and provide support and advocacy.

Additionally, all teenage girls are now offered a new vaccine against cervical cancer. And to support women to look after themselves and their unborn child we are offering a Health in Pregnancy Grant: a payment of £190 for all mums-to-be after the 25th week of pregnancy.

Much equalities legislation was passed as part of nine different pieces of legislation passed over several decades. Our new Equality Bill will consolidate and simplify this legislation to make it simpler to follow, simpler to enforce and clearer to those who rely on the rights such legislation can afford them. But there is also a need to strengthen the rules which protect people from unfair treatment at work and discrimination in every day life.

The Equality Bill will make life fairer for women by bringing in compulsory gender pay gap reporting for businesses in 2013 if there is not sufficient voluntary progress by then. It will allow the use public procurement to improve equality by insisting on a diverse workforce as part of a contract or on recruitment practices which help ensure diversity for contractors. Women are often the primary carers in a family and we will protect their rights not to be discriminated as a result of their caring responsibilities and we will also make sure that breastfeeding mothers are protected from discrimination.

We will also extend the use of positive action in the workplace so that employers can choose to make their workforce more diverse when selecting between two job candidates who are equally suitable. So that people's rights are more easily secured we will extend the power of employment tribunals so that they can make decisions which affect a whole workforce not just the individual who brought the case.

The Equality Bill will also extend the permission to use women-only shortlists for parliamentary selections to 2030. Thanks in part to our use of all-women shortlists for parliamentary selections in the past, we lead the way on women's representation with more than three times as many women MPs as all the opposition parties combined.

Labour's record:

- Every year since its introduction, up to a million low paid workers stood to benefit from the National Minimum Wage uprating, two thirds of whom were women. When increased in October 2010 (the headline rate will increase to £5.93 an hour), the NMW will have risen by over 22 per cent in real terms since the Government introduced it in 1999.
- We have provided support through a Flying Start for pre-school children, and Integrated Children's Centres, the Foundation phase and 'learn through play' for 4-7 year olds.
- To support new parents to balance work and family life, we have increased paid maternity leave to nine months and extended total maternity leave to a full year. We have doubled maternity pay and given millions of parents the right to request flexible working for children under 16 years of age from May 2009
- Our measures to tackle the victimisation of women are having an impact. Convictions for rape have increased by 45 per cent and there has been a 58 per

cent decline in cases of domestic violence. We have strengthened the law through the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004, and improved how the police, prosecutors and courts handle domestic violence cases.

- We introduced Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit in 2003 to help low income working households, with extra support on its way for the youngest children.

At a Glance: Black and Minority Ethnic Communities

Labour is the party of equality and diversity. We believe everyone has the right to be treated equally, regardless of ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality, religion or belief.

In 2009, we introduced into Parliament the new Equality Bill, a landmark piece of legislation which will streamline, modernise and strengthen Britain's anti-discrimination laws. When the bill is passed into law it will help Britain's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities by allowing employers in the public and private sector to use positive action to recruit or promote more ethnic minority candidates to diversify their team if they want to and to public procurement to promote diversity. We have established the Equality and Human Rights Commission led by Trevor Phillips as an independent public body responsible for driving equality across government and society.

The Equality Bill will also expand the public sector duty so that people are not discriminated against on grounds of their religion or belief and will toughen up the tribunal system where employers are found guilty of racial discrimination. And it will allow political parties to use positive action measures to support and select more ethnic minority candidates at local and national level if they want to.

The Labour Party has broken new ground with the first black and minority Members of Parliament, of the government and of the cabinet. Today Labour has 13 Black and Asian MPs. The Tories have just two and the other parties have none. Labour has selected 53 BAME candidates to date.

Labour's record:

- Extended protection against discrimination on grounds of religion and belief in employment (Employment Equality Regulations 2003) and when accessing goods, facilities and services (Equality Act 2006)
- Established the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) in 2007 to act as a strong independent champion to tackle discrimination and promote equality.
- Helping to tackle issues such as diabetes, strokes, heart disease and cervical screening within minority ethnic communities.

- Introduced the Human Rights Act, safeguarding and promoting fundamental rights and freedoms and making them legally enforceable in the UK.
- Legislated for aggravated sentences for racially motivated crimes (in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998) and strengthened and broadened the definition to include assaults and threatening behaviour
- Introduced the Race Equality Duty in 2000 which applied to over 43,000 public bodies, improving the diversity of their workforce and the services they provide;

At a glance: Rural communities

We believe that many of the issues which affect rural communities need solutions designed specifically to meet unique local needs. We also believe it is necessary for the needs of rural communities, and the unique issues that they sometimes face, to be considered across all policy making.

We are committed to supporting strong rural communities, to safeguard and enhance the rural environment, improve the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors and foster competitive and sustainable rural businesses and thriving rural communities. Funding from the Rural Development Plan and the EU helps deliver this support in rural Wales. Labour works to assist rural areas across Wales. Support for farming, fishing and woodland industries in Wales to ensure they become more sustainable economically, socially and environmentally. Our new plans for a 'People's Bank' using the Post Office network will be very welcome to rural areas who have faced declining services over many decades.

Through the Wales Rural Development Plan in Wales there is a total budget of £795 million for the lifetime of the Plan with £195 million coming from the European Union. This will ensure our rural areas can respond to new market demands, develop land management techniques and diversify the economic base.

In February 2010 it was confirmed that £225 million has been spent on developing rural communities since Wales' Rural Development Plan was approved two years ago.

From 1st January 2012 the Glastir scheme will provide for 100,000 hectares of new tree planting over the next 20 years.

The Labour-led Assembly has recently received research work on 'deep rural' areas and will consider the findings of that research in the next period.

Rural businesses play a vital role in our economy, and they will be even more important in future. Across the UK rural communities are home to one million businesses, employing more than 5.5 million people with a combined turnover of more than £300 billion a year. There are more businesses for every 10,000 people in rural areas than there are in urban areas. Rural crime rates are lower, school results are better and research suggests that people generally enjoy a good quality of life..

Rural businesses need broadband connection in order to compete in the modern market, so to support them as well as those who live in rural areas and deserve the same access to new media as those who live in towns, we are creating the broadband levy on fixed phone lines to pay for expansion of broadband to those areas where for the market alone it is not commercially viable to do so.

We also believe it is vital to preserve our countryside, while ensuring that everyone is able to share in its beauty, and that rural tourism can thrive. Having opened up access to the countryside with the Countryside Rights of Way Act, we are now making it possible for people to access the entire length of our fantastic and unique coastline. These historic pieces of legislation will ensure that for generations to come, all are free to enjoy Britain's countryside, bringing with them the economic benefits of tourism on which many rural businesses and jobs rely.

The Government is investing up to £1.7 billion in the Post Office network until 2011, including a £150 million annual social network payment to support non-commercial sub post offices, in urban as well as rural areas, from April 2008. Without this funding up to 7500 non-commercial post offices, many in rural areas, would be in jeopardy.

Labour's record

- Wales Rural Development Plan is delivering £795 million to support rural economies
- Our Countryside Rights of Way and Marine and Coastal Access Acts are opening up access to our countryside, supporting rural tourism.
- Labour has worked with shooters and anglers to make sure that country sports continue to thrive.
- The 'People's Bank' based on the Post Office network will provide new opportunities to sustain the rural network of Post Offices.

Britain in the World - at a glance

Labour will ensure Britain continues to hold an influential role in the world allowing us to effect progressive global change in line with Britain's national interest and our moral values. Through strong global alliances we will tackle climate change, international terrorism, global poverty, nuclear proliferation and other international challenges in the knowledge that it is the only way to achieve a fairer, safer world.

Faced with an unpredictable security environment we are committed to taking the necessary action to protect our national security - that is why we are fighting to defeat terrorism in Afghanistan. Labour will not give up in Afghanistan because we know that a more stable and secure Afghanistan is essential for protecting Britain's streets. We will ensure our brave Armed Forces have all the equipment and support they need in recognition of the sacrifices they and their families have to make.

The action we are taking to achieve a more peaceful and just world goes beyond our commitment to Afghanistan. Whether through our continued campaign for an International Arms Trade Treaty, our work to promote democracy and respect for human rights and sustained pressure for a two state solution in the Middle East, Labour will keep working hard to help create a safer world.

Eradicating global poverty is both morally right and in our common interest in an increasingly interdependent world. It is because we are committed to improving the lives of the poorest in our world that we will work to ensure we meet the eight Millennium Development goals designed to combat extreme poverty by 2015. We have already trebled our support for the world's poorest countries - which is helping children go to school and saving mother's lives - and will now also enshrine in law our commitment from 2013 to spend 0.7 per cent of our Gross National Income on aid.

From taking the lead in the fight against climate change or weapons proliferation, Labour will continue to ensure we retain Britain's leading role at the heart of international institutions such as the United Nations. By working for greater reform of such institutions we will ensure they are better equipped to deal with the challenges we face.

Closer to home, under Labour, Britain will remain at the heart of Europe using our leading position in the European Union to achieve change in the best interests of British people - whether through making sure we are best placed to take advantage of economic

opportunities or by working together to achieve common goals. We will push for a Europe that is able to tackle global challenges - whether that is securing the economic recovery or fighting poverty and climate change.

In the years ahead our vision is clear - retaining an outward looking, bold and progressive foreign policy which embodies our values as a party and achieves change in Britain's national interest

The Wales for Africa fund delivers a framework for international sustainable development with a £270,000 grant scheme to help meet Millennium Development Goals.

In June 2010 Wales will celebrate two years as a Fair Trade nation.

Labour's Record

- Since 1997 Labour has tripled Britain's aid budget, helping to improve the lives of the poorest people on our planet.
- From fighting to defeat terrorism in Afghanistan to introducing a ban on landmines we have taken action to put Britain's national security first and build a safer world.
- Labour was at the forefront of efforts to agree a coordinated international response to the economic downturn, and played a decisive role in fighting back against the global recession through its leadership at the London G20 summit in 2009
- Labour led an international campaign to cancel 100 per cent of multilateral debts for the poorest countries and secured agreement on an extra billion pounds of aid for all developing countries.
- Labour has made Britain a leading partner in Europe, working constructively in the EU to promote British jobs and trade and to enhance Britain's role in the world
- Wales for Africa Fund provides grants towards meeting Millennium goals.
- In June 2010 Wales celebrates two years as a Fair Trade nation.

At a Glance: Fairness

Labour is proud to call itself the party of fairness and equality. We are the party of the many not the few. Even people who disagree with Labour know that it is at the heart of what we are about. We also know that it is a reputation that has to be earned every day and that fairness is as much about how people are treated as it is about final outcomes.

Our approach to getting Wales and Britain through the global downturn has been governed by fairness. We will not stand back and do nothing, and we will not risk the recovery by withdrawing support for the economy. We took the decision to help the individuals and communities hit hardest, helping people, with tax cuts, increased Child Benefit and Tax Credits topping up the incomes of families. We have expanded support for the unemployed, winter fuel payments for pensioners and are helping to keep businesses afloat through a range of different schemes. Mortgage protection schemes have been expanded to help families stay in their homes. And we are guaranteeing work or training for every 18-24 year old unemployed for six months because we do not wish to see the patterns of past recessions repeated where temporary job loss leads to whole communities becoming long-term unemployed.

We made the choice to invest now to help people through tough times but we recognise that as the economy starts to grow we need to pay down debt. So we will halve the deficit in the next four years. And we will do this in a fair way. We believe that those can afford to do so should contribute the most to getting the deficit down. That is why we have made a judgement that those earning over £150,000 - the top one per cent of earners - should pay a bit more in tax, and why we are introducing a one-off tax on bank bonuses. For people with incomes over £100,000 a year - the top two per cent - we will gradually remove the value of their personal allowances. Tax relief on pensions will be restricted from next year, for those with incomes above £130,000 a year. These measures will ensure fairness - those who have benefited most from the strong growth in incomes in past years should now pay their fair share of tax. We are taking these steps to cut the deficit in a fair way with 60 per cent of them will be paid for by the top 5 per cent of earners.

Although there are tough decisions to be made, we intend in future years to go further with measures that make our country fairer and help the poorest in society. In line with our values of fairness, Labour will provide help for pensioners, families and homeowners.

In line with the recommendations from the Low Pay Commission on the National Minimum Wage (NMW), we announced in Budget 2010 announces that the **headline rate of the NMW** will rise by 2.2 per cent to £5.93 in October 2010. This increase strikes a balance between helping low paid workers and families, and ensuring that the rise does not damage their employment chances. Labour will help hard working families trying to get on. We will give a **two-year Stamp Duty holiday** for first-time buyers on residential property transactions up to £250,000; funded by a new 5 per cent rate of stamp duty for transactions over £1 million from April 2011. The **fuel duty** for 2010 will be staged, with an increase of one penny per litre on 1 April 2010 and one penny per litre on 1 October 2010, then 0.76 pence per litre on 1 January 2011. Consumers will be given a new right to a basic bank account, following consultation on the details; and to encourage saving we will launch the **Saving Gateway**, where the Government adds 50 pence for each £1 saved by working age people on low incomes, in July 2010. On top of the generous increases in Tax Credits we have already introduced, additional support will be targeted at children, with the introduction of additional support through the child element of the **Child Tax Credit** of £4 per week for families with children aged 1 and 2 years old from April 2012. From April 2010, there will be additional annual payments of £100 into the **Child Trust Fund** accounts of disabled children. Severely disabled children will receive £200 per year.

We are committed, through legislation, to eradicate child poverty by 2020, helping the most vulnerable in society.

We want to help people get on the housing ladder. So we are doubling the stamp duty limit for first time buyers from £125,000 to £250,000, for this year and next. This means 9 in 10 first time buyers will pay no stamp duty at all. This will be funded through an increase in the stamp duty to 5 per cent for residential property over £1 million, from April next year.

We will do more to build the homes the country needs - 6,500 more affordable homes in Wales between 2007-2011.

Pensioners will be helped with a 2.5 per cent increase in the **basic State Pension** from April 2010 - this will benefit over 12 million pensioners. And because we recognise the importance of the winter fuel payments for many pensioners we will guarantee the **Winter Fuel Payment** will be at the higher rate of £250, and £400 for the over-80s, for another year. This will mean that 9 million pensioner households will receive at least £250 this winter to help with their fuel bills.

We will develop improved **Care Services** for all adults who need social care. We have acted to ensure fair charging for non-residential care for the elderly across Wales. Since 2007 over 11,000 people have been taken out of charging or had their charges reduced. From April 2010 nobody in Wales is paying more than £50 per week for their non-residential care.

Because we believe that everyone should be treated equally our **Equality Act** will strengthen the law to prevent unfair discrimination. The Act also places a high level duty on public bodies to consider the social and economic circumstances of those affected by their actions, because we recognise that social class is often a barrier to people realising their aspirations.

We believe that in tough economic times it is even more important to ensure that only those with the skills that we need to build a stronger economy can come here to work. We have tightened our points-based immigration system so that as growth returns, we will see rising levels of employment, wages and skills rather than rising immigration. And because we believe fairness demands that citizenship brings responsibilities as well as rights, and that those who look to build a new life in Britain should earn the right to do so, we are bringing in a points based system to applications for citizenship or permanent residence, controlling the number of people staying here permanently.

Labour's record

- The National Minimum Wage has helped make work pay - the annual uprating helps 1 million people a year currently receiving the NMW by increasing their earnings. When increased in October 2010, the NMW will have risen by over 22 per cent in real terms since the Government introduced it in 1999.
- Tax Credits to support those in work on lower incomes.
- The net result of our tax and benefit policies has, according to the IFS, been progressive.
- Most people depend on our public services - record investment with Labour has seen new hospitals, new schools and less crime up and down the country.
- The New Deal has helped over 2 million people into work.

- Labour has helped 500,000 children out of relative poverty and halved the number in absolute poverty, from 3.4 million to 1.7 million.
- 900,000 pensioners have been lifted out of poverty.
- 690,000 pensioner households in Wales, and 9 million pensioner households across the UK are benefiting from increased Winter Fuel Payments.
- The Equality Act will give added protection to those who are unfairly discriminated against.
- Our new Australian-style Points-Based system for immigration allows in only those who can contribute to the UK economy, and ensures that as growth returns, we will see rising levels of employment, wages and skills rather than rising immigration.
- Crime is down and we have acted to keep it down despite the downturn - 100,000 fewer burglaries and 15,000 fewer robberies this year, compared to what would have happened if crime had risen like it did in the last recession.

At a Glance: Public services

Labour has always valued the public services on which mainstream families rely. We will continue to protect and support our NHS, our schools and our police. We will support them because we believe in them: they support families, underpin a fair and strong society and are the foundation of a strong economy. It took a Labour government to turn our public services around and make them, once again, something we can all be proud of - and it will take a Labour government to take them from good to great. Labour used the decade of prosperity before the global financial crisis to give them the investment and reform they needed. Now, in a tougher financial climate, while making sure that every pound is used efficiently, we will protect the NHS, schools and the police at the front line, knowing that these are all too important to be left to private wealth. After a decade of catch-up and the renewal of public infrastructure, value for money with less waste and less bureaucracy will continue to be our priority.

There can be no let-up in the process of reforming our public services. Standards have risen and must keep rising; at the same time as delivering value for taxpayers' money. Since coming to power we have had a focus on driving improvement. That was crucial given the state of public services when we came to power. We have now formed a Service Improvement Board to drive the next phase of public service improvements.

For cancer patients will have a key worker to co-ordinate their support and navigate their way through the health and care system.

In education, we will increase the spend per child from 2010-2011 and ensure money reaches the education front line and remove the 'funding fog' that can surround education spending in different local authorities.

We will build on neighbourhood policing with new guarantees on response times, monthly beat meetings, and a pledge that your local neighbourhood team spends at least 80 per cent of its time on the beat in your neighbourhood.

Public services must continue to evolve, and the Government must help families to make the most of longer and healthier lives. The security of affordable, high-quality, personalised care is fundamental, and older people and those with long-term conditions should be able to retain their independence. We want to give people real choice over their care, making social care fairer, simpler and more affordable, ending the postcode lottery.

Labour's record

- The NHS now has 21,246 qualified nursing staff (Sept 08 audit) , a 29% increase over a decade,
- 1893 hospital medical consultants an increase of &)% over a decade
- 8 new hospitals since 2003 including Tremadog, Holywell, Caerphilly, Merthyr, Cynon, Ebbw Vale, Pembroke Dock.
- Major investment in new medical facilities/equipment including - Mental health facilities at Cefn Coed Hospital Swansea (£10 million announced in December 2009).
- New equipment at the North Wales Cancer Centre £12.6 million.
- £20.7 million of capital investment (Feb 09) including refurbishing Royal Gwent, Newport, scanner and ultrasound equipment(Univeristy of Wales and Velindre hospital), accident and emergency at Carmarthen A&E.
- More than £7.5 million announced for redevelopment of Ysbyty Bronglais, Aberystwyth.
- More than £30 million announced for transformation of Cardiff Royal Infirmary (July 2009).
- £16.5 million PET scanner at University Hospital Wales.
- Spending £300 million annually to repair the NHS estate,
- 12 years ago it was not uncommon for patients to wait over 18 months for an operation - The latest figures, published in February 2010, show that at the end of December 09, more than nine in 10 patients were treated within 26 weeks from initial referral to definitive treatment, with many patients treated far quicker than that.
- 98% of cancer patients starting treatment within two months of referral,
- Labour has delivered more than 16,000 police officers and 16,000 Police Community Support Officers across the UK, and overall crime is down by 36 per cent since 1997.

- 663 more Police Officers in Wales than in 1997 and 600 new Police Community Support officers.

At a glance: Scotland

Although the SNP are in government in the Scottish Parliament, the General Election in Scotland is a two-horse race between Labour and the Tories. The SNP can't win a general election - all they can do is let the Tories in by the back door.

1. The Tories in Scotland haven't changed

The Tories failed Scotland in the past and haven't changed now. They still don't understand Scotland. Their plan to cut faster and deeper than is safe threatens jobs in Scotland. In March, Ken Clarke had the audacity to criticise Scottish manufacturing - forgetting that the government of which he was a senior member closed Ravenscraig, closed down our industries and cast a third of a million Scots onto the dole.

2. The Tories have the wrong ideas for Scotland

On reserved and devolved matters, the Tories have taken the wrong side of the argument. At Holyrood, when the SNP cancelled the Glasgow Airport Rail Link - costing 1,300 jobs and in the face of huge anger from the business community - the Tories actually voted with the Nationalists to make the West of Scotland a less attractive place to do business.

3. The SNP are not doing enough

In the Scottish Parliament, the minority SNP government is not doing enough to help Scotland through these difficult times. Although the Scottish Government budget has risen to a record level, the SNP are wasting time trying to separate Scotland from the rest of the UK. They have broken almost every promise made to the people of Scotland in their last election campaign:

- the promise to scrap council tax is shelved
- plans for smaller class sizes have been scrapped
- Scotland's school building programme is at a standstill
- scrapping student debt has itself been scrapped
- the grants promised to first time buyers won't happen
- there are 2,600 fewer teachers than with Labour

- knife crime is on the up
- the NHS has had the worst budget settlement since devolution

4. Our ambitions for Scotland

Labour wants to get Scotland back to work. At Westminster, we have created over 10,000 jobs from the Future Jobs Fund. At Holyrood we argued for an won 8,000 apprenticeships. And we have been at the forefront of criticising the "Salmond slump" - the sharp collapse in capital investment which is so damaging the construction industry.

Our policies for the 2011 manifesto for the Scottish Parliament elections will feature exciting and new ideas on schools, hospitals and policing. Even from opposition, we are campaigning for tough new action on knife crime, for a victim's commissioner, for a specialist plan on hospital superbugs to be put in place, and for action to eradicate illiteracy from Scotland's schools.

5. The choice: Vote SNP - Get Tory

People are taking a long hard look at the SNP - and not liking what they see. The SNP openly say they want a hung parliament - in other words, they want Labour to loose. When Nicola Sturgeon said there were lots of good reasons why Gordon Brown shouldn't be PM, she was totally out of kilter with the majority of Scots. Since 2005, the SNP MPs have actually voted 2 out of 3 times with the Tories.

At a Glance: Wales

Our Labour Government has worked with the Labour-led Welsh Assembly Government in partnership, to improve the lives of everyone in Wales. At the heart of our shared objectives is the conviction that government can be a force for good, to secure economic prosperity and build a fairer society. Not small government or big government, but smarter - reformed and responsive - government.

We will maintain the funding we need to build growth - we will not cut off supply when it is most needed. We will act to halve the budget deficit over four years - whilst protecting frontline services for the people of Wales. We will do so in part through a fairer tax system including a 50p rate on incomes above £150,000 impacting on the top one per cent of earners, a 0.5 per cent increase in National Insurance, and by cutting tax relief on pension contributions for incomes above £150,000 a year.

The Welsh budget next year will be over £15.7 billion, well over double what it was in 1997, and an increase of £500 million from this year's budget. Under new future funding arrangements, the UK Government will take action if Wales becomes disproportionately disadvantaged by the Barnett Formula. Labour will continue to reform and renew our public services. We will reform charging for care services at home. In future, charges across Wales will be fairer and easier to understand. Labour will fund the reforms to guarantee a Wales-wide maximum weekly charge of £50 for anyone receiving care services which help to keep them in their own home.

With Labour, education will remain a priority for Wales. We are reviewing the real cost of administering education across Wales, so that we can reduce bureaucracy and streamline the education system to the benefit of our learners. We want many more people in Wales to experience higher education, and be equipped with higher level skills. As well as improving access, we will promote flexible learning, better collaboration between universities and business, more world-class research, the development of the university Heads of the Valleys initiative and the launch of the Coleg Ffederal - to offer more courses in Welsh. And we will ensure that higher education works closely with many more businesses, employers, and employer organisations in Wales and internationally.

To help keep Wales safe we are introducing the first national standards for what people can expect from their local police - including response times, time on the beat, and monthly beat meetings - and we are rolling out the National Victims' Service for all victims of

crime across England and Wales. And there we will reform services provided to vulnerable children and families in Wales. New Integrated Family Support Teams are being established, bringing together workers from a wide range of services to provide targeted support where there are problems of substance misuse and wider concerns about child welfare.

Through the economic downturn we invested to provide real help for people to stay in their homes. We will build on this by providing an additional 6,500 affordable homes for social housing in Wales by 2011.

We have invested in rail services in Wales, including the opening of the new Vale of Glamorgan and Ebbw Vale lines. We are committed to the electrification of the Great Western Main Line between London and Swansea, enabling the introduction of a predominantly electric high-speed train fleet.

We are committed to making Wales a leading provider of green energy, produced not only by wind, but from biomass, marine and microgeneration. We will continue to support work to investigate the feasibility of constructing the Severn Barrage, which could potentially supply 5 per cent of Britain's energy needs, and provide a massive economic boost to the surrounding area.

We will continue to work to extend the powers of the National Assembly, whether through framework provisions in UK Bills or Legislative Competence Orders. The process is bringing real results for Wales, allowing the Welsh Assembly Government to make and implement policy decisions tailored to the needs and aspirations of the Welsh people.

We have legislated to give the Assembly new powers to make provision for the Welsh language, striking the right balance between the interests of those who use Welsh as their mother tongue and who wish to conduct their day-to-day business in the language and the majority of people in Wales who do not speak Welsh.

We will continue to place Wales and Britain at the heart of Europe. With Labour, Wales has secured billions of pounds of support for disadvantaged communities in West Wales and the Valleys, which the Tories were not even prepared to bid for. Schemes such as ProAct and ReAct, part-funded by European money, have helped thousands of people in Wales to stay in work and retrain, or to get back into employment after redundancy.

Labour's record

- The creation of the National Assembly for Wales, as part of the most radical reform of the British constitution for three hundred years.
- Since 1997, we have lifted 50,000 children out of poverty in Wales
- The latest increase in the minimum wage which Labour introduced has benefited over 50,000 people in Wales.
- We have introduced Neighbourhood Policing Teams in every part of Wales.

At a Glance: Young People

Unlike in the recession of the 1990s, young people in Britain today can be assured that with Labour they have a government that is on their side.

Since 1999, Labour in the Assembly has made put education, skills, rights and social justice at the heart of our vision for a more prosperous Wales. Together, our programme of investment and reform has delivered:

The largest ever school modernisation programme;

- Introduced learn through play at the foundation phase of early years education,
- Free nursery places for three and four year olds, and for two year olds in our poorest communities;
- A new curriculum developed, including the introduction of the Welsh Bac;
- Over 1000 primary schools with free breakfast schemes;
- Support for students, especially those in greatest need,
- Revolutionise 14-19 education through the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure,
- Thousands more modern apprenticeships across Wales.

Take for example the Welsh Bac is not simply 'a different GCSE' - it is fundamental to the structure of 16 and 16+ education and a great success.

So the work we are carrying out now will provide the basis for further by focussing the educational spend on pupils and students, providing a sure start in life through the foundation phase, extending opportunities for learning for our children, ensuring people have the skills required and a positive approach to lifelong learning.

We are offering a guarantee to today's young people. Everyone aged 18 to 24 will, with Labour, be guaranteed a job, training or work experience place if they are unemployed for more than six months. There will be a guaranteed place in education or training for all 16 and 17 year olds. We are offering more apprenticeships - we have an ambition of creating 500,000 apprenticeships starts a year across the UK by 2020. Apprenticeships in Wales have doubled since 1999.

To compete in the global economy Britain will need a high skill, innovative economy and Britain's young people will need support to get those skills and the training and education needed to ensure we make the best of all of their talents. We are committed to increasing the number of people going to university.

After major investment in NHS infrastructure we will now look to deliver more services more locally with improved access to GP surgeries, including online services.

Young people are more likely to experience crime than adults. We will work through local community partnerships to address the anti-social behaviour that concerns many communities. But every time a young person breaches an ASBO, there will be an order, not just on them but on their parents, and if that is broken there will be sanctions. We will stand up for the right of the mainstream majority to live without fear or intimidation in their neighbourhoods.

Even with recent house price falls many young people are still priced out of housing in many areas. To remedy this, we have now set about delivering a rapid increase in affordable housing, including shared ownership schemes to give people a leg-up on to the property ladder, and a new generation of social rented housing. In Wales delivering 6,500 more affordable homes between 2007-2011.

Labour's record:

- The National Minimum Wage has helped challenge the scandal of poverty pay. We have introduced a development rate for the minimum wage of £4.83 per hour for workers aged 18-21 inclusive a £3.57 per hour rate for all workers under the age of 18, who are no longer of compulsory school age.
- We have rescued apprenticeships with a doubling of apprenticeships in Wales.
- More young people are in education and training at 16 and 17 than at any time before - record numbers studying at school or college and in apprenticeships.
- 1,000 schools with free breakfast.
- Delivering more affordable homes in Wales.

Crime, justice and immigration

We are determined to continue to bear down on crime and we recognise that even though crime and anti social behaviour is down, it is still a real issue in many areas, and we also recognise that fear of crime and anti social behaviour has not fallen as much as crime and anti-social behaviour itself. That is why we're protecting front line policing, and why we have introduced neighbourhood Policing Teams for every community in England and Wales who are committed to spending 80 per cent of their time on the beat or visibly working in their community.

Overall crime is down by more than a third since 1997 - that's 6 million fewer crimes each year. Almost 1 million fewer homes burgled; and almost 1 and a half million fewer violent crimes. The risk of being a victim of crime today is the lowest since the British Crime Survey began in 1981. Many people said it was inevitable that crime would rise in a recession - as it did in the recessions of the 1980s and 90s - but this time it has not.

Labour is committed to protecting the key public services we know people value, including front line policing. We will protect the police by maintaining central funding so that there is no reason based on funding why police numbers should fall, and by standing firm against the politicisation of policing and political interference in operational decisions - while at the same time working with the police to ensure they are more in touch with people's needs and concerns.

We are building on the 3,600 Neighbourhood Policing Teams now in every area of England and Wales through the Policing Pledge which sets out clear minimum standards for what people can expect from their local police. These include new guarantees on response times - including 24 hours for non-emergencies; monthly beat meetings to set local priorities; and a commitment that your local neighbourhood team will spend at least 80 per cent of its time on the beat or visibly working in their community.

Knife crime is falling, homicides are at their lowest level for a decade and there were fewer gun killings last year than at any time in the last 20 years. We will give police the tools they need to fight crime, including DNA and CCTV. Without the DNA database, thousands of crimes would go unsolved and many serious and dangerous criminals would be walking our streets. Labour will ensure that the most serious offenders are added to the database no matter where or when they were convicted whilst also achieving a proportionate balance between the rights of the individual and the wider interests of public protection. To help

people feel safer in their communities we will give people more of a say over where CCTV is used - giving them a right to petition their local authority for more CCTV.

Britain isn't broken, despite the Tories' attempts to talk the country down. We recognise people's concerns about crime and antisocial behaviour, and issues like binge drinking and problem families - but we are committed to working together to tackle these problems, not talking them up to run Britain down. Anti-social behaviour must be tackled, not tolerated and we firmly believe that no-one should have to suffer from the misery that this behaviour can bring. Labour will take action where alcohol-related disorder is causing problems by giving the police and local authorities new powers to deal with the specific problems in their area and insist on them using every one of the wide ranging tools and powers available to them in the fight against anti-social behaviour in all its forms. We believe in investing in policing to help keep our streets safe but also in early intervention to stop people, especially young people, heading towards a life of crime. We will empower communities to address the problems that affect them, giving them more information and a greater say in decisions on crime, policing and justice and other factors that affect their quality of life.

Through the Cymorth programme we provide support for families and young people to address issues of poverty and social inclusion.

Councils already have the power to ban on-street drinking where there is alcohol-related crime. We have just introduced a new mandatory code for alcohol retailers targeting the most irresponsible promotions like "drink all you can for a fiver" or "girls drink free". The new Drink Banning Orders can be used to prevent a persistent offender from drinking in public, going to a particular pub, club or off licence, or to certain parts of town at night. We have introduced a 'yellow card, red card' scheme to shut down retailers found persistently selling to those under 18 - as well as supporting initiatives by responsible retailers like Think 21 - and we are bringing in a new right to petition the local authority to end twenty four hour licensing where such problems arise.

On drugs, our message is clear - we will not tolerate illegal drug use. Our goal is to see fewer people start using drugs, more people helped by treatment towards a drug free life, and a reduction in the damage which problem drug users cause to communities.

Labour will not tolerate a situation where some people break the rules and others pay the price. We have provided 27,000 more prison places since 1997. There are more criminals in

prison now not because crime is rising - the opposite is true - but because persistent, serious and violent offenders are going to prison for longer. To ensure there are enough prison places for persistent, serious and violent offenders we will take forward our plan to provide a total of 96,000 places by 2014. But at the same time we are taking steps to address unnecessary increases in the prison population, including reducing the number of women and the mentally ill in prison, transferring more foreign prisoners to EU jails, and new approaches to cut reoffending. We have brought in tough new 'Community Payback': hard work for several hours a day not a few hours a month, in public wearing orange jackets, paying back through useful service to the communities they have harmed.

As well as tough measures to punish and prevent crime, there must be an effective system of justice working on behalf of the people it serves and in which they have confidence. From April we are rolling out a National Victims' Service guaranteeing all victims of crime and anti-social behaviour more intensive support, care and attention, including seven days a week cover; and a named, dedicated worker offering one-to-one support, staying with them through the trial and beyond.

Controlled migration brings undoubted benefits to our country but we also recognise people's legitimate concerns about the impact it can have on communities. Net inward migration to Britain as measured by the Office for National Statistics has fallen for the last three years. We are delivering the biggest changes to our immigration, citizenship and border security systems for decades - we are bringing in a new Australian-style points-based immigration system which allows us to be more selective so that only those with the skills that we need to build a stronger economy can come here, and to ensure that as growth returns, we will see rising levels of employment, skills and wages not more immigration. We have brought in 100 per cent biometric visas, are rolling out ID cards for foreign nationals with 170,000 already issued, and electronic border controls will count people in and out of the country by the end of 2010. To build on this we will introduce a points-based system for permanent residence and citizenship clearly spelling out the rights and obligations of legal migrants to Britain, as well as the requirements for earning British citizenship. These requirements will include learning English, paying tax and obeying the law- because we believe those who look to build a new life here should earn the right to do so. Our Earned Citizenship plans for newcomers, together with the points-based immigration system will reduce overall numbers of economic migrants coming to Britain and the numbers awarded permanent settlement.

The Environment, Climate Change and Energy

We believe that the green agenda is fundamentally rooted in Labour values. Labour's environment, energy and climate change policies are about securing fairness, creating jobs and building strong communities as well as tackling carbon emissions and improving the quality of life. By taking the action we need to tackle climate change and reduce waste we can drive economic growth, make Britain more energy independent, and make it easier for people to live in greener ways.

Labour came to power at a time when climate change was emerging as an important political issue. Six months after we took office, the Labour Government played a key role in securing a new international agreement at Kyoto. This signalled the beginning of a period in which Britain has become a world leader on tackling climate change globally and at home. Our 2008 Climate Change Act makes the UK the first country in the world to put its carbon targets into law - cutting emissions by a third (34 per cent) by 2020 and 80 per cent by 2050 on 1990 levels. Our UK Low Carbon Transition Plan sets out a comprehensive strategy for reducing emissions right across the economy, with every government department given its own 'carbon budget'.

Sustainable Wales

Sustainability lies at the heart of the Assembly Government's programme and affects the work of every department. A key driver of this is a distinctive statutory duty, under the Government of Wales Act 2006, to make a sustainable development scheme, setting out how we propose to promote sustainable development.

'One Wales: One Planet' was published in May 2009 and is the Labour-led Assembly Government's strategy for Sustainable Development. It is focussed on action to make our communities greener. The fact that we are a small nation does not mean we can shy away from the urgent challenge of climate change.

In addition to the Assembly target of a 3 per cent annual cut in carbon emissions by 2011 - we need to harness every sector and every resource.

In December 2009 the Labour-led Assembly Government signed up to the 10:10 campaign and committed to reducing the estates greenhouse emissions by 10% in 2010.

Practical action to deliver our aims are found in policies like **“Capturing the Potential. A Green Jobs Strategy for Wales”**. This strategy is based on government driving Wales towards a low carbon economy, improving the performance of business and encouraging responsible consumers. We are taking action to foster innovation and technology, investing in a more sustainable economy and using procurement and investment to further sustainable development. This can be evidenced for example in requiring ever higher standards for building new homes and business premises.

With Labour our green policies have become a motor of economic prosperity. As firms invest in insulating people’s homes, renewable energy and nuclear power, and in new technologies such as electric vehicles, we will create around 400,000 new green jobs by 2015 - making 1.2 million British jobs in the environmental and low carbon sectors in all. The Government’s Low Carbon Industrial Strategy has set a framework for active industrial policy, with new firms such as wind turbine manufacturers now investing in Britain.

Announcements like Ford investing in Bridgend for eco-engines show the potential for the coming years.

We continue to push for international agreement on action to tackle climate change; we are determined that the progress made at Copenhagen in December 2009 will ultimately result in the ambitious, effective and fair legally binding agreement on which we have led. We are spending £1.5 billion on climate assistance to developing countries between 2010 and 2012 and are committed to ensuring that from 2013 part of our climate assistance is additional to our pledge to provide 0.7 per cent of national income in aid, with no more than 10 per cent of our Official Development Assistance counted towards climate finance.

Labour believes that the beauty and biodiversity of Britain’s countryside and green spaces enrich the quality of our lives. Over the last thirteen years we have worked not only to protect our natural environment for future generations but to open up access for all. Through our two landmark Acts - the Countryside and Rights of Way Act and the Marine and Coastal Access Act - and the creation of two new National Parks in the New Forest and South Downs we have enabled millions of people to enjoy our countryside and coastal areas.

In Wales we have invested in sustainable initiatives in the Brecon Beacons, Pembrokeshire Coast and Snowdonia National Parks along with each of our Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Anglesey, Gower, Clwydian Hills, Llyn, Wye Valley) as well as long distance

footpaths around the Anglesey coast, the North Wales coast and national trails like the Offa's Dyke. We are delivering the Wales coastal footpath.

Labour remains committed to defending the welfare of animals, whether wild, domestic or on farms. We have legislated to ban cruel 'sports' such as fox hunting and hare coursing, toughened the sanctions against people who mistreat animals, and banned animal testing of cosmetics and barren cages for chickens, among other items. We will ensure that these measures are rigorously enforced, and extend and enhance them where necessary.

CONCLUSION

The General Election is a big choice for the people of Wales.

It is a choice that is vital to every family, business and community in our country. And at the heart of that choice will be a decision on which party people trust most to secure the economic recovery. A Labour Party committed to supporting people through tough times, or the Tories who will put the fragile recovery at risk.

In this election Labour will help **secure the economic recovery**. We will not take risks with our economic future and will focus on creating the jobs of the future.

We will protect frontline investment in policing, schools, childcare and the NHS, with every cancer patient in Wales provided with a key worker.

We will raise family living standards, keeping mortgage rates as low as possible; increasing tax credits for families with young children; providing new help for first time buyers; and restoring the link between the state pension and earnings from 2012. **Labour will Strengthen fairness in communities** through an Australian style points-based system to control immigration; guaranteed education, apprenticeships and jobs for young people; and a crack down on anti-social behaviour.