

**Plaid Cymru
Programme for Opposition
2016-2021**



**Plaid Cymru
Party of Wales**

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Plaid Cymru Programme for Opposition 2016-2021

Programme for Opposition

PROGRAMME FOR OPPOSITION: INTRODUCTION

On May 5th this year the people of Wales elected members of the National Assembly for its fifth term. No party secured an overall majority, and a tied vote ensued between the leaders of the two largest parties on who should become First Minister.

On May 18th the Plaid Cymru Group in the National Assembly announced a Compact with the Labour Group in order to facilitate the formation of a minority Government led by the Labour party. This one-off agreement covered the first 100 days of the new administration, and is reproduced as an annex to this document.

When the Compact was announced, we committed to providing 'real opposition' to the minority Labour-led government. Real opposition means holding the Welsh Government to account with robust scrutiny. It also means retaining the ability to secure achievements for our constituents and for the nation.

We are therefore publishing the first ever Programme for Opposition in the history of Welsh democracy.

This has never done before, but we hope it will now become a regular feature of the Welsh democratic cycle.

For the first time ever, a Labour-led government will be opposed by a party with a detailed and comprehensive alternative Programme, elements of which we will seek to have implemented.

The Programme builds upon and re-prioritises our ground-breaking 2016 election manifesto. It is not exhaustive, and in a constantly changing world we will remain open to responding to new challenges and identifying new opportunities. But the Programme outlines key priorities, associated goals, and capital projects which could help transform Wales with immediate effect. It is able to be updated as the Assembly term progresses and as global and domestic events shape our society and require a response.

Plaid Cymru will also take forward a comprehensive set of actions around EU withdrawal and our constitutional future as part of this Programme and in parallel with it. In doing so we will be led by the motion agreed by Plaid Cymru members at our Special Conference on July 16th this year.

This is an historic period for Wales. The very foundations of our nationhood, and our European values, have been challenged during the referendum campaign.

Yet that challenge has created opportunities to imagine, and then to secure, an alternative national future for Wales.

That future encompasses our nation's independent and outward-looking relations with the rest of Europe and the world.

But it must also include the necessity of transforming Wales from within, of drawing upon the potential of our people, and achieving a nation of prosperity and social justice.

We present this Programme of Opposition to the National Assembly and to the nation as a whole.

PROGRAMME FOR OPPOSITION: NATIONAL CONTEXT

Key Values

Our decisions will be guided in the first instance by the foundational values of the party as set out in our constitution:

2.1 To secure independence for Wales in Europe.

2.2 To ensure economic prosperity, social justice and the health of the natural environment, based on decentralist socialism.

2.3 To build a national community based on equal citizenship, respect for different traditions and cultures and the equal worth of all individuals, whatever their race, nationality, gender, colour, creed, sexuality, age, ability or social background. These are the Party's core values.

2.4 To create a bilingual society by promoting the revival of the Welsh language.

2.5 To promote Wales's contribution to the global community and to attain membership of the United Nations.

National Objectives

A set of National Objectives, as outlined in January 2016, establishes Plaid Cymru's vision for a future Wales and will act as a set of indicators/key criteria to which the party will refer in assessing draft budgets and the efficacy of government programmes:

- Wales is the most attractive place to do business in the UK
- We have increased and improved employment opportunities for people in Wales
- People in Wales are better educated, more skilled and successful
- Wales is renowned internationally for research and innovation
- Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens
- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
- People in Wales live longer, healthier lives
- We have made Wales a more equal society
- The life chances of young people, children and families at risk have improved
- People in Wales live life safe from crime, disorder and danger
- All communities are sustainable, well-connected and have access to amenities and public services

- Communities' stake in their own well-being has been strengthened
- Our natural environment is protected and is secure for future generations
- Everyone in Wales can take pride in our inclusive, progressive national identity
- Wales' public finances are stronger
- Wales' economy is more balanced and diverse
- More people have access to Welsh-medium education, there are greater opportunities to use the Welsh language in daily life and the number of Welsh-speakers is growing
- We have reduced the local and global impact of our consumption and production
- Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it
- Our public services are high-quality, constantly improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

Three Key Aims

These three Key Aims are strategic and guide the party's Programme for Opposition.

1. PROTECTING WALES FROM THE IMMEDIATE FALLOUT OF BREXIT

We will endeavor to mitigate any harmful effects resulting from the referendum. This includes both the effect on the economy and trade, but also the effect on society and culture. In advance of Brexit actually occurring, we will propose alternative models for the Welsh relationship with the EU in the future. We will then advocate this during any Article 50 or EU negotiation process, and will ensure that Wales does not become a silent partner in the UK-wide debate.

2. BUILDING THE NATION FOR THE LONG-TERM

Our policy programme will continue to lay the foundations for national success in the future, in all fields. Nation-building will remain our core purpose and will be at the forefront of the Programme for Opposition. We are determined that Wales should have a future as a nation in its own right, with its own institutions, its own successes and a sense of self-confidence.

3. AN ALL-WALES APPROACH THAT LEAVES NO COMMUNITY AND NO INDIVIDUAL BEHIND

Plaid Cymru advocates an all-Wales approach to public policy. Investment, opportunity and resource should be distributed as evenly as possible throughout Wales. By this, we include a geographic element, rebalancing Wales away from an over-concentration of the state in any one region. But we also believe that government and its agencies should reach into those communities and parts of society which are hard to reach, or which have been neglected. This was a theme embraced by our 2016 manifesto and remains central to our ideology and vision for Wales.

Well-Being of Future Generations Act

Following the passage of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act, we will design and frame all of our policies in a way which helps secure a sustainable future. We committed to doing so in our manifesto, and accept the Act in good faith as a potential driver for change.

The clear risk is that business as usual will continue under the current government. The Act has already been used to retrospectively justify Welsh Government decisions which were made prior to its conception. Our scrutiny of the government will aim to ensure that the Act lives up to its promise, and that it really does create a culture change both within the machinery of government, and wider society.

PROGRAMME FOR OPPOSITION: POLICY AREAS

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Plaid Cymru vision for Health

The overarching vision of Plaid Cymru is to conjure up the spirit of Bevan in reinventing an NHS for tomorrow's Wales.

As the largest budgetary area within the Welsh Government, health requires the largest number of interventions.

Our full ambitions for health require a Plaid Cymru Government and would last more than one Assembly term. It involves making the service fit for the future. But we can make a start in fixing Labour's mismanagement of the health service straight away.

A Plaid Cymru NHS would be fully in public hands, would prize prevention of ill health where possible, and respond to ill health with timely treatment as close to home as possible, using the most modern treatments and technologies.

Key Priorities

1. Ending poor performance on waiting times for testing and treatment.

Waiting times for treatment and diagnosis in many specialisms have been in decline for several years, and are longer than in other nations in the UK, including in areas that spend less on health than we do. Because of this we would:

- *Develop three multi-disciplinary Diagnostic centres, aiming for tests and diagnosis for cancer within 28 days so treatment can begin sooner.*
- *Improve performance on waiting times through a statutory Patient Treatment Guarantee and far more rigorous monitoring of health board performance.*
- *Recruit and train 1,000 extra doctors and 5000 extra nurses - including the introduction of financial incentives for hard-to-recruit areas and specialisms.*

2. Maintaining and restoring local services

Under Labour many services have been lost from district general hospitals and been centralised because of a shortage of doctors. Furthermore, many GP practices are closing or under threat because of a shortage of GPs. To tackle this we would:

- *Recruit and train 1,000 extra doctors and 5000 extra nurses - including the introduction of financial incentives for hard-to-recruit areas and specialisms*
- *Create a National Specialist service with guarantee of A+E/Maternity that is close to home for every community*
- *Develop clinical networks so that consultants working predominantly in smaller hospitals can retain sufficient skillsets.*

- *Invest in medical education and training so we can create a new generation of doctors, including a new medical school in Bangor and increasing the number of Welsh students applying to medical school.*
- *Reform NHS planning guidance to avoid penalising rural hospitals.*
- *Invest in new technologies such as telemedicine to minimise travelling time for specialist treatments.*
- *Return specialist services from England including establishing a new specialist neo-natal care unit in north Wales, an eating disorder clinic, and a gender identity clinic.*
- *Retain consultant-led maternity services at the three District General Hospitals in north Wales.*

3. Improving Mental Health and access to therapy

Mental Health services have been under-funded for too long, despite the growing demand on these services. Many people wait too long to see therapists, and crisis support is often not available. Plaid Cymru would:

- *Increase spending on Mental Health services in each year of the Assembly term.*
- *Make more therapists available in the community.*
- *Establish a specialist residential centre for people with eating disorders.*
- *Ensure crisis care was available 24/7 throughout Wales.*
- *Ensure children receive education in how to maintain good mental health through reforms to the curriculum.*

4. Saving 10,000 lives through better hospital care

Overall we will reduce preventable deaths by 25% by 2026. We know that avoidable mortality is about 15% higher in Wales than in England. Our plan will save 10,000 lives over the period 2016-2026 through measures such as

- *Extending the safe nurse staffing levels bill to more hospital settings to reduce adverse incidents, hospital infections and long term complications caused by under-staffing*
- *Investing in better social care services that can keep people living independently*
- *Creating a 21st century medical care network to ease the transition from hospital back to the community and providing early access respite care to prevent hospital admissions.*

5. Longer term prevention of ill health

- *Tackling smoking through supporting colleges and universities to ban smoking on campuses, and consulting on an increase in the minimum age for buying cigarettes to 21.*
- *Tackling alcoholism and substance abuse through introducing legislation on a minimum unit price of alcohol, and ensuring that a network of residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation facilities exists in all parts of Wales.*
- *Tackling obesity through a radical change in policy that would include conducting a randomised control trial on the effects of subsidy on the consumption of fruit and vegetables, promoting more grass roots sport, and a substantial investment in the promotion of healthy eating.*

Capital Projects

- Multi-disciplinary diagnostic centres.
- New medical school in Bangor.
- Specialist Neo-natal care unit in north Wales.
- Gender identity clinic.

EDUCATION

Plaid Cymru vision for Education

Education has the potential to transform the fortunes of the nation. Plaid Cymru's vision is to empower our young people through the education system to achieve their full potential.

Central to the offer in our 2016 manifesto was to raise the status of the teaching profession through the National Teaching Premium.

In return for the National Teaching Premium we will expect the teaching profession in Wales to set an agreed national strategy for raising standards of educational attainment in Wales relative to UK and international educational performance, equivalent to reaching an average top 10 placement in Europe across the five areas covered by the PISA tests – literacy, numeracy, science, problem-solving and financial literacy by 2026.

We will await the findings of the Diamond Review on the future of higher education and student fees, believing that a sustainable tuition fee system that supports students, and affords adequate funding for Welsh higher education institutions is the best way forward. The relationship between fee support and higher education funding is absolutely critical to the future of our University sector, even more so in light of the challenges arising from the EU referendum result.

Key Priorities: Early Education and Schools

1. *Free childcare for three and four-year-olds, ensuring high-quality childcare provision is available in all parts of Wales*
2. *Ensure an outcome based education system, with a national child development tracking model to ensure children are reaching their potential, with assistance provided at an early stage to those who are falling behind.*
3. *Reform of teacher training, with the aim of making teaching a Master's level profession.*
4. *Reduce bureaucracy so that teachers spend more time in the classroom - making inspections risk based, rather than time based.*
5. *Make Welsh in education a continuum of learning in order to move away from the Welsh first language/ Welsh second language subject divide, and ensure that all pupils receive some education through the medium of Welsh.*

Other Goals: Early Education and Schools

- Reform the Education Workforce Council into a comprehensively independent, self-regulating professional body, responsible for teaching standards and continuing professional development, making CPD for all teachers both a right and a duty if they are to maintain professional competence.

- Push for one centre for Initial Teacher Training linked to pedagogical research centres, following the Furlong review.
- Develop a national cooperative for supply teachers to ensure supply teachers receive the same entitlement.
- Call for the use of statutory powers to ensure all Local Education Authorities deliver on their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans by reinforcing existing powers to ensure that all WESPs include specific dates and locations for increasing Welsh Medium Education provision.
- Support legislation to support those with additional learning needs to ensure early interventions and effective support.
- Push for all 16-18 year olds to be supported in the education system and for free school/college transport for 16-18 year olds.
- Invest in schools as community hubs through NICW, with facilities such as gyms, swimming pools and libraries open to communities out of school hours and enhanced childcare and after-school club provision.

Key Priorities: Higher Education, Further Education and Skills

1. *Ensure that the student tuition fee system is sustainable so that Welsh universities have more resources and that more graduates stay in or return to Wales*
2. *Restore funding to Further Education to alleviate the cuts made by the Welsh Government over the last Assembly Term, ensuring provision for part-time students and to fill Wales' skills gaps.*
3. *Increase the number of available apprenticeships in Wales, including higher level apprenticeships, targeting sectors facing skills shortages.*
4. *Develop further education and work based learning through the medium of Welsh by extending the remit of Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to include the post-16 sector.*
5. *Develop an under 25 job guarantee for young people who have been seeking work and are not in education or training.*

Other goals: Higher Education, Further Education and Skills

- Develop a National Citizen Service programme open to all 18-25 year olds within Wales involving an approved 9-12 month paid, full-time placement.
- Support a combined body for further and higher education to promote parity of esteem between vocational and academic qualifications, following the Hazelkorn review.
- Ensure better funding support for postgraduate students.
- Push for student financial support for Welsh-domiciled students enrolling as undergraduates in universities outside the UK, on similar lines to the recent pilot in Scotland.
- Explore whether we can urgently secure increased support for Erasmus+, prior to any EU withdrawal, so that more of our young people get the opportunity to study for part of their degree or work placements elsewhere in the European Union.

- Push for the establishment of a National Construction College, a National Green Skills College and a National Digital College, led by employers and/or universities.

Key Priorities: Children and Young People

1. *Support legislation to remove the reasonable chastisement defence.*
2. *Tackle the unacceptably long waiting times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health services, and ensure that transition to Adult services are more robust and delivered in an age appropriate way to ensure that young people are ready.*
3. *Develop a Child Poverty Action Plan to tackle child poverty, which affects one in three children in Wales*
4. *Establish a National Youth Parliament for Wales.*

Other goals: Children and Young People

- Ensure adequate resources for young carers' support packages, supporting the identification of young carers and providing them with help to reach their potential in gaining qualifications and employment.
- Develop a truly national youth service, ensuring that all young people, regardless of postcode, receive the best possible services.
- Develop and support alternatives to prison for young offenders so that they do not enter a cycle of crime.
- To better protect our most vulnerable children, we will review the effectiveness of child protection provision to make sure that schools and social services co-operate efficiently.

Capital Projects

- Capital works on a National Construction College, National Green Skills College and National Digital College.
- Finish any EU-funded capital projects in Higher and Further education as quickly and decisively as possible, commencing projects prior to any cut off of EU funds as a result of Brexit.

ECONOMY AND FINANCE

Plaid Cymru vision for Economy and Finance

The economy stands at the heart of Plaid Cymru's vision for Wales. Its success or lack of determines whether our young people can stay in Wales or have to leave.

Our medium-term economic objective is to bring Wales to economic parity with the UK within a generation – that is over a twenty year period to 2036. This means achieving a Welsh GVA growth rate of around 3.5% every year, equating to an additional £1.5 billion in output for the Welsh economy every year. This is challenging but by no means impossible. The Basque Country achieved an average GVA growth rate of 3.69% between 1995 and 2008.

Key Priorities: Economy

- 1. Create a Wales Development Agency (WDA) for the 21st century which will sell Wales, our products and ideas, to the world to grow Welsh businesses and boost our exports.*
- 2. Legislate to ensure Welsh companies can secure 75% of public procurement spend in Wales, increasing its current total spend in Wales from 52% now, and creating over 40,000 new jobs as a result.*
- 3. Create a National Bank of Wales, a publicly-owned bank that will provide debt finance to Welsh businesses to help plug the estimated funding gap of £500m a year faced by Welsh SMEs and help to support and grow Welsh-owned businesses to medium size (between 250 and 500 employees, like the German Mittelstand).*
- 4. Extend the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme to help all businesses with a Rateable Value of £20,000 or less – 90,000 firms would benefit and more than 70,000 would be taken out of paying business rates altogether.*
- 5. Establish a National Infrastructure Commission Wales (NICW), an independent public corporation that will plan, fund and deliver the aspirations set out in the National Infrastructure Investment Plan to modernise our nation's transport, telecommunications, energy and green infrastructure.*

Other Goals: Economy

- Create Regional Development Agencies within Wales, beginning with a Valleys Development Agency and a body covering rural and west Wales.
- Support a Wales Expo Bid for 2025.
- Develop a publicly owned telecoms company to address broadband and mobile phone coverage.
- Establish a digital currency for Wales.
- Create a National Academy for Tourism, with an onsite hotel and conference centre.
- Develop a distinct Welsh model of tourism, based on promoting and celebrating our language, heritage, culture and landscapes.
- Set up a social business school.
- Introduce free car parking for town centres.
- Establish a National Steel Innovation Centre.
- Introduce the Real Living Wage throughout the Welsh Public Sector.

Key Priorities: Finance

1. *Establishment of an Assembly parliamentary commission to explore reform or replacement of council tax.*
2. *Introduce innovation-related tax-breaks for Wales.*
3. *Give powers to Welsh councils to introduce tourism levy.*
4. *New approaches to budget-setting, including participatory budgeting, evidence-based, zero-based and expert-led budget reviews.*

Other Goals: Finance

- Continue to seek fiscal framework which allows the introduction of devolved taxes and new fiscal powers to Wales.
- Improve data on Welsh public finances, and financial scrutiny across all aspects of government.
- Invest in future savings through a Public Sector Innovation and Intrapreneurship Fund.
- Provide a Co-Operative Challenge Fund to finance market and feasibility studies for groups exploring the option of setting up co-operatives.

Capital Projects

- Most capital projects for boosting the economy directly will be in Transport, or will be further down the line under the remit of the National Infrastructure Commission.
- All capital investment in housing and the public sector estate benefits the economy and construction industry, and we will call for Welsh borrowing powers and innovative financing methods to be expanded prior to any recession or other form of economic downturn.

TRANSPORT

Plaid Cymru vision for Transport

Creating a national transport system fit for the 21st century is crucially important for our wider social and economic goals as a nation.

Plaid Cymru has long believed that transport can be used to unite and connect a nation that has historically suffered from fragmented and incomplete links.

Transport is in area where the Welsh Government will face some of the largest decisions in the history of Welsh democracy. We will hold them to account on the renewal of the Wales and Borders franchise, the delivery of integrated public transport and Metro systems in the south-east and the north, and the distribution of expenditure on roads, rail and new stations throughout the country.

Key Priorities

1. *Sufficiently resource 'Transport for Wales', an arms-length not-for-profit body to oversee the co-ordination and improvement of transport throughout Wales; particularly through the Wales and Borders' Franchise.*
2. *Create the south-east Metro as well as a similar Metro-style network for both north Wales and Swansea and the western valleys; crucially ensuring that these networks don't leave key communities out of the picture.*
3. *Invest in improvements to the A55, including a programme of investment in hard shoulders and junction improvements , the upgrading of the section between Abergwyngregyn and Tai'r Meibion and the construction of a third Menai Bridge (dualling the current Britannia Bridge) to reduce congestion and improve resilience in the link between Anglesey and the mainland.*
4. *Improve the M4 through the more cost-effective "Blue Route" or a variation of it.*
5. *Lay the groundwork for, and later achieve, the delivery of a rail corridor between Carmarthen and Aberystwyth, with the potential to open up further possibilities elsewhere along the western coast.*

Other Goals

- Raise the level of funding per person on active travel in Wales.
- Eliminate toll fees for residents of Wales on the Severn Crossings if the opportunity becomes available by the end of this term.
- Achieve the Plaid Cymru commitments relating to the Wales and Borders' Franchise such as protection of the existing route map and links into England, worker and passenger representation on the board, smart ticketing, a fair fares structure, and a model which sees profits reinvested into services.
- Invest in further development of dualled four lane sections along Wales' internal strategic routes.
- Reregulate buses when the powers become available.
- Regulate and improve the taxi industry for customers and drivers.
- Protect bus passes, concessionary fares, for those currently eligible.
- Develop long-haul services at Cardiff Wales Airport, if necessary via the creation of a low-cost national carrier.
- Continue public support for Cardiff Wales Airport and increasing passenger numbers.
- Maximise other job opportunities around Wales' airports.
- Publish national aviation strategy for Wales.

- Develop and deliver plan to ensure that valleys communities see benefits from any Metro system, potentially including promoting the valleys for business relocation and the development of housing and leisure opportunities.
- Negotiate to remove tolls on the Cleddau Bridge.
- Create the National Ports Strategy, identifying where infrastructure improvements are required.

Capital Projects

- New stations and lines as part of the south-east Wales Metro and other integrated transport systems, with specific choices based on social and economic need.
- Increase the capacity of the valley lines, especially by doubling the line between Porth and Treherbert.
- New rail stations and rail re-openings outside of the 'Metro' areas.
- Package of A55 improvements.
- Improvements to Wales' internal strategic routes, depending on where the social and environmental case permits.
- Develop National Bus Stations Improvement programme, echoing the similar scheme that exists for rail.
- Improvement of the west Wales road corridors, principally between Carmarthen and Llandysul, and between Newcastle Emlyn and Cardigan.
- Ensure that re-opening of the Rhondda tunnel as a cycle path and tourist attraction is supported.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT, GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION

Plaid Cymru vision for Local Government, Governance and Constitution

Plaid Cymru will continue to advocate that Wales takes responsibility for its own future.

The world is changing constantly around us, and we as a party will respond innovatively to any new circumstances in which we find ourselves, always securing the greatest possible level of autonomy and self-government.

While much of the party's constitutional position will be shaped by EU withdrawal and the future of our immediate neighbouring countries, our Westminster representatives continue to work tirelessly on the Wales Bill, which potentially sets out immediate areas where Welsh democracy could be strengthened.

The internal governance of Wales is just as important to our vision of Welsh democracy, not least at the level of local government. The functioning of the country and its governance structures will determine whether or not our public services and economy can truly succeed.

Key Priorities: Local Government and Planning

1. *Pursue the creation of Regional Combined Authorities as basis for local government reorganisation.*
2. *Once the regional layer of government has a clear direction, pursue the creation of a fit for purpose layer of government at the community and/or area level.*
3. *Abolish flawed LDPs and replace them with Regional and Strategic Development Plans.*
4. *Establish an independent Welsh Planning Inspectorate, particularly to end flawed population projections.*
5. *Make a change of use towards a second home subject of a mandatory planning application, alongside other measures such as increasing council tax and Stamp Duty Land Tax relating to second homes.*

Other Goals: Local Government and Planning

- Develop a pan-Wales ICT strategy for local government.
- Introduce new local government direct grant formula based on joint resource planning, recognising poverty and rurality.
- Ensure that the National Development Framework reflects the need for balanced growth in all parts of Wales, and spells out clear roles for our Welsh regions.
- Greater focus on local government empowerment and general competence, as recommended in Plaid Cymru policy work on public service reform.
- Strengthen TAN 20 to reflect the new provisions in the Planning Act 2015 making linguistic impact a material factor for the first time

Key Priorities: Governance and Constitution

1. *Continue to engage as fully as possible with the European Union institutions, to secure current and future Welsh national interests.*
2. *Make the Single Transferable Vote (STV) the basis for elections to National Assembly and local authorities.*
3. *Creation of a New Civil Service College as part of a National School of Government.*
4. *Achieve votes at 16 and establishment of an elected national youth parliament.*
5. *Take forward a clear Welsh position on the devolution of legal jurisdiction, policing, criminal justice, broadcasting, energy and natural resources, rail infrastructure and transport; and communicate this vision clearly to all parties at Westminster.*

Other Goals: Governance and Constitution

- Support any blockage or repeal of the UK Government's regressive Trade Union Bill.
- Make Statutory Commissioners answerable to National Assembly.
- Introduce a new Public Service Ombudsman Act.
- Explore ways of improving citizen participation in Welsh democracy.
- Explore ways of encouraging a more diverse body of elected representatives.

- Establish a Wales Peace Institute.

Capital Projects

- Capital works relating to the creation of a New Civil Service College.

HOUSING

Plaid Cymru vision for Housing

The party's vision is for affordable housing for all-in private ownership, private renting, and social housing.

Our manifesto envisaged an innovative approach towards housing where multiple sources of delivery and financing could be utilised to fund new housing stock, including through the National Infrastructure Commission, a National Housing Company, and a Community Development Corporation. These would sit alongside the existing sources of housing in local government, social landlords and the private sector.

Our vision for housing fits with our appreciation of the planning system and its role in protecting green spaces. Areas for housing development should be chosen strategically and carefully.

Plaid Cymru will also dramatically improve the Welsh housing stock through our policy agenda on energy.

Key Priorities

Affordable Housing for all – both ownership, private renting and social housing

1. *Create a National Housing Company which will borrow against rents to build a new generation of public rental housing in Wales limited in number only by demand.*
2. *Oppose the Right to Buy scheme and take action to ensure the social housing stock remains intact in order to meet the demand for homes.*
3. *Reform the private rented sector to ensure it can meet the needs of current renters, whilst being fair to landlords.*
4. *Abolish letting agency fees and extend the fit and proper person's test for landlord licensing to letting agents, including a record of landlords and letting agents who are found to have carried out a retaliatory eviction or had a complaint from a tenant about the condition of a property they manage.*
5. *Ensure new housing is of a lifetime houses standard so we can increase our supply of adapted homes, allowing individuals to stay in their own home without further costly adaptations.*

Other goals:

- Release public land for self-build plots for affordable homes.
- Ensure new housing is of a lifetime housing standard.
- Include housing in our low-carbon and tackling climate change agenda.

- Develop a rural Wales scheme for small-scale projects to specifically meet local housing need.
- Compensate in full those households affected by the Bedroom Tax.
- End the intentionality test for those who are facing homelessness and repeal the “Pereira Test” from the Housing (Wales) Act in line with the Supreme Court ruling in England.
- Grant local authorities and Housing Association greater discretion to avoid evictions when arrears are caused by welfare cuts.

Capital Projects

- Aim to build an additional 10,000 homes beyond current targets for local and affordable needs, where innovative financing and land availability allows.
- Roll out the Housing Energy Efficiency scheme.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Plaid Cymru vision for Energy and Environment

Climate change must be tackled across the entire remit of any government. Mitigation and adaptation of its effects must be pursued in order to preserve a good quality of life for Wales’ future generations. For Plaid Cymru, the reality of climate change affects our policies on transport, housing, the economy and public health.

We will promote a specific vision in energy and the environment which sees Wales reduce its carbon emissions, harness its natural resources sustainably, and seize the opportunities in the low-carbon and circular economies.

Key Priorities: Energy

- 1. Seek a complete ban on fracking and new open-cast coal mines.*
- 2. Tackle fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions by embarking on the biggest home energy efficiency programme that Wales has ever seen.*
- 3. Produce as much electricity as is consumed in Wales from renewables by 2035.*
- 4. Establish a national energy company, Ynni Cymru, which will run as a not-for-dividend company at arms-length from Welsh Government, investing profits in improved client service and prices.*
- 5. Create a network of local energy grids.*

Other Goals: Energy

- Commission market study to seek opportunities to maximise the proportion of energy generation technology which is manufactured in Wales.
- Build support for the principle that responsibility for all of Wales' natural resources should be with the people of Wales through their National Assembly.
- Produce the National Inventory of green energy potential- "the Energy Atlas for Wales".
- Give the social and economic benefits of Community Energy schemes material weight in the planning process.
- Linked to the goal above, amend land-use planning legislation to give a fast-track route to community renewable energy schemes.
- Build on our energy efficiency policy in housing by implementing solar-positive policies for all suitable public buildings.
- Create Welsh National Flood Forum.
- Ensure that environmental clauses are part of Welsh public sector procurement policy.
- Develop an Usk hydro electricity project, subject to a full environmental impact assessment.

Key Priorities: Environment

1. *Achieve a Zero Waste Wales by 2030 through action on food establishments, a ban on Styrofoam packaging, presumptions in favour of recycling in procurement policy and 100% recycling rule for waste at major events, plastic, glass and can deposit schemes, and other related measures, if necessary in legislation.*
2. *Ensure climate change targets are regularly reviewed to ensure they are adequate – push the Welsh Government to provide annual reports on climate change targets.*
3. *Develop a more preventative approach to flooding. Achieve a greater emphasis on flood prevention in planning guidelines and invest more in prevention work using an ecosystems approach.*
4. *Take measures to improve biodiversity through: updating and consolidating Welsh wildlife legislation creating a new Wildlife Act for Wales; creating new marine protected areas; encouraging greater participation in agri-environmental schemes; and ensuring Natural Resources Wales' over-riding purpose is to be an environmental champion for Wales.*
5. *Reaffirm our support for a GM-free Wales and seek assurances from the UK Government on the possible risk of cross border contamination if it pushes ahead with plans for GM crops in England.*

Other Goals: Environment

- Support the ongoing work on Future Landscapes, covering our National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Make Wales an internationally recognised dark skies nation.
- Introduce a nation-wide ban on the use of the release of sky lanterns.
- Support the introduction of River Initiatives to develop river-specific plans to boost fish populations, with specific attention to sewin and salmon populations.
- Oppose the use of pylons through National Parks and Areas of Natural Beauty, advocating the use of underground and undersea cables to carry electricity where feasible.
- Support an Endangered Species Action Plan for Wales.
- Promote new recreational opportunities within the Forest Estate.

Capital Projects

- Capital projects relating to our energy priorities may emerge, depending on the level of private sector involvement in local energy grids, and depending on the scope of projects delivered by Ynni Cymru.
- Potential capital works relating to the creation of new woodland.
- Increase overall investment in flood prevention.
- Usk hydro electricity project.

AGRICULTURE

Plaid Cymru vision for Agriculture

Plaid Cymru will champion Welsh farming and our traditional natural-resource based industries. Agriculture should be regarded as a key economic sector, as an industry of cultural and linguistic importance, and as a way of life.

Farming and agriculture are the apex of our vision of Wales being internationally known for the quality of its food and drink.

We will work to position Welsh agriculture in a way that survives any challenges from Wales leaving the European Union, and is able to thrive in the future. Farm businesses must not face any additional tariffs or barriers in exporting their products to the EU in the future.

Key Priorities

1. *Ensure that the Rural Development Programme delivers support back to farmers, in order to encourage real change at the farm level.*

2. *Take decisive action to tackle bovine TB in wildlife by committing to use the most effective measure to control and eradicate bTB and ensuring that testing and movement restrictions are proportionate to the disease status of an area.*
3. *Scrap the six-day-standstill rule which is hampering farm businesses at the very time we need more flexibility.*
4. *Increase the amount of Welsh food purchased by the public sector in Wales and push to reform the Red Meat Levy rules to ensure the levy raised on Welsh livestock goes towards the promotion of Welsh produce. Current regulations mean that Hybu Cig Cymru loses out on £1 million per year that is vital to opening up new markets.*
5. *Introduce a strategy to save council farms from being sold off, under a wider programme to support new entrants into the industry.*

Other Goals

- Appoint an industry champion to promote Welsh farming with major retailers and processors.
- Develop Small Harbours Initiative to increase the long-term viability of the fisheries sector.
- Create a Welsh Rural Parliament.
- Support initiatives to promote the quality and excellence of Welsh food and drink, including a designated year-long campaign aimed at consumers.
- Encourage more local production of food, including in Local Development Plans.

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND SPORT

Plaid Cymru vision for Heritage, Culture and Sport

At a time when our European values have been challenged and questioned, it is more important than ever that we elevate Welsh national culture, and the diversity it contains, to the highest possible status.

Our Programme values our rich cultural legacy and creative potential. Heritage, culture and sport underpin our day to day lives as well as the national story.

Plaid Cymru will celebrate Welsh culture and use it as a way of boosting our economy, health and well-being.

Key Priorities

1. *Secure the devolution of broadcasting to Wales, particularly for responsibility for S4C to be devolved to Wales, with a ring-fenced minimum in the Welsh Block Grant agreed. The forthcoming review of S4C in 2017 provides an opportunity to push for this.*

2. *Develop a Welsh Government backed Commonwealth Games bid with Wales as the host nation.*
3. *Establish a Welsh football museum in Wrexham, where the Football Association of Wales was founded, to showcase the development of football in Wales.*
4. *Develop a duty for local authorities to promote participation and experience in the arts for children, particularly those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.*
5. *Create an independent Welsh Media Commission to fund a syndicated digital news network in the English language.*

Other Goals

- Seek at least an additional 1% in Wales's share of UK lottery funds devoted to the arts to recognise additional needs arising from the high incidence of poverty and social deprivation in Wales.
- Ensure all parts of national and local government contribute towards tackling hate crime, discrimination and violence, including racism and homophobia.
- Establish a National Art Gallery and an international gallery of contemporary art.
- Push for public broadcasters to devote a greater percentage of broadcast time and funding to female sport.
- Call for Welsh Government to bid to bring the Tour de France to Wales, for both men and women.
- Follow the example of Local Sports Partnerships in the Republic of Ireland to develop a regional approach to sport provision.
- Support proposals for a one-day Welsh international cricket team.
- Call upon sport governing bodies and major organisations to develop appropriate training courses and marketing information in both Welsh and English.
- Create apprenticeships in cultural organisations
- Support investment in successful home-grown initiatives like Only Boys Aloud.
- Create a Welsh 'sistema' using music, arts and theatre to overcome disadvantage to help young people realise their potential.
- Call for the preservation of schools' music services across Wales, building on the recommendation of the task and finish group on music services in Wales.
- Continue to fund our key national cultural institutions
- Push for Wales to become the first nation to legislate for the creation of a national digital library.

Capital Projects

- Capital works relating to the National Art Gallery, Football Museum and potentially other projects.

- Depending on the progress of any Commonwealth Games Bid, we would require a significant capital investment outlay over most of the next decade.

WELSH LANGUAGE

Plaid Cymru vision for the Welsh Language

Plaid Cymru believes in a genuinely bilingual nation in which citizens can choose which language to use in their daily lives.

We would overhaul how Welsh is taught in schools and to adults, and how it is used in the economy and in national and local government.

We will take every opportunity as part of our Programme to increase the opportunities to use Welsh in the community, and to ensure that our language remains at the heart of everything we do as a nation.

Key Priorities

1. *Work with childcare providers, such as Mudiad Meithrin, to ensure that sufficient Welsh language childcare is available in all parts of Wales.*
2. *Double the budget for Welsh language teaching for adults in order to provide language training to teachers and public service workers; help parents who want to increase their use of Welsh at home; and promote the language among new residents of Wales.*
3. *Expand Foundation Phase teaching and the provision of Welsh so that more pupils are able to speak Welsh to an acceptable standard by the age of seven.*
4. *Strengthen the standards expected from the public sector and large private sector organisations in dealing with the public, including in the banking sector and supermarkets, and organisations outside Wales who serve the Welsh public.*
5. *Expand the use of the Welsh Language as the language of administration within local government and the wider public sector.*

Other Goals

- Develop economic hubs in areas where Welsh speakers are in the majority: Carmarthen, Aberystwyth and along the Menai Straits.
- Take steps to protect historic Welsh language place names.
- Continue to support the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and call for a similar model for Further Education.
- Call for the establishment of a Workforce Training Programme that will provide structured Welsh-language training and immersion courses, including financial support to release employees to learn Welsh and improve their language skills.
- Encourage small and medium sized businesses across Wales to develop apprenticeship places in the Welsh language.
- Call for entrepreneurs and businesses who operate through the Welsh language to be given additional support to develop their bilingual business model.

- Call for an increase the number of Welsh speakers working in healthcare in Wales so that Welsh speaking patients have the right to a Welsh language service throughout the NHS.
- Call for a network of Welsh language centres in all parts of Wales.

Capital Projects

- Network of Welsh language centres in all parts of Wales.

EUROPEAN UNION AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Plaid Cymru vision for EU and International Relations

Plaid Cymru will push to retain and enhance Welsh links to the European Union as much as possible following the EU referendum result.

Now more than ever, Plaid Cymru's vision of an "International Wales" must be realised.

Plaid Cymru has adopted a wide-ranging policy motion following democratic discussion within the party, and will undertake a programme of work.

Our priorities for the future of Wales' relationship with the EU include actions for government, but will also be closely linked to the Welsh and UK negotiating positions over Brexit.

Any change in the composition of the United Kingdom, including it ceasing to exist as a result of Scottish independence, must enable Wales to decide its own future without any constraints or limitation.

Key Priorities

1. *Secure EEA and EFTA membership or the best option for Wales upon withdrawal from the EU.*
2. *Hold a National Convention to discuss all potential options for Wales to respond to the end of the United Kingdom; and support an independent Wales within the EU as part of that discussion.*
3. *Develop and publish National Mitigation Plan to reduce any economic and social damage to Wales as a result of Brexit.*
4. *Push for the final terms of Brexit to be ratified by the National Assembly in the most appropriate way it sees fit.*
5. *Ensure that all decisions made about the future of Wales, are made in Wales by the public or their elected representatives.*