



A NEW VOICE FOR WALES



Welsh
Conservatives



A NEW VOICE FOR WALES



What kind of Wales do we want to see in five years' time?

A Wales that continues to lag behind other parts of Britain on employment and jobs? Where health outcomes compare poorly, and hospital waiting lists continue to rise? A Wales that consigns too many people to poverty and poor educational attainment as they set out in life?

Or a Wales that pushes forward, by unleashing the talent of its people?

Over the last four years, Welsh Conservatives have travelled the length and breadth of Wales and seen first-hand the difficulties many people face. We've met parents, patients, students and workers who are rightly angry at the way Labour continues to run this proud nation down. We've fought your struggles in opposition.

But we want to do more.

Here we set out an ambitious programme for government. Using the full range of powers that are now at the National Assembly's disposal following the historic 'yes' vote in the referendum in March, we outline the policies and legislative proposals that we would use to boost enterprise and employment in Wales, improve the quality of healthcare in our hospitals and surgeries and raise standards in our schools.

We are clear, however, that we cannot do it without you.

From releasing head teachers and teachers to spend money on their pupils education as they see fit.

To unleashing the potential of small businesses in Wales, by taking them out of business rates so that they can invest their profits in new products, new markets or taking on new staff.

From protecting the health budget, and freeing up and properly funding doctors and nurses to prioritise patient care.

To encouraging everyone who wishes to leave their community a better place than when they found it, by sponsoring volunteering and a Welsh Big Society.

Welsh Conservatives are a new voice for Wales, and we are on your side.

So to those who tell you Wales can't do it; won't do it; that say that Wales starts from too far back, and is destined for decline – tell them you've got other ideas. Tell them there are plans afoot for a healthier, happier, more prosperous Wales, beginning on the 5th May.

Tell them the fight back starts now.

We hope that you'll vote Welsh Conservative on 5th May.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "David Cameron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

David Cameron

A NEW VOICE FOR WALES



Since we formed the Government at Westminster last May we've embarked on a radical transformation in the way our country is governed.

The decisions we are taking will reform the economy to provide jobs and growth for the future, help families

with the cost of living, and support those most in need.

We have similar ambitions for Wales.

We've protected the health budget in England because we know how important our NHS is. We'll do the same in Wales.

We're freeing up our schools and teachers in England because we know how significant education is to the next generation. We'll do the same in Wales.

We're building an environment in which our businesses can grow and thrive, creating the jobs we so badly need in Wales, and across the United Kingdom.

And we're handing power back to communities while cutting the cost of government and politics.

These are just some of our achievements and ambitions. They show we are combining fiscal responsibility with social responsibility and a bold vision for the future.

We can continue that work in Wales through a Conservative-led Welsh Assembly Government, working with the Conservative-led Government at Westminster.

Through the Wales Office, Wales has a strong

voice and influence at the heart of the UK Government.

It is by working together in the national interest we can achieve the best for Wales.

More jobs and more investment.

Better hospitals and improved healthcare.

Better schools and improved prospects for our children.

Giving people and communities a bigger say over their lives and communities.

Welsh Conservatives will bring stability and accountability to the Assembly, and make devolution work in the interests of people in Wales.

We will underpin our commitment to the Union. And at the same time we will take the lead to ensure that Wales is on the map nationally and internationally.

The Conservative Party has made great strides in Wales in recent years - from gains at the General Election, in town halls across the country, and topping the poll at the last European elections.

These Assembly elections are an opportunity for our party to achieve even more, setting Wales on a new path after the Labour years of wasted opportunities.

We've laid the foundations for change at Westminster. It's time to build on them in Wales on May 5th.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Cheryl Gillan'.

Rt Hon Cheryl Gillan MP

Secretary of State for Wales



A NEW VOICE FOR WALES



Wales has a proud history.

Two vibrant languages.

Castles and countryside the envy of the world.

Great cities and proud communities.

Sportsmen and women at the top of their game.

Wales is a creative, innovative and cultured country.

But Labour has run this proud nation down.

In the last decade Wales has gone backwards under Labour.

The Welsh economy has fallen further behind other nations, and we're the poorest part of the UK.

Our school pupils scored lower in recent international rankings than they did in 2006.

And ambulance and hospital waiting times continue to rise.

We must now work together to reverse Labour's decline.

And we must do so without delay.

In this manifesto, Welsh Conservatives outline an ambitious agenda for growth and jobs.

By getting targeted help to small businesses, we'll spark enterprise and boost employment. By reforming schools, and redoubling the fight against child poverty, we'll ensure that everyone in Wales has the chance to achieve their full potential.

We set out an ambitious agenda to help everyone in Wales to lead healthier lives.

By reversing Labour's cuts to the health service and backing the NHS, we'll invest in stroke units, ambulance services and a dedicated cancer drugs fund. By backing nurses and doctors, we'll raise standards in patient care.

And we unveil an ambitious agenda to recognise and reward those in our society to whom we owe so much.

By giving carers a right to respite, we'll make sure they're fully supported. We'll promote volunteering and allow local communities to take over local facilities to rejuvenate towns and villages right across Wales. By rewarding all service personnel with a dedicated Armed Forces' Card, we'll thank them for their contribution and dedication to Wales and Britain.

Welsh Conservatives are a New Voice for Wales, and we are ready to lead.

With your help, we can build a brighter, more prosperous Wales in which progress once again comes knocking at every door and communities can thrive.

So on 5th May, vote for a New Voice for Wales; vote Welsh Conservative.

Nick Bourne

Leader of the Opposition,
National Assembly for Wales

A NEW VOICE FOR WALES

- **Protect the NHS budget for the next 4 years.**
- **Invest in education to give teachers, parents and governors a greater say.**
- **Introduce an Armed Forces' Card to give benefits such as free bus travel and NHS priority care.**
- **Eliminate child poverty by 2020.**
- **Scrap business rates for all small businesses.**
- **Protect free bus passes and free prescriptions for older people.**
- **Protect flood plains with new 'Blue Belts' to prevent irresponsible development.**
- **Promote the Welsh language with a new Charter Mark for businesses that encourage its use.**



A NEW VOICE FOR ENTERPRISE

THE CHALLENGE

The Welsh economy has failed to achieve its potential under Labour. Despite spending billions, the gap between poorer parts of Wales and the UK is widening. And even two rounds of EU structural funds have not shifted Wales up the economic table. Incredibly, Wales is so poor under Labour that it is likely to qualify for a 3rd round of EU funds.

Wales needs a more enterprising, productive and skilful economy. Not since the early years of the 20th century has the Welsh economy been at the forefront of British enterprise. Wales requires a new economic vision to bring about radical changes to set the nation on the path to sustainable growth.

A NEW VOICE

The Welsh Conservative Party will focus on increasing the size of the private sector in Wales. It is our business culture that must be strengthened. Economies with a strong business culture also attract high value investment from abroad. We will be a new voice for Welsh enterprise. The Welsh Conservative Party believes that, at a minimum, Welsh wealth should be 85% of the UK average by 2020 and 100% by 2030. The first vital step to this success will be the abolition of business rates for small businesses.

Of course, ambition is not enough. Only effective policies can help bring about the level of enterprise we desire. It is the natural enterprise of the Welsh people that will achieve this transformation. It must be our role in government to enhance this enterprise and not stand in the way with out-dated policies.

A WELSH CONSERVATIVE ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT WILL:

Boost Business

- Abolish business rates for businesses below £12,000 rateable value (and taper the rate between £12,001 - £15,000).
- Publish a manufacturing and technical innovation strategy and encourage international partnerships.
- Create at least 4 Enterprise Zones in Wales to promote economic and social regeneration.
- Establish a made-in-Wales Public-Private Partnership (PPP) scheme 'Building Together' as part of a Welsh Infrastructure Plan.
- Encourage closer working between the public and private sectors.
- Support West Wales and the Valleys' bid for the next round of EU structural funding, but use this funding to promote private sector projects and initiatives.
- Create a stronger Council for

A NEW VOICE FOR ENTERPRISE, CONTINUED

Economic Renewal (called Enterprise Wales) to give the private sector a larger role in public policy.

- Work with the private sector, EU and UK government to deliver universal broadband coverage and 85% high speed coverage. We will work with providers to improve mobile coverage, particularly in rural Wales.
- Publish a White Paper on Welsh financial services.
- Offer a skills audit and advice on skills improvement to everyone over 40.
- Contract out business support to maximise value for public money and to take advantage of private sector expertise.
- Publish a Shopkeepers Strategy to help the retail sector and shops across Wales.
- Establish a Welsh hub in London to help Welsh businesses take advantage of global opportunities.
- Publish a White Paper on the role of the planning process in economic regeneration.

Create New Jobs

- Create private sector-led skills academies to provide job-focused training particularly in distribution and transport, construction, IT, and services.
- Offer business support tailored for unemployed people with the potential to start a business or franchise.

- Facilitate work placements with small businesses to mentor and train young people who lack skills and experience, and who cannot embark on an apprenticeship.
- Work with Graduate Opportunities Wales to assist graduates to find work placements, training opportunities and jobs.
- Establish a microcredit scheme to stimulate enterprise in areas of multiple deprivation.
- Continue the Joint Employment Board with the Department of Work and Pensions to add value to The Work Programme's measures and to ensure programmes do not overlap or clash.
- Move the skills and HE portfolios to the Minister for Economy and Transport so that the employability of graduates and young people is promoted.

Build a Modern Transport Network

- Seek to establish a direct air link between Wales and North America.
- Commission a study into the economic effect of bridge tolls in Wales and options to reduce or remove tolls. We will freeze the Severn bridge tolls for cars at their present level.
- Take full advantage of the opportunities offered by rail electrification and seek to work with the UK government to extend electrification to the Valleys network



and west along the Great Western line to Swansea.

- In light of the UK government's forthcoming review of the railways we will explore the possibility of devolving Network Rail to Wales.
- Seek to improve the rail links between North Wales and the conurbations of North West England and links to South Wales.
- Focus the road building budget on maintenance and improve the network through the Building Together scheme.
- Make roads safer for children and pedestrians and reduce the level of accidental death and serious injury.
- Create a safer environment for walking and cycling and encourage such exercise as carbon free alternatives to short car journeys.

Promote Tourism

- Ensure that small tourist operators pay no business rates.
- Boost the marketing of Wales as a destination in the home and international markets.
- Promote Welsh food and drink and other key growth markets like walking, fishing and country sports.
- Publish a Religious Heritage Strategy to promote tourism and knowledge of religious heritage.
- Develop a Seaside Towns Strategy.

A NEW VOICE FOR A HEALTHY WALES

THE CHALLENGE

Labour has decided to cut health spending in Wales. This damaging decision was taken by the Labour-led Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) despite the fact that we have the highest proportion of overweight children in the UK, diabetes and heart disease rates well above the UK average, and cancer mortality rates amongst the highest in Europe. Welsh patients deserve better. If we are to make Wales a healthier nation we must protect health spending and use the NHS budget more effectively. It is the skills of doctors, nurses and other health professionals that will transform such financial support into better health outcomes. And patients must also be supported to live healthier lives.

A NEW VOICE

A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will be a new voice for doctors, nurses and health professionals. We will trust them to take the decisions that will help eliminate the £1 billion of waste that occurs annually in NHS Wales. A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will be a new voice for patients and not settle for health outcomes that don't match the highest in Europe.

A WELSH CONSERVATIVE ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT WILL:

Protect Health Spending

- Protect NHS expenditure each and every year in real terms for the next four years.
- Clamp down on the £1 billion waste that occurs annually within the NHS.
- Re-introduce a charge of £5 per prescription for those who can afford it, but we will not ask those under 25, older people, cancer patients and those who were previously exempt to pay.

Fight Cancer

- Establish a cancer drugs fund to give Welsh patients the best possible treatments.
- Implement an integrated cancer screening service to ensure that current best practice in areas such as breast cancer is extended to other cancers.
- Appoint a 'Cancer Co-ordinator' for Wales, to champion cancer services and implement a robust National Cancer Plan.

Improve Health Services

- Ensure that at least 75% of ambulances respond to category A emergency calls within 8 minutes nationally and invest an additional £10 million annually in the Ambulance

Service.

- Support the Wales Air Ambulance Service, providing funding of £3 million a year.
- Invest in stroke units and Early Supported Discharge services, to give stroke victims the best chance of recovery.
- Invest in palliative care services, and provide all hospices in Wales with three-year funding cycles with the money raised from prescription charges.
- Pilot a walk-in health centre in Wrexham, utilising the skills of therapists and nurses to provide fast, convenient healthcare advice and treatment for minor injuries and ailments.
- Publish a comprehensive hospital infection reduction strategy with an emphasis on preventative measures that start in the patient's home.
- Invest in antenatal screening and maternity services, to give babies born in Wales the best possible start in life.
- Develop a national oral health strategy, which will provide strong guidance for NHS dental services, and share best practice across Local Health Boards.

Promote Public Health

- Improve access to screening services for cancer, diabetes, and eye conditions such as glaucoma as part

of an integrated strategy on health screening.

- Appoint a Deputy Minister for Public Health, with a focus on improving the health of the nation by co-ordinating cross-cutting portfolios.
- Improve food hygiene and ensure that food businesses display food hygiene scores.
- Review smoking cessation measures, including the display of tobacco products.

Support Doctors and Nurses

- Maintain the number of whole-time equivalent registered nurses working in NHS Wales, and invest in their continuing professional development.
- Undertake a recruitment and retention drive to address the current shortage of doctors.
- Take full advantage of the expertise in community pharmacies and optometrists to improve health and wellbeing. There is great scope to increase the effective use of medicines and cut down the £50 million wasted annually by patients returning unused medicines.
- Improve CCTV coverage in A&E wards and ambulances, and protect NHS staff who raise concerns about patient safety.

Raise Standards in Social Care

- Publish a White Paper on collaboration between the NHS and

A NEW VOICE FOR A HEALTHY WALES, CONTINUED

Social Services. With the formation of the 7 new Local Health Boards, now is the appropriate time to review the planning and commissioning of services.

- Invest in therapy services and emphasise their role in keeping people well and promoting independent living.
- Give people with a chronic illness or long-term condition the right to shape the care they receive. While patients should not be forced to take control of their care budgets, those that wish to should be encouraged and supported.
- Ask the Older People's Commissioner to conduct a review of advocacy services for older people and other vulnerable groups.



A NEW VOICE FOR EDUCATION

THE CHALLENGE

Labour has failed pupils, parents and teachers in Wales. Education standards here are the lowest of any UK nation. We are also slipping further behind our international competitors. No nation can expect to achieve prosperity without excellent, confident school leavers and graduates. Failure cannot be tolerated if we are to drive up standards, and schools need more freedom to manage their budgets efficiently. Wales needs to match or exceed the highest international standards. Once, Wales had a highly education-friendly culture. It must be restored quickly. Greater ambition is necessary for Higher Education too. None of our universities ranks in the top 100 in the world.

A NEW VOICE

A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will be a new voice for pupils, parents and teachers. We will improve GCSE and A level results so that they become the best in Britain, and then among the best in the world. Modern school buildings can play a vital part in driving up standards and we will develop a made-in-Wales PPP funding scheme to build new schools. Teachers are key to achieving higher attainment in schools and we will invest in their continuing professional development. We will fund schools directly from WAG and so give headteachers the powers to boost educational attainment.

A WELSH CONSERVATIVE ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT WILL:

Raise Standards in Schools

- Improve GCSE and A level results to the best in Britain, and then aim to be among the best in the world.
- Focus on educational attainment including targeted strategies for looked after children and other vulnerable groups.
- Review the National Curriculum and ensure that time is protected for sport, home economics and life skills.
- Introduce 'Teach Wales', a two year programme encouraging highly talented people into STEM subject teaching. Comparable schemes in England and America are resulting in improved attainment.
- Create a new made-in-Wales PPP scheme, Building Together, to fund a major school building programme.
- Fund schools directly from WAG to give headteachers the powers to boost educational attainment.
- Encourage the development of specialist schools, and support faith schools.
- Introduce targeted support for schools with pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds including a pupil premium.
- Develop a 'middle phase' (8 – 13 year olds) to integrate the school system and bridge the gap between the Foundation Phase and 14–19 Learning Pathways.

A NEW VOICE FOR EDUCATION, CONTINUED

- Retain the Wales and England-wide pay structure for teachers.
- Require all secondary schools to set-up a social enterprise to be managed and run by pupils. This will promote entrepreneurial spirit and equip our young people with life skills.

Improve Higher and Further Education

- Establish world class Higher Education institutions in Wales. Cardiff University to be a world top 50 university by 2020, and the majority of other HE institutions to attain a top 200 ranking.
- Implement a fair and sustainable fees system for Higher Education in Wales. Universities will be permitted to raise fees to a maximum of £9,000 subject to WAG approval.
- Establish a hardship fund, to help the most disadvantaged students. Bursaries will be linked to basic entrepreneurship training to cultivate an enterprising mind-set in our students.
- In both higher and further education, increase the emphasis and value placed on part-time, modular and distance learning and vocational courses to provide education in a flexible and responsive manner.
- Encourage collaboration to make the best use of resources, but not compel mergers.
- Preserve the corporate status of Further Education institutions.
- Encourage the growth of the Research

and Development sector, including HE-private sector partnerships.



A NEW VOICE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

THE CHALLENGE

Labour's failure to adequately tackle child poverty or boost educational attainment has let our children down. The full potential of children and young people can only be realised if we produce policies that put their interests at the heart of government. Some groups of children and young people face particular difficulties, such as looked after children and children living in poverty. As well as providing for a safe and nurturing childhood, society must prepare children and young people effectively for the challenges of adulthood.

A NEW VOICE

A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will be a new voice for children, ensuring that their interests are at the heart of government decision-making. We will work with the UK government to eliminate child poverty – starting with the most severe cases. The interests of looked after children and other children in need will be a priority. The wellbeing of all children will be promoted through a more child focused NHS and by raising educational attainment. We will continue to work with the Children's Commissioner to properly protect the interests of children and young people.

A WELSH CONSERVATIVE ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT WILL:

Reduce Child Poverty

- Eliminate child poverty by 2020 – starting with the most severe cases.
- Co-operate with the UK government to eradicate the barriers to employment. We will invest in affordable and flexible childcare including home-based childcare.

Promote Wellbeing

- Introduce legislation to promote the wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the levels of death and serious injury resulting from traffic accidents; seek to reduce other forms of accidental death amongst children and young people, and promote an integrated approach to health and children's services.
- Ensure that Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services are improved, together with those for young adults. Immediate priorities will be to improve the transition between child and adult services and to eliminate the use of adult inpatient services for children with serious mental illnesses.

Improve Corporate Parenting and Care

- Publish a strategy to raise the educational attainment of looked after children. A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will tackle the

A NEW VOICE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE, CONTINUED

ingrained attitudes that have led to poor outcomes for looked after children, and remove the stigma surrounding the care system.

- Strengthen guidance on corporate parenting and clarify the role of foster carers in corporate parenting.
- Extend free bus travel to looked after children and care leavers (up to the age of 25).
- Appoint a Cabinet Minister to also serve as Minister for Children and Young People. We will set-up a children and young persons’ “cabinet” to advise the First Minister.
- Reform the social workers’ profession to encourage experienced practitioners to stay in front line services, and create the grade of social worker consultant.
- Retain the Assembly’s Children and Young People Committee and promote its valuable work.
- Make the appointment of the Children’s Commissioner the responsibility of the National Assembly not the Welsh Assembly Government.



A NEW VOICE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

THE CHALLENGE

Under Labour Wales has lacked direction and leadership in the fight against climate change. In stark contrast to nations such as Scotland and Norway, where renewable energy and carbon emissions targets have been raised, Welsh targets have been missed, and even lowered by the Labour-led coalition. Labour has failed to secure the confidence of stakeholders because action plans have been too weak to achieve behavioural change. A much more rigorous approach is needed to tackle climate change. The scale of this challenge amounts to an opportunity greater than any since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution.

A NEW VOICE

A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will be a new voice for a greener economy. While Wales has an old industrial legacy, it is also abundant in alternative energy sources such as wind, wood, bio-gas, marine and hydro. We will honour, and aim to build on, existing climate change targets, such as the goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 3% a year in devolved areas. A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will set-up a mechanism to independently monitor and evaluate climate change targets. It is also important to take measures to minimise the risks associated with climate change –

including introducing ‘Blue Belts’ to prevent irresponsible development on flood plains.

A WELSH CONSERVATIVE ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT WILL:

Tackle Climate Change

- Achieve at least 3% annual reductions in Welsh-sourced greenhouse gas emissions in devolved areas.
- Establish an independent mechanism to monitor and evaluate climate change targets.
- Subject all WAG policies to a carbon impact assessment, to ensure they do not undermine this emissions reduction target.
- Publish a comprehensive strategy and action plan on building a green economy.
- Continue to make the case for devolving power over energy projects up to 100 MW.

Generate More Renewable Energy

- Promote a diverse range of renewable energy sources – including solar, wind, marine, small scale biomass, and microgeneration technologies with an aim to produce 100% of our energy needs from renewable sources by 2025. We will aim to achieve 70% delivery by 2020.
- Publish a marine energy strategy and work with the private sector to harness the River Severn’s tidal energy

A NEW VOICE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, CONTINUED

potential, through small-scale tidal lagoon projects and the development of marine turbines. As part of this programme, we will maximise EU funds for R&D, and for testing sites for renewable marine technologies.

Make Planning More Responsive to Local Need

- Protect flood plains with new ‘Blue Belts’ to prevent irresponsible development.
- Publish guidance on the planning system to make it more responsive to sustainable development and the needs of local communities.
- Close the planning loop-hole which allows ‘garden-grabbing’. Gardens will no longer be designated as potential brown field sites.
- Make Wales’ National Parks accountable to local communities through direct elections to National Park Authorities.

Protect the Environment

- Establish a biodiversity budget, funded by revenue from wind farms on public land, enabling targets set in the 2026 Wales Environment Strategy to be achieved. This will be used to restore Wales’ natural heritage, such as raised bogs and moorland.
- Create incentives and not penalties to encourage people to recycle. We will pilot recycling reward schemes, whereby residents will be given ‘points’ for recycling to use in local retail

outlets, restaurants and leisure facilities.

- Increase penalties for environmental crime – including littering and dog fouling – and ensure rigorous enforcement.
- Work with the private sector to support ways of reducing packaging, make packaging biodegradable, and establish recycling deposit schemes.



A NEW VOICE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

THE CHALLENGE

Labour has failed to protect the most vulnerable in our society. They have not built enough affordable homes, not targeted resources to help the poorest, nor done enough to help disabled people live independently.

We know that true prosperity can never be achieved without social justice. The right to participate is a key test of fairness and whether the vulnerable are supported to live full lives. In the 21st century the most successful nations will be those that champion social justice, respect human rights and acknowledge strength in diversity. Within a common core of Welsh and British values, diverse communities must be allowed to prosper.

A NEW VOICE

A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will be a new voice for disabled people who need support to help them participate in education, work and leisure. We will speak up for ethnic minorities who need the confidence to enjoy their dual or even multiple cultural identities. Carers who contribute so much to society need a voice to ensure regular and reliable respite care. And LGBT people often need protection from bullying and hate crimes, as do other minority groups – all can expect a Welsh Conservative Assembly Government to speak up for them.

A WELSH CONSERVATIVE ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT WILL:

Protect the Vulnerable

- Promote an integrated strategy to tackle domestic and sexual violence.
- Ensure that stable, three year funding cycles are available to support rape crisis centres.
- Require a zero tolerance policy on hate crimes and bullying. We will raise awareness of what constitutes homophobic, racist and gendered bullying.
- Continue to support events such as the Cardiff Mardi Gras.
- Run a national awareness campaign against elder abuse and age discrimination.
- Support the voluntary sector to increase provision of English and Welsh lessons for speakers of minority languages.

Reduce Fuel Poverty

- Deliver the key elements of the Fuel Poverty Charter.
- Place a duty on local authorities to tackle fuel poverty.
- Protect funding for the Fuel Poverty Scheme.
- Develop a targeted policy to help communities that are off mains gas.

Empower Communities

- Establish a National Youth Service Scheme for school leavers and young

A NEW VOICE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUALITY, CONTINUED

people who want to work in a community project and develop key skills. The scheme will extend to voluntary work abroad when supported by reputable organisations.

- Create a Big Society scheme, where public sector workers are given the opportunity to volunteer for five days annually.
- Set-up a network of community ‘anchor’ organisations to support and encourage community enterprise and social entrepreneurship.
- Encourage WAG, local authorities, and government agencies to transfer redundant assets to community groups.

Build More Homes

- Set a target to build at least 10,000 more affordable homes by 2015.
- Relate the definition of affordable housing to local price/income ratios.
- Examine the case for moving the Deputy Minister for Housing to the Department of Health and Social Services.
- Create a single tenure for all Social Housing tenants.
- Publish an affordable homes strategy which will also tackle the problem of empty homes. The strategy will be monitored by a sector-led working group on housing delivery.
- Fully protect the Right to Buy in Wales.
- Encourage housing stock transfer as a means to improve the quality of social housing, empower tenants and deliver

Sustainable Community Regeneration.

- Focus the home insulation scheme on older, harder to insulate homes.

Help Disabled People to Live Independent Lives

- Develop the ‘Centres for Independent Living’ model within Wales by working with local authorities and the third sector. These centres promote and deliver independent living, advocacy, peer support and advice.
- Promote the social model of disability.
- Encourage the use of direct payments. Too many barriers stand in the way of people who want to use direct payments.
- Improve occupational and other therapy services.
- Provide better access to lip reading classes in Wales via a National Lip Reading Strategy.

Remove Barriers

- Develop an ‘Access to Public Transport’ policy. We will work with local authorities and community transport providers to ensure disabled passengers are given the necessary help to travel.
- Protect free bus passes for older and disabled people, and extend the scheme to former and serving members of the armed forces and carers.
- Phase in audio and text announcements on public transport.
- Reduce accessibility barriers in polling

stations across Wales.

Support Carers

- Establish a ‘Carers Right to Respite’. Entitlement to respite care will taper depending on the hours spent caring per week.
- Extend the free bus travel scheme to carers who care for more than 20 hours per week.
- Develop the ‘Caring for Young Carers’ programme. In schools we will require a young carer’s educational support plan. Respite care must be flexible and should ensure protected study time for young carers.

Promote Financial Inclusion

- Support greater choice in financial services and promote financial education, especially for those who experience financial exclusion.
- Support the use of credit unions to decrease reliance on door-step lenders; and encourage links between credit unions and post offices, as the preferred method and location for community financial service provision.
- Highlight the danger of scam letters, bills and phone calls so vulnerable people don’t face intimidation and lose money.

Tackle Substance Misuse

- Create a National Directory of Substance Misuse that gives details of sources for advice and information, treatment and rehabilitation providers.
- Increase the use of Tier 4, residential

detoxification and rehabilitation centres which have a strong record of helping people back into society and a productive life.

Commissioners

- The Older People’s Commissioner for Wales and the Children’s Commissioner for Wales will be made National Assembly for Wales appointments.

A NEW VOICE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

THE CHALLENGE

A strong society must respect and engage with the interests and needs of all its members, regardless of age. Living in your own home, access to transport, the availability of public services – these are things that make for a good quality of life. It should surprise no one that they are central to the concerns of older people. In addition, we must ensure that older people are always treated with dignity when they are in the care of others – whether that be in hospital, a care home or their own home.

A NEW VOICE

A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will be a new voice for older people. Tackling elder abuse and age discrimination will be a priority. We will continue to work closely with the Older People's Commissioner to protect and promote the welfare of older people. We will ensure that as many older people as possible are supported to live independently in their own homes. Furthermore, we believe the skills and life experiences of older people should be utilised in decision-making and the development of services.

A WELSH CONSERVATIVE ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT WILL:

Respect Older People

- Run a national awareness campaign

against elder abuse and age discrimination.

- Recognise the large role that grandparents play in caring for children within the family.
- Introduce a requirement for bodies to consult older people when making decisions which affect their lives.
- Highlight the danger of scam letters, bills and phone calls so vulnerable people don't face intimidation and lose money.

Improve Access to Public Transport

- Protect free bus passes for older people.
- Develop an 'Access to Public Transport' policy. We will work with local authorities and community transport providers to ensure disabled passengers are given the necessary help to travel.
- Phase in audio and text announcements on public transport.

Help Older People to Live Independent Lives

- Support flexible working practices, especially for older people.
- Develop the 'Centres for Independent Living' model within Wales by working with local authorities and the third sector. These centres promote independent living, advocacy, peer support and advice.
- Invest in therapy services, to promote independent living.
- Make personal care budgets available



for all those that wish to have the power to shape their own social care, enabling them to choose services and care providers which suit their own particular needs.

Invest in Health

- Protect NHS expenditure each and every year in real terms for the next four years.
- Protect free prescriptions for all older people.
- Increase investment for stroke services and hospices.
- Establish a cancer drugs fund to give Welsh patients the best possible treatments.

Strengthen Advocacy Services

- Ask the Older People's Commissioner to conduct a review of advocacy services for older people.
- Ensure the Older People's Commissioner for Wales is a National Assembly for Wales appointment.

A NEW VOICE FOR RURAL WALES

THE CHALLENGE

Labour does not value or understand rural communities. They do not share our vision that with the right support rural Wales could be an economic powerhouse. Through the responsible use of abundant natural resources, distance-busting IT, and more enterprise-focused planning regulations, much-needed jobs can be generated, while protecting the unique characteristics of rural Wales. Of course Welsh agriculture must adapt to the changing demands of the 21st century, balancing the need to protect and enhance the natural environment while increasing food production to meet growing global demand.

A NEW VOICE

Farmers and businesses all across rural Wales need a new voice. A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will revitalise rural Wales and create a vibrant and mixed economy that enhances the network of family farms across Wales. We will support key growth markets like food tourism and country sports. And we know how important it is to rescue the flawed Glastir scheme and slash needless red tape. We must also reverse the decline in biodiversity and restore the vital ecosystems in our countryside, rivers and seas.

A WELSH CONSERVATIVE ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT WILL:

Support Farmers and Rural Communities

- Guarantee access to public services through a Rural Charter.
- Work to secure continuity of direct payments during CAP reform negotiations.
- Redesign the Glastir agri-environment scheme to secure maximum landowner participation and achieve Wales' environmental goals.
- Reduce red tape and bureaucracy, increasing the competitiveness of Welsh agriculture.
- Develop a more enterprise-focused planning policy which also allows for community participation and reward in economic and social development, including the release of more land for affordable housing.
- Introduce an integrated package of support for young farmers.

Promote Animal Welfare and Food Security

- Ensure that public sector food procurement is local, seasonal, and from sustainably certified sources wherever possible.
- Pursue Protected Geographic Status for unique Welsh produce, increase funding for promoting Welsh food and drink, and promote food tourism in Wales.



- Protect Wales' high standards of farm animal welfare, and work with the Food Standards Agency to protect small abattoirs.
- Introduce a comprehensive programme of bovine TB eradication.
- Provide local allotment space for all who need it, working in partnership with local authorities and landowners.
- Support a full programme of measures to safeguard animal health in Wales and protect livestock from disease.

Protect the Countryside

- Give communities the opportunity to take over the running of local amenities including village halls, community centres, pubs and post offices. Tailored business support will be available to assist those managing community assets.
- Support major projects to restore and create wildlife habitats across Wales funded by revenue from wind farms on public land.
- Protect public access to woodland and prioritise funding for new forestry in areas where it reduces flood risk.
- Introduce a licensing system and national code of conduct for all river users to safeguard fishing stocks and promote responsible access for unpowered craft.
- Promote Wales as a destination for outdoor and country sports.

A NEW VOICE FOR A BIG SOCIETY

THE CHALLENGE

Devolution should have brought decision-making closer to the people. Yet, more than a decade on, the reality is that under Labour people have seen decision-making and control taken further and further away by Ministers and bureaucrats in Cardiff. Council tax in Wales has more than doubled, but despite households paying more they are getting less. We believe communities must have a greater say in the decisions that affect them, and that local authorities must form more vibrant partnerships with communities and citizens. The challenge is to deliver deeper devolution for the people of Wales, and in the process build a stronger, fairer, and bigger society.

A NEW VOICE

A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will be a new voice for local communities across Wales. We will shift power to local councils and communities, overturning more than a decade of central control under Labour. We will decentralise power to the lowest possible level, giving local communities the power to instigate referendums on council tax hikes. We will also give Town and Community Councils a greater say in the planning process.

A WELSH CONSERVATIVE ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT WILL:

Strengthen Communities

- Give local authorities greater discretion over their expenditure by reducing the costly use of ring-fenced grants. This will save up to £70 million annually, and allow local people to decide on local priorities.
- Devolve powers from the National Assembly to local communities. We will make it easier for residents to trigger local referendums on issues such as council tax hikes, car parking and business rates.
- Hold referendums for directly-elected mayors in Cardiff, Swansea, Newport and Wrexham – to provide strong local leadership and deliver real change.
- Increase the role of Town and Community Councils in the planning process.

Open-up Government

- Unleash an army of ‘armchair auditors’ to scrutinise government accounts, by encouraging local authorities to publish online all expenditure above £500. This will enable the public to determine if their local authority is delivering value for money.
- Encourage partnership arrangements between local authorities – particularly in back office functions such as HR and payroll – and where practical, work with local authorities to encourage



greater cross-border collaboration. However, we will not force mergers between local authorities.

- Open-up more public services and general procurement to the voluntary sector and SMEs.

- Support faith schools and protect the place of religious education in the curriculum.

Promote a Big Society

- Recognise the commitment of our servicemen and women with an Armed Forces' Card. The card will extend to former members of the forces and provide free bus travel and free entry into local authority leisure centres and CADW sites.
- With the Armed Forces' Card, prioritise the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants to support independent home living, and give ex-service personnel priority NHS treatment for service related conditions or injuries.

Make Communities Safer

- Fund a national campaign to recruit more Special Constables.
- Work closely with Welsh Police Forces to ensure that devolved areas like community safety are delivered effectively.
- Ensure that Police Commissioners are supported and properly scrutinised.

Respect Faith Communities

- Sponsor a national conference to examine the relationship between WAG and faith communities and how it can be further developed.

A NEW VOICE FOR HERITAGE

THE CHALLENGE

Wales is blessed with a vibrant heritage, two national languages and an outstanding sporting tradition. Our national community was among the first to emerge in Europe. We have a literary tradition that dates back to the sixth century. Yet while devolution has brought renewed self-confidence to Wales, successive Labour-led WAGs have failed to take enough pride in Welsh cultural traditions. There is often little knowledge of Wales beyond our borders. As a result the world's greatest castles remain relatively obscure. The chance to strengthen legislation for the Welsh language was ducked. And other opportunities have been missed to protect and cultivate Welsh heritage.

A NEW VOICE

A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will give Wales a big, confident 'brand' identity with heritage at its core. We will enhance the full potential of national treasures like the Welsh language and the finest medieval castles in the world. We want to spark a renaissance in the creative industries, in both the medium of English and Welsh. While Wales has in recent years become a venue for major sporting events, we will invest further in this vital area.

A WELSH CONSERVATIVE ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT WILL:

Create a Bilingual Nation

- Introduce a Charter-Mark for businesses which will recognise Welsh language services. The scheme will be voluntary but will offer incentives for bilingual signage and Welsh language training for front-line staff.
- Work towards one million Welsh speakers by 2031 and 1.5 million by 2051 in a truly bilingual Wales.
- Legislate to enshrine the official status and equality of the Welsh and English languages in Wales and the independence of the Welsh Language Commissioner.
- Offer a package of support to parents and guardians of children in Welsh medium schools, to include help to learn Welsh.
- Support Eisteddfodau across Wales.

Champion Sport

- Market Wales as a world class sports venue for major events. We will support bids for a European Cup Final and the Commonwealth Games. We would use the Commonwealth Games bid to encourage deeper ties with other Commonwealth countries.
- Invest in a grassroots sport coaching scheme to increase physical activity among children and young people.

Promote Creative Industries

- Support a review of Welsh language broadcasting to protect the independence and financial security of S4C beyond 2015.
- Seek to establish a joint mechanism with Westminster to keep S4C fully accountable in areas where devolved matters are affected such as support for creative industries and the promotion of the Welsh language.
- Work with entrepreneurs in the creative and cultural industries to meet the sector's needs, including premises, digital networks and provision of wireless internet connections in public buildings.
- Explore the feasibility of a Welsh joint digital fund between broadcasters, producers and media entrepreneurs, to invest in Welsh creative industries.
- Work with producers and broadcasters to increase co-production across creative industries.
- Implement the main recommendations of the Hargreaves Report into creative industries.

Celebrate Welsh Heritage

- Invest in a big brand marketing strategy for Wales. This will market Wales as an entire destination from tourism and culture to a business location and partner.
- Seek to establish St. David's Day as a national holiday for Wales.
- Place a duty on local authorities to

ensure that war memorials are maintained.

- Establish a Welsh military museum.
- Create a Welsh public records office, under the supervision of the National Library for Wales.
- Secure the University of Wales Press' future by funding it directly from WAG.

A NEW VOICE FOR THE NATION

THE CHALLENGE

Devolution has made Wales a political nation. The Welsh Conservative Party welcomes this development and believes it is completely compatible with a strong Union, which is the basis of the UK. Now that the principle of a primary law making Assembly has been settled, it is time to strengthen the political partnership between Wales, England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the UK. This will require the UK to move to a fair, needs based formula for the funding of devolution.

A NEW VOICE

A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will be a new voice for Wales in a strong UK. However, Welsh Conservatives want the National Assembly and WAG to be made more accountable for the decisions they make. Welsh Conservatives also believe that the legal jurisdiction of Wales needs to be made more distinct and partly accountable to the National Assembly.

A WELSH CONSERVATIVE ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT WILL:

Secure a New Settlement for Wales

- Fully support the retention of the Wales Office, which acts as a strong voice for Wales in Westminster and ensures Welsh interests are fully represented in the UK Cabinet.
- Work closely with the network of UK Ministers that has responsibility for

liaising with the devolved administrations to assess the impact of UK legislation on Wales, Scotland and N. Ireland.

- Publish a White Paper on the legal jurisdiction of Wales.
- Support the extension of the 4th Assembly by one year to avoid a clash with the UK General Election in 2015.
- Work with the UK government to take forward discussions on all aspects of the Holtham reports on fair and accountable funding for Wales, including taxation.

Celebrate Wales' Contribution to the UK

- Promote St Athan's bid as a site for collective technical training of the UK's armed forces.
- Work with the UK government to ensure that the views of Welsh communities and stakeholders are fully heard in the consultation on the modernisation of the coastguard service.
- Seek to establish St. David's Day a national holiday for Wales.
- Petition Her Majesty to establish a Welsh Order of Chivalry.

Rebuild Trust in Politics

- Fully support the standards set out in the 2009 Commissioner of Standards Measure and do everything in our power to promote public trust and confidence in the National Assembly and its Members.
- Appoint a Minister for North Wales to represent North Wales in the cabinet.
- Hold some plenary sessions of the National Assembly in North Wales.



THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME

A Welsh Conservative Assembly Government will deliver the following core legislative programme:

(1) THE ENTERPRISE WALES BILL

A Bill to foster the growth of the private sector in Wales, promote enterprise, strengthen the voice of business, and increase relative GVA. The Bill will:

- Abolish business rates for small businesses.
- Reform procurement to make more contracts SME friendly.
- Reform planning to provide flexibility in return for community reward.
- Reform the Council for Economic Renewal to make it an arm's length body to influence and monitor WAG's economic policy.
- Provide incentives for enterprise: scholarships, greater scientific and technical training; R & D support and Enterprise Zones.
- Publish a 5 yearly Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Strategy.
- Raise the average skills level of the Welsh workforce.

(2) THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS WELLBEING BILL

A Bill to reduce the level of accidental death and severe injury among children and young people, and to reduce other causes of serious ill health and harm.

The main provisions of the Bill will be:

- A duty on local authorities and other agencies to make the road network and

general built environment safer for children and young people and reduce fatal road accidents to approaching zero by 2020.

- The prohibition of the routine use of adult services to treat children with serious illnesses.
- To produce a statutory code of conduct, and monitoring mechanism, to improve Children's Services and a local authority's status as corporate parent.
- To stipulate a framework for the elimination of child poverty by 2020.

(3) PUBLIC HEALTH IMPROVEMENT BILL

A Bill to reduce health inequalities and raise life expectancy in Wales to the highest levels in Europe. The main provisions of the Bill will be:

- The creation of an All Wales Public Health Board to monitor improvements in public health and provide help, support and advice to Health Boards.
- A comprehensive health screening service.
- A new duty on public agencies to collaborate and pool resources to secure public health outcomes (to include health, social services, housing, education, and leisure services).
- Review smoking cessation measures including display of tobacco products.

(4) CREATIVE INDUSTRIES BILL

A Bill to promote creative industries in

THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME,

CONTINUED

Wales. The main provisions of the Bill will be:

- A system for the National Assembly to monitor and evaluate the performance of S4C in areas that relate to devolved functions.
- The creation of a Welsh public records office under the supervision of the National Library for Wales.
- A duty on the Welsh Assembly Government to produce a 10 year Creative Industries Strategy.

(5) EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BILL

The Bill will set out duties and powers to promote educational attainment in Wales. The main provisions of the Bill will be:

- A duty on local authorities to measure the attainment gap (between the relevant LA and Welsh, UK and OECD benchmarks) and produce strategies to close such gaps.
- Measures to improve the educational attainment of looked after children and other vulnerable groups.
- Powers for local authorities to establish a middle school phase.
- Measures to reduce truancy and other symptoms of educational disengagement.

(6) COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT BILL

A Bill to support local groups, establish a National Youth Service Scheme, and give local communities a greater say in the

running of public services. The main provisions of the Bill will be:

- To require all local authorities in Wales to publish expenditure over £500.
- To permit the transfer of public assets to community groups.
- To create a National Youth Service Scheme.
- To provide business and organisational support to community organisations, social enterprises, and voluntary organisations.

(7) THE FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT BILL

A Bill to prevent irresponsible development on land at high risk of flooding. The main provisions of the Bill will be:

- To provide clear national guidance, to control inappropriate development on areas identified by Environment Agency Wales to be at high risk of flooding.
- A requirement for strategic flood consequence assessments to be built into local development plans.
- A duty on developers to make local people fully aware of the potential risks of flooding from their development.
- A requirement that any authority which gives planning permission to develop on flood plains takes out an indemnity policy for future flooding in these developments.



(8) THE CLIMATE CHANGE (WALES) BILL

A Bill to set annual targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and to set further targets for 2020, 2030 and 2050. The Bill will set out duties on public bodies to reduce emissions and give Welsh Ministers powers to enter into agreements with utility companies and other non-government bodies to promote fuel efficiency and reduce emissions. The Wales Audit Office will be required to monitor the targets set out in the Bill and to evaluate the efficacy of interventions. An Annual Report will be submitted to the National Assembly by the Wales Audit Office.

(9) WELSH LANGUAGE BILL

A Bill to recognise the official status of Welsh and English and the equality between the Welsh and English languages. The Welsh Language Commissioner will be made independent of government by means of making the appointment the responsibility of the National Assembly. The Welsh Language Commissioner's powers will be extended to promote equality between Welsh and English. Welsh Ministers will be given powers to create grants to extend the use and visibility of Welsh in the private and voluntary sectors.

A duty will be placed on Welsh Ministers to produce a Welsh Language Recovery Strategy setting targets for bilingualism

in Wales in 2031 and 2051 and for these targets to be monitored by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

(10) HERITAGE BILL

A Bill to enshrine the protection and promotion of Welsh heritage in legislation. The Bill will reform the listing process to ensure it is responsive to current challenges. Local authorities will be placed under a duty to ensure maintenance of war memorials. The publication of culture and heritage plans by local authorities will be compulsory.

(11) FOOD HYGIENE AND NUTRITION BILL

A Bill to improve the hygiene of food businesses in Wales, improve the nutritional standards of food in public sector bodies, and reduce waste. The main provisions of the Bill will be:

- A duty on all food businesses in Wales to display food hygiene scores on the premises.
- A requirement for the complete separation of equipment for raw meat and ready-to-eat foods.
- An obligation for public sector bodies to improve the nutritional standards of food, through local and seasonal procurement.
- To establish local and national targets to reduce food waste.
- Measures to improve general nutrition in Wales.

A NEW VOICE FOR WALES

- **Protect the NHS budget for the next 4 years.**
- **Invest in education to give teachers, parents and governors a greater say.**
- **Introduce an Armed Forces' Card to give benefits such as free bus travel and NHS priority care.**
- **Eliminate child poverty by 2020.**
- **Scrap business rates for all small businesses.**
- **Protect free bus passes and free prescriptions for older people.**
- **Protect flood plains with new 'Blue Belts' to prevent irresponsible development.**
- **Promote the Welsh language with a new Charter Mark for businesses that encourage its use.**