

Moving Rural Wales Forward

WELSH LABOUR RURAL OFFER 2021



Welsh Labour  Llafur Cymru

Promoted by Louise Magee, Welsh General Secretary, on behalf of
Welsh Labour, both at 2nd Floor Transport House, 1 Cathedral Road,
Cardiff CF11 9HA



Moving Rural Wales Forward

Welsh Labour is committed to standing by rural Wales - ensuring that our communities are connected, our people are skilled and that our environment is protected. Our mission is to encourage smart and innovative rural development in order to deliver a sustainable and inclusive economy.

The environment of rural Wales is a vital asset that can drive innovative development and a sustainable economy. But our treasured landscapes must not become a reason for curbing economic development, where appropriate and where carried out sensitively. A balance must be achieved.

Rural Wales like so many aspects of our society is undergoing transformation and change. Brexit, the pandemic, the threat to our biodiversity and climate change have all set a new backdrop for how we adapt our lives to new circumstances.

- ✓ Supported stronger digital connectivity that can support jobs and investment in rural Wales, with around 750,000 properties across Wales getting access to good quality broadband.
- ✓ Ensured more than 50% of our energy in Wales now comes from renewable sources by investing in green infrastructure, green energy and green jobs.
- ✓ Committed £55m to the mid-Wales growth deal to support economic growth and jobs.
- ✓ Tested new models of public services such as our Fflecsi model of demand responsive bus transport to better support rural economies.
- ✓ Protected the working conditions of agricultural workers by maintaining the Agricultural Wages Board for Wales.

WELSH LABOUR'S PLEDGE TO RURAL WALES WILL:

Deliver:

- A new Community Bank for Wales, with branches in areas of Rural Wales where High Street Banks have retreated.
- A new system of farm support that will help protect jobs and maximise the protective power of nature through farming.
- The creation of a Welsh language Communities Housing Plan to strengthen Welsh-speaking communities – keeping the 1% increase in Land Transaction Tax charged on second home purchases.

Build on the Infrastructure of Rural Wales

- A digital strategy for Wales – upgrading our digital and communications infrastructure.
- Development of new Regional Transport Plans with more initiatives like *Bwcabus* and *Fflecsi*.
- Rolling out the infrastructure for electric vehicles in rural Wales.



Commit to a jobs-first recovery

- New jobs for communities in rural Wales, through harnessing our environment – making Wales a World centre of emerging wave, tidal and marine technologies.
- A 'Town Centre First' approach to ensure we build new infrastructure in the heart of communities – stimulating local economies
- A Wales Community Food Strategy to encourage the supply of locally sourced food in Wales, creating jobs in the foundational economy.



Promote food, farming & forestry...

- Create a National Forest from North to South. Create 30 new woodlands and connect habitat areas.
- Strengthen the protection for ancient woodlands. Harness the economic cultural and recreational potential of the National Forest in Consultation with local communities building on our progress towards creating a sustainable timber industry.
- Create a new system of farm support that will maximise the protective power of nature through farming, requiring food production in Wales takes place within environmental limits. Farmers will only receive public subsidy for producing food that delivers additional environmental outcomes. We will develop a Wales Community Food Strategy to encourage the supply of locally sourced food.
- Expand the scheme of supporting community groups across Wales to create or enhance green spaces accessible to and valued by local communities.

Grow our businesses

- Support innovation in new renewable technology with a particular focus on supporting the marketing of new technologies that need additional help.
- Expand renewable energy generation by public bodies and community groups in Wales by over 100MW by 2026 working towards our target of 1GW in public sector and community energy capacity by 2030.



Use the Foundational Economy to ensure local jobs for local people

- Back local firms through driving support for the foundational economy through our public funding.
- Create new remote working hubs.
- Support the Mentrau Iaith to take a leadership role in developing economic community initiatives.

Ensure affordable homes for local people

- Take action to address the impact of second homes. Keep 1% increase in land transaction tax on second homes. Develop effective tax, planning and housing measures which could include local rates of Land Transaction Tax. – to ensure the interests of local people are protected.
- Create a Welsh language Communities housing plan to strengthen Welsh language communities and protect Welsh place names.

Maximise tourism potential

- Continue to help the Tourism Sector recover after covid and market Wales' rich Staycation offer, beyond traditional seasons.
- Consult on legislation permitting local authorities to raise a tourism levy – ring-fenced to support improving the visitor experience in Wales.
- Support quality tourism developments with additional Welsh Government funding.
- Promote Wales as a World-leader in adventure tourism.



Increase rural skills & productivity

- Investment in Skills and Innovation – including a young persons guarantee of work, education or training to everyone under 25.
- More apprenticeships and extend personal learning accounts.
- Create skills to meet the changing economic needs of rural communities.
- Provide opportunities for the digitally excluded to learn appropriate skills.

What we've done:

- Supported stronger digital connectivity that can support jobs and investment in rural Wales, with around 750,000 properties across Wales getting access to good quality broadband.
- Ensured more than 50% of our electricity in Wales now comes from renewable sources by investing in green infrastructure, green energy and green jobs.
- Committed £55m to the mid-Wales growth deal to support economic growth and jobs.
- Tested new models of public services such as our *Fflecsi* model of demand-responsive bus transport to better support rural economies.
- Protected the working conditions of agricultural workers by maintaining the Agricultural Wages Board for Wales.
- Tackled water pollution.
- Banned third-party puppy sales.
- Introduced a new *fflecsi* rural bus model.
- Built new community, 21st Century Schools.
- Delivered sustainable, affordable housing.
- Supported tourism & hospitality sectors throughout the pandemic.
- Promoted Welsh language & business initiatives in rural Wales.
- Delivered quality apprenticeships, including in forestry.



What we'll do:

- Create a new system of farm support that will help protect jobs and maximise the protective power of nature through farming.
- Develop a Wales Community Food Strategy to encourage the supply of locally sourced food in Wales, creating jobs in the foundational economy.
- Create a new National Forest for Wales extending right across the country and create a new National Park in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley, harnessing the potential for new green jobs and a stronger natural environment.
- Give every young person in rural Wales under the age of 25 the guaranteed offer of a job or a place in education, training or self-employment.
- Harness our rich cultural heritage as part of a plan for local jobs and growth, including developing plans for a Museum of North Wales and supporting the application to identify the slate landscape of North West Wales as a World Heritage Site, creating jobs and new economic opportunities.
- Build a sustainable economic future for our ports.
- Support small and medium-sized businesses in Rural Wales to grow and expand by using our £500m Wales Flexible Investment Fund to support economic recovery and provide long-term lending.
- Seeking to advance the use of technology for GP consultations for rural communities.



- Re-regulate buses in Rural Wales creating stronger services that better supports work and jobs.
- Create more all-age apprenticeships in Rural Wales – part of 125,000 we will create right across Wales.
- Legislate for a new Fair Work and Social Partnership Bill to make sure more jobs in Rural Wales are good quality and fair.
- Create a Welsh language Communities Housing Plan to strengthen Welsh-speaking communities and keep the 1% increase in Land Transaction Tax charged on second home purchases.
- Put more Police Community Support Officers on the streets in Rural Wales – part of 100 extra we will fund across Wales.
- Give every care worker in Rural Wales a fair deal at work, with the guarantee of the Living Wage.
- Support the NHS and Schools in Rural Wales to recover after Covid with the biggest programme of catch-up support ever.
- Make 20mph the default speed limit in residential areas and ban pavement parking wherever possible.
- Legislate to abolish the use of more commonly littered, single use plastics, saving our seas and countryside from the scourge of plastic pollution.
- Develop a national model for regulation of animal welfare, introducing registration for animal welfare establishments, commercial breeders for pets or for shooting, and animal exhibits.
- Require CCTV in all slaughterhouses, we will ban the use of snares, restrict the use of cages for farmed animals.
- Begin to designate Wales' inland waters for recreation, supporting sustainable jobs and strengthening water quality monitoring to enable rivers to reach the same high standards achieved by Wales' beaches.