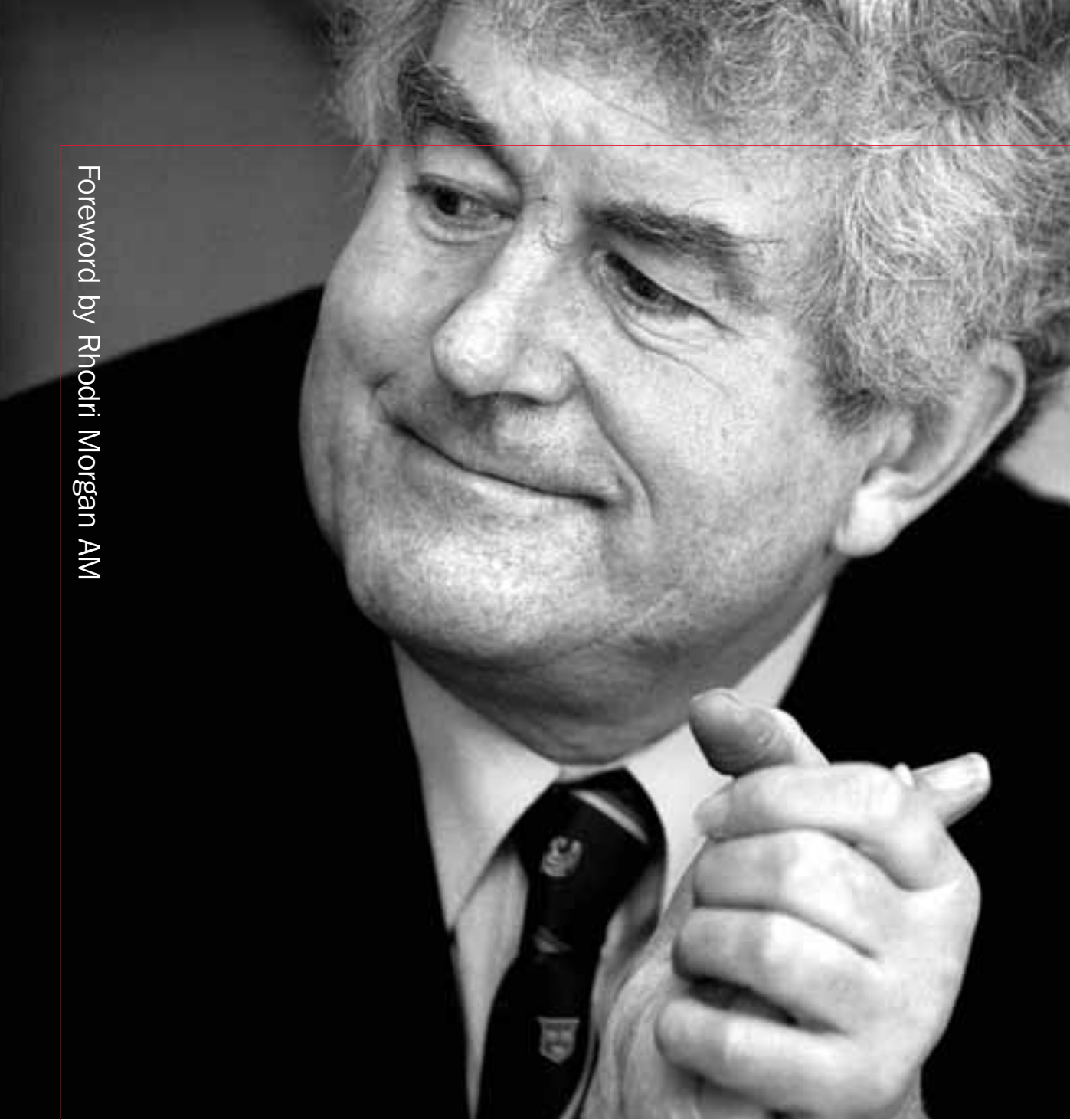




Working together for Wales

Welsh Labour's manifesto 2003





Don't let anyone persuade you that there's nothing at stake in this election, that it's hardly worth bothering to vote. May 1st 2003 is a day of decision for Wales, the day the direction of our country for the next four years will be set.

Four years ago Wales set off down a new road, where we got our own institutions of government for the domestic agenda. Wales became responsible for setting its own priorities on how all our children are educated. Nothing could be more important than that. The same applies to what happens to all our children after they leave school to go on to quality training, to apprenticeships, to college or to university.

Wales now makes its own decisions on the health services we get from our GPs, community nurses, dentists and pharmacists. The hospitals that meet those health needs which the primary care side of the NHS cannot solve – there is nothing more important to our daily lives than that. Health is now devolved to the people of Wales and their political representatives. That's how important May 1st is.

When we took on the mantle of responsibility for running the new government of Wales in 1999, the budget we had was £7.5 billion. The fruits of our partnership with the UK Government means that the budget we will be working with in two years' time will be over £12.5 billion. Unlike any previous devolved administrations, we have got hundreds of millions of pounds over and above the Barnett formula to utilise the Objective One 'opportunity of a generation' to transform the Welsh economy.

Apprenticeships are rising rapidly too, up 40% in the last three years. To achieve a high wage, high skill economy we need a higher quality of jobs and a higher level of skills in the workforce to match it. That's the modern Welsh knowledge economy we're aiming for. Give us the tools – we'll do the job.

Assembly Learning Grants are part of that drive for higher skills, qualifications and educational attainments. We are proud of the equal treatment of Further Education and Higher Education in student support for the very first time in British educational history.

That's how we've been getting on with the job of delivering for the people of

Wales with the promise of much more to come. We are expanding the number of medical students entering our medical schools in Wales by 89%. We need those extra doctors to expand the treatment capabilities of the NHS. The same is true for the extra training places for nurses, physiotherapists and all the other health professions. It's the only lasting solution to the problem of waiting lists for NHS treatment. And we need to ensure that people feel safer in their homes and on the streets, with a new combined £100 million crime fighting fund and a real partnership, with every level of government and local people all working together.

It is a matter of enormous pride to me to have the privilege of serving as First Minister for Wales, heading the only Cabinet government in the world where women are in a majority. Bringing in the free bus travel for pensioners and the disabled, restarting free school milk and stopping formal testing for Key Stage One children, reducing unemployment sharply right across Wales, expanding the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme for combating fuel poverty, these are all the hallmarks of a radical, reforming administration.

The lowest Welsh unemployment for 28 years, the lowest mortgage rates for 40 years – that is the platform for everything else.

We are now clearly on track to create that healthier, wealthier and smarter Wales that we all want. We will be seeking your endorsement in the ballot box to carry forward the good work in that same direction, and to complete the unfinished tasks.

Support us on May 1st, give us your democratic backing and you will not be disappointed in the results. We are well worth not just your vote, but both your votes – and yes, you do have two votes! Labour has delivered. With a majority Labour will deliver even more.

Help us to reach your goals, our goals, Labour's goals.

Rhodri Morgan



“The lowest Welsh unemployment for 28 years, the lowest mortgage rates for 40 years – that is the platform for everything else.”

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The dynamic partnership between a Labour-led Assembly and a Labour government at Westminster is delivering results.

After years of neglect by the Tories our public services are getting the investment and reform they need.

Building on a platform of economic stability, which has resulted in low inflation, low interest rates and the lowest unemployment in Wales for a generation, thousands of new jobs have been created.

We have secured year-on-year increases in the Assembly's budget, pushing it up to £12.5 billion by 2005-06, compared with a little over £7 billion in 1999.

Objective 1 status has been secured for West Wales and the Valleys, together with the public finance arrangements needed to enable the Assembly to take full advantage of the programme, to regenerate communities.

We have, through primary legislation, enabled the Assembly to implement radical plans to improve and reform the way in which health and education services are delivered in Wales.

But despite these achievements, there is still a long way to go if we are to attain our goal of a world-class Wales, with an internationally competitive economy and high quality public services.

This manifesto sets out how a Labour Assembly, working in partnership with Labour at Westminster, will move toward that goal.

The Tories and Nationalists offer no hope for the future. The Tories' plans for across-the-board cuts in expenditure show that they have learnt nothing since they were last in office. The Nationalists would put constitutional wrangling before jobs, schools and hospitals, and render Wales isolated, without influence either at home or abroad.

Wales' future must lie not in going back to the days of boom and bust, or to standing alone in separatist isolation, but in continuing a partnership for social justice and prosperity to build a world-class Wales.

Peter Hain,
Secretary of State for Wales

“The Tories and Nationalists offer no hope for the future.”

Wales is changing for the better.

Better Health

Better health is the foundation for a world class Wales. Better health means a better quality of life, a dynamic economy, stronger, more active communities. The principles of Labour's NHS are the same today as when we founded it: care provided free-at-the-point-of-use according to need, funded from general taxation and led by the public sector.

The biggest programme of new investment is transforming the NHS into a service for better health, not just a service for the treatment of illness. There can be no Nationalist or Tory standstill on the NHS; we will only improve health in Wales by providing more investment alongside more reform and more efficiency.



Getting the right treatment quickly

Primary care - GPs, practice and community nurses, dentists and pharmacists - constitute the patient's first point of contact with the NHS in 9 out of 10 cases.

Labour developed the Primary Care Team in our first term to make sure that people get seen quickly by the team member best able to help them. In our second term we will ensure no-one waits more than 24 hours to see a member of their Primary Care Team, while at the same time widening the range of services provided at a local level.

Labour will step up the range of health professionals with authority to write prescriptions and take responsibility for their administration and effectiveness. We will simplify and improve prescribing arrangements for those suffering from common ailments and long-term conditions. And we will abolish all prescription charges in Wales.

With an ageing population, demand for treatment continues to grow. For most people treatment is available within an acceptable time, but while more staff are being trained and more health care facilities are being built, waiting for treatment is too common an occurrence. Our goal during the first term has been to reduce the length of time people have to wait for treatment in priority areas. We have eliminated waits of more than six months for angiograms. We have eliminated waits of more than 12 months for cardiac surgery. We have drastically reduced waits of more than

18 months for orthopaedics and similar treatments have been abolished in most parts of Wales. We have not met all of our targets to reduce waiting, but the solution in these areas is not to change direction or scale back on investment, reform and capacity building – it is to go faster and further than we have already.

We will continue to drive down waiting times in key areas. The system of booked appointments, helping people to have operations at a time that suits them, will be extended. We will expand the provision of surgery on a day case, overnight or outpatient basis and we will ensure that more people get treated in their own homes. To reduce cancellations and disruptions in elective treatment, a Labour Assembly Government will create a clearer distinction between emergency and planned treatment facilities while ensuring a secure future for all District General Hospitals in Wales.

First steps:

- 17,000 more staff working for patients since 1997
- 89% increase in medical school intake
- Eight new hospitals open or underway
- Free prescriptions for under 25s – frozen for everyone else
- Waiting cut in priority areas
- Scrapped a layer of bureaucracy
- Free nursing care in nursing homes

“We will invest £550 million in modernising Wales's GP surgeries and hospitals”

More doctors, more nurses, more facilities

For almost two decades Tory cuts ate away at the capacity of the NHS in Wales to deliver for patients. GP facilities were run down. 70 hospitals were closed. Nurse training places were cut by a quarter. The number of beds fell by a third.

Labour's first task was to reverse this long term reduction in capacity. There are now 17,340 more staff working for patients. We are increasing medical student intake by 89%. There are more GPs and hospital consultants. Eight new or replacement hospitals are open or underway. There are more beds in acute medicine.

In our second term we will recruit 3,010 extra nurses and 410 extra doctors. We will match the number of beds to clinical need. We will fund more purpose built facilities for GPs and Primary Care Teams and we will invest £550 million in modernising Wales's GP surgeries and hospitals. In our first term we opened a new clinical school in Swansea to train more staff locally. In our second term we will open two more clinical schools in North Wales and Gwent.





“As a trainee nurse I am delighted that Labour will open a new clinical school for North Wales.”

Kelly Bamsey, trainee nurse, Prestatyn

Fairer, more accessible Social Services

Fairer, more accessible social services are critical to making Wales healthier. In our first term we introduced free nursing care for all nursing home residents, together with six weeks free home care for vulnerable people leaving hospital.

In our second term we will establish a Commissioner for Older People in Wales. We will improve the early adaptation of homes on discharge from care and we will support older people to stay independent in their own homes. There will be a new drive to encourage older people to take up the Minimum Income Guarantee. At the same time we will do more to help older people stay warm in winter, as we aim to eradicate fuel poverty in Wales by the end of the decade. And Labour will eliminate all charges for home care services for disabled people in Wales.

Labour will develop new ways of providing residential services in the future. We will fund Housing Associations to provide extra residential care in more imaginative ways. In our second term Labour will complete the programme of reaccommodating people with learning disabilities from hospital to the community.

Labour is providing £21 million to support the vital work that carers in Wales perform, including money to allow well earned breaks. In our second term we will reform NHS practices to make life easier for carers, including provision



of respite care. We will continue to improve the quality of the social care workforce, having already raised from a fifth to a third the number of staff with qualifications, including a sharper increase in areas such as residential, day and domiciliary care. A new qualification, to be implemented from next year, will drive up standards further.

Labour will continue to improve mental health services. We have committed new resources to combat stigma and discrimination. We will develop innovative new solutions in primary care and share good practice. We will increase involvement from patients and carers, together with hospital advocacy services.

Wales already has the UK's first Children's Commissioner. We are the only part of the UK to have developed a play policy for children. Our Sure Start and Children's First programmes are targeting help at those children who are most in need. Our new Children and Youth Support Fund is ploughing new investment into improving the life chances of young people from deprived backgrounds. In our second term we will take new action to meet our goal of halving child poverty by 2010 en route to eradicating it altogether within a generation.

Making the NHS work better

Labour's investment in better health will only deliver sustained improvements if it is matched by real reform. In our first term we abolished an entire layer of NHS bureaucracy, placing the power over three quarters of health spending into the hands of local people and health professionals at the sharp end. In our second term we will devolve more power and more responsibility to these new Local Health Boards, joining up health services with other services, such as those provided by local councils.

We will implement a new health formula funding, channelling a greater share of the extra investment to those areas where ill health is highest, while every part of Wales benefits from the increase in the health budget. The Health Inequalities Fund will be expanded to target more pockets of ill health throughout Wales.

We are retaining and strengthening Community Health Councils, giving them new powers to access GP premises on behalf of patients. We will extend the network of Patient Support Officers to NHS hospitals and Local Health Boards throughout Wales, giving them direct access to chief executives and senior staff, ensuring swift action when problems arise.



Spending on Health and allied services will double with Labour

It was £2.6 billion at the beginning of our first term – it will be £5.4 billion by the end of our second term.

Next steps:

- 3,010 extra nurses
- 410 extra doctors
- Scrap prescription charges
- £550 million to modernise GP surgeries and hospitals
- Access to a GP or Primary Care Team member within 24 hours
- Scrap Home Care charges for disabled people
- Older People's Commissioner

Only for Wales...

Because of Labour in the Assembly, Wales is the only part of the UK where there is:

- Free prescriptions for the under 25s – frozen for everyone else
- Free eye tests for high risk groups, eye screening for people with diabetes
- Hearing tests for all new born children, with latest digital hearing aids for those who need them
- Welfare rights advice in GP's surgeries and other primary care settings, tackling poverty as we tackle ill health

The learning country

Education is the cornerstone of a world class Wales, the key to a skilled workforce and the means for us all to reach our potential as individuals and as a nation.

Labour's goal is education for all, regardless of age or circumstance. We will sweep away the barriers to learning, from Early Years through to Higher Education. Equality of opportunity, not Tory elitism or Nationalist dogma, will be our guiding principle as we increase both investment and the pace of change in a second Labour term.



"I am delighted with the free local nursery places for my young children, the removal of testing at 7 and the abolition of divisive league tables."

Liz Roach, Playgroup helper, Pembrokeshire

The best start in life

Inequality in early years education leads to inequality in life chances. We have delivered free nursery places to all 4 year olds and we are expanding this to cover all 3 year olds whose parents want it. To ensure the best possible start in life for our children a Labour Assembly will provide a network of innovative new Early Years Centres for parents, teachers and other services to work together.

In our first term we abolished tests for our youngest children. In a second term we will review testing and assessment at Key Stages 2 and 3. We will act on evidence and ensure that our children's achievement is not compromised, and that their achievements are measurable. We will introduce a new curriculum for 3 to 7 year olds, integrating learning from nursery to primary school and focusing on child development and learning-through-play.

Labour will reform early years Welsh medium education as part of our commitment to the Welsh language and its use in schools. We will invest additional money to tackle the problems faced by small and rural schools, moving towards federations of schools and the development of community learning under single leadership teams and governing bodies.

In our first term we reintroduced free school milk for infants. In our second term we will provide funding for all primary school children to have free breakfasts at school, giving kids a square meal in the morning and helping to tackle truancy.

"We will provide funding for all primary school children to have free breakfasts at school"

First steps:

- Free school milk for all infants
- Smaller class sizes
- £300 million for school buildings
- Tests for 7 year olds abolished
- 1,200 extra teachers
- 22,000 extra students in FE
- New student grants for 50,000 university and college learners
- Education investment up by a third



Better schools, better chances

In our first term we invested £300 million to reverse the Tory legacy of run down school buildings. In our second term the level of investment will increase to £140 million per year so that by the end of the decade over £1 billion will have been spent ensuring that every school in Wales is fit for our children.

As investment increases we will prioritise repairs for schools that teach Wales's most vulnerable children and young people with Special Educational Needs. School playing fields will be treated as a resource for the whole community.

Labour has already ensured that all infants are taught in classes of 30 or under, together with reducing class sizes for all other age groups. In our second term we will cut all junior classes to 30 or under by the end of 2003 and reduce infant class sizes still further.

“In our first term we invested £300 million to reverse the Tory legacy of run down school buildings.”

Poor performing schools rob children of the opportunities they deserve. In our first term we started to narrow the gap between the best and worst performing secondary schools in Wales. In our second term, backed by a new funding formula based on need instead of numbers, we will extend this agenda to primary schools.

Welsh Labour has invested in connecting every school to the internet and creating a national Learning Grid for Wales. We have introduced interactive White Boards to every school in Wales. We will continue to expand ICT learning opportunities in communities across

Wales in the next term, including developing the ICT skills of teachers.

The driving up of standards will continue through more literacy and numeracy schemes and by extending out-of-school and homework clubs. Labour will take new steps to tackle underachievement, truancy and exclusion, which particularly affects boys' educational opportunity. And we will establish a school council in every primary and secondary school in Wales together with a Youth Forum in every local authority.

Labour will develop an all-Wales approach to Special Education Needs, incorporating Regional Centres of Excellence to reduce bureaucracy in

identifying and educating children with special education needs. Working with Labour in Westminster we have set up a Special Educational Needs Tribunal in Wales which will start hearing cases in September.

Since 1999 more than 1,200 extra teachers are working to improve our children's education. In partnership with Local Authorities, we have introduced new professional development opportunities for teachers. Paperwork and form-filling will be cut, freeing teachers to spend more time teaching. And we will look to bring in new regional Learning and Resource Centres to provide additional support.



Only for Wales...

Because of Labour in the Assembly Wales is the only part of the UK where there is:

- Free school milk for infants
- Individual assessment for 7 year olds – mass testing scrapped
- New student grants

“Labour’s goal is education for all, regardless of age or circumstance”



Learning for life

Wales will become a learning country through reform of the 14 to 19 age range curriculum, extending education at school into lifelong learning as an adult. Our comprehensive schools will be at the forefront of these reforms, tearing down the barriers between vocational and academic qualifications and moving away from rigid timetables to learning tailored to the needs of the individual pupil. We will develop comprehensive schools to become community resources, delivering adult learning, family support and health promotion as well as educating our children.

In our first term we developed the first Welsh post-16 qualification, the Welsh Baccalaureate, in our schools. We will extend the Welsh Baccalaureate to intermediate and foundation stages as part of our 14 to 19 agenda.

We will build on the capacity gained from early age Welsh language teaching to increase the learning of modern foreign languages in primary schools. And we will ensure high quality careers information, advice and guidance through the use of innovative and modern technologies.

By the end of the decade our goal is that no pupil in Wales will leave school without any qualifications. So that no-one is left behind we will boost skills for adults with few or no qualifications, and those on low incomes through a new Individual Learner Account scheme for Wales.

With the help of the Assembly Learning Grant, payable to college as well as university students, we will continue to widen access to Further Education, building on the extra 22,000 students since 1999. In our first term we agreed a long overdue substantial increase in pay for lecturers and support staff as the basis for continued expansion. With more full and part time FE courses we will boost skills and increase employment opportunities.

Labour will work to widen participation in Higher Education, so that people from all backgrounds have the chance to take part. We will build on the success of the Assembly Learning Grant to encourage wider participation in HE. We will rule out the introduction of Top Up fees in Welsh universities in the next Assembly term.

Next steps:

- New Early Years Centres
- Free breakfasts for all primary school kids
- Large junior classes abolished
- £560 million for school buildings
- Narrowing the gap between the best and worst performing schools
- An Individual Learner Account scheme for Wales
- No Top Up fees in Wales

Stronger, Safer Communities

Strong communities underpin a world class Wales. Neighbourhoods where people feel secure in their homes and on the streets are places where people respect each other, where everyone feels they have a stake.

Clean surroundings, efficient transport, decent homes, community leadership, access to sport and creative activities - all strong communities need these ingredients. But crime and fear of crime can blight the strongest neighbourhood, while the anti-social behaviour of even a few erodes the sense of shared respect upon which communities depend.

Labour will unite government action to combat crime, particularly drug crime, and help the victims put their lives back together. We will give local people the tools to renew and reclaim their streets and neighbourhoods.



“Our communities are beginning to get stronger thanks to Labour policies in the Assembly.”

Ior Davies, Former Miner, Kidwelly

Did you know?

It took the Tories 15 years to increase the number of police officers in Wales by 100. In five years Labour has put an extra 600 police officers on the beat.

Making our communities safer

Since Labour was elected in 1997 the likelihood of becoming a victim of crime has fallen to its lowest level for 20 years. We have put more police on the beat than ever before. While crime has fallen, fear of crime has not gone down in parallel; this can be almost as damaging to individual and shared quality of life.

We are developing an effective partnership between the Home Office, local government and local people themselves. Labour has recruited extra community police in areas covered by the Assembly's anti-poverty Communities First programme, joining up local action to cut crime. The results have been dramatic, with offences such as burglary and car crime halved in some areas. Every local authority now has a Community Safety Partnership drawing together local action on crime. We will increase investment in Community Safety Partnerships. We will back this up with new resources for local initiatives through the £11.5 million Safer Communities Fund. And we will invest additional resources in tackling domestic violence.

Combating the drug gangs is a priority for Labour. With the Home Office we have jointly funded a new police drive to smash these criminal rings. Alongside this goes treatment for addicts to help break their addiction. This year we are doubling investment in tackling drug and alcohol misuse. Within two years this investment will nearly double again. An extra 1,000 victims of drug and alcohol misuse will be able to access Community

Detoxification services as a result. At the same time NHS funds for drug treatment will be ring-fenced.

Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour will always be preferable to clearing up its effects. In partnership with Westminster we have invested in additional CCTV cameras, with particular emphasis on protecting small shops, often the heart of a community. We support the greater use of anti-social behaviour orders and acceptable behaviour contracts where they are needed. We will back councils in stopping 'neighbours from hell' from blighting communities.

Our Communities First programme is aimed squarely at helping our 100 most deprived communities to find their own way out of poverty. Communities First has made good progress in our first term, so in our second term we will extend it. We will also extend the Community Loan Fund scheme, to make it available to all disadvantaged communities in Wales. Local authorities will continue to receive the new Deprivation Grant of £20 million a year to support better public services in Wales's hardest hit areas. Expenditure in health, education, training and economic development will contribute fully to helping those areas of Wales which are lagging behind in prosperity to catch up.



First steps:

- More police than ever before
- Doubling investment in tackling drug and alcohol misuse
- Communities First for the 100 most deprived areas in Wales
- More enforcement action against fly tippers
- Free bus travel for over 60s and the disabled
- Fuel poverty cut in 28,000 homes
- No more 'cash strapped' councils
- Free entry to National Museums and Galleries of Wales

Making our communities cleaner and greener

Putting waste in landfill cannot be sustained in the long term, so Labour has committed £79 million to move Wales towards waste reduction and recycling. By the end of our second term our goal is to have increased the amount of municipal waste that is recycled to 25%. We are cracking down on those who fly tip and dump waste illegally, with more enforcement action and more prosecutions than any other part of the UK.

In our second term Labour will extend our programmes to reduce pollution from emissions and to contribute to the management of climate change in Wales. Flood management will be improved through streamlining of flood defence committees and clearer guidance about building on flood plains. We will introduce new buffer zones to protect communities from open cast mining sites. We will improve assessments of the impacts of

new development on public health, develop new programmes to provide quality open spaces and encourage design that respects our existing built heritage and makes the most of local resources.

The quality of our drinking water and beaches has increased dramatically since 1999. All of our bathing beaches now meet European standards. In our second term we will continue to improve water quality while valuing Wales's marine and coastal areas, which contribute to quality of life, biodiversity and jobs in leisure and tourism.

We have piloted innovative sustainable development schemes within some 200 communities in Wales's most beautiful areas. We will resource this work on a long term basis, working with National Parks and within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Despite Tory opposition, and without Nationalist support, Labour is

opening up the countryside to the public. In our second term we will implement new access provisions from the Countryside and Rights of Way Act.

We will further extend open access to coastal areas after the initial rights of way are established. And we will continue to make the planning process easier for people to understand and influence, as well as more responsive to business needs.



“By the end of our second term our goal is to increase recycling to 25%”



Quality and choice in transport

Our transport services need to deliver both quality and choice. Bus stops, taxis, cycle facilities and railway stations should be co-located as conveniently as possible in safer, more accessible locations. Timetables for trains and buses should be reliable and frequent enough to provide choice. Tickets for journeys should cover all forms of public transport.

Labour has begun the long process of integrating transport services in Wales. In our first term we brought together local authorities to integrate their approach to bus routes. We have embarked upon a major package of rail station refurbishment. We have introduced Traveline Cymru, a new information system linking all the bus services in Wales and providing price and route-planning information. In our second term Labour will extend this service to include information on all public transport and fares across Wales. We will promote the integration of private car use with public transport through schemes such as Park and Rides to help reduce traffic flowing into busy town and city centres. Innovative public transport projects will be supported, including those that draw together different public services, for example the pilot Demand Responsive Transport scheme in North Wales. We will promote greater use of community transport, working with local groups to remove the technical barriers and constraints that currently exist.

Our free bus travel for pensioners and the disabled has been extremely successful in getting people back on our buses. It has given people more freedom and bus use has increased across Wales by 10%. In a second term we will keep this scheme in place and add to it, developing half price bus travel for 16-18 year olds. We will work with local authorities to introduce bus friendly measures such as bus lanes, priority at junctions, safe, clean bus stops and stations with real time information. We will improve the quality of bus services, making our innovative Quality Partnerships a legal requirement.

Cars are a vital part of our transport system, particularly in rural Wales. However, over-dependence on vehicles run on fossil fuel is unsustainable. We are on course to achieve our target to increase

Next steps:

- Combined £100 million Crime Fighting Fund
- Tough action against anti-social behaviour
- Recycling increased to 25%
- Tougher public health assessments for new developments
- Develop a half price bus travel scheme for 16-18 year olds
- New Safe Routes to School, 20mph zones near homes, schools and hospitals
- New licensing scheme for rented accommodation
- Free swimming for school kids and older people
- Biggest ever investment in the Welsh language

from a fifth to a quarter the number of people who do not use a car to commute to work. We will use our funded travel plan co-ordinators across Wales to encourage employers and individuals to start car-sharing schemes for work journeys.

Far too many young people are killed or seriously injured on Wales's roads. We will halve this number by 2010. The successful Safe Routes to School programme will be extended and we will fund new measures to slow traffic speeds to 20mph in residential areas and around schools and hospitals.

“Our free bus travel for pensioners and the disabled has been extremely successful in getting people back on our buses.”

Equal opportunities

Labour has demonstrated the strongest commitment to equal opportunities, itself part of the legislation that created the Assembly. The Assembly cabinet is the only one in the world where women are in the majority, while Welsh Labour is the only party in the UK to take advantage of new legislation allowing women-only shortlists. As a party we have also ensured that black and Asian candidates are represented on all our regional lists. In our second term we will press ahead with policies to promote equal opportunities for ethnic minorities, the disabled, gay and lesbian people and women, starting with the abolition of home care charges for disabled people.

“Our aim is to eradicate fuel poverty in Wales. Already nearly 28,000 Welsh homes are benefiting from our Home Energy Efficiency scheme, cutting bills, improving health and creating jobs.”

Decent homes

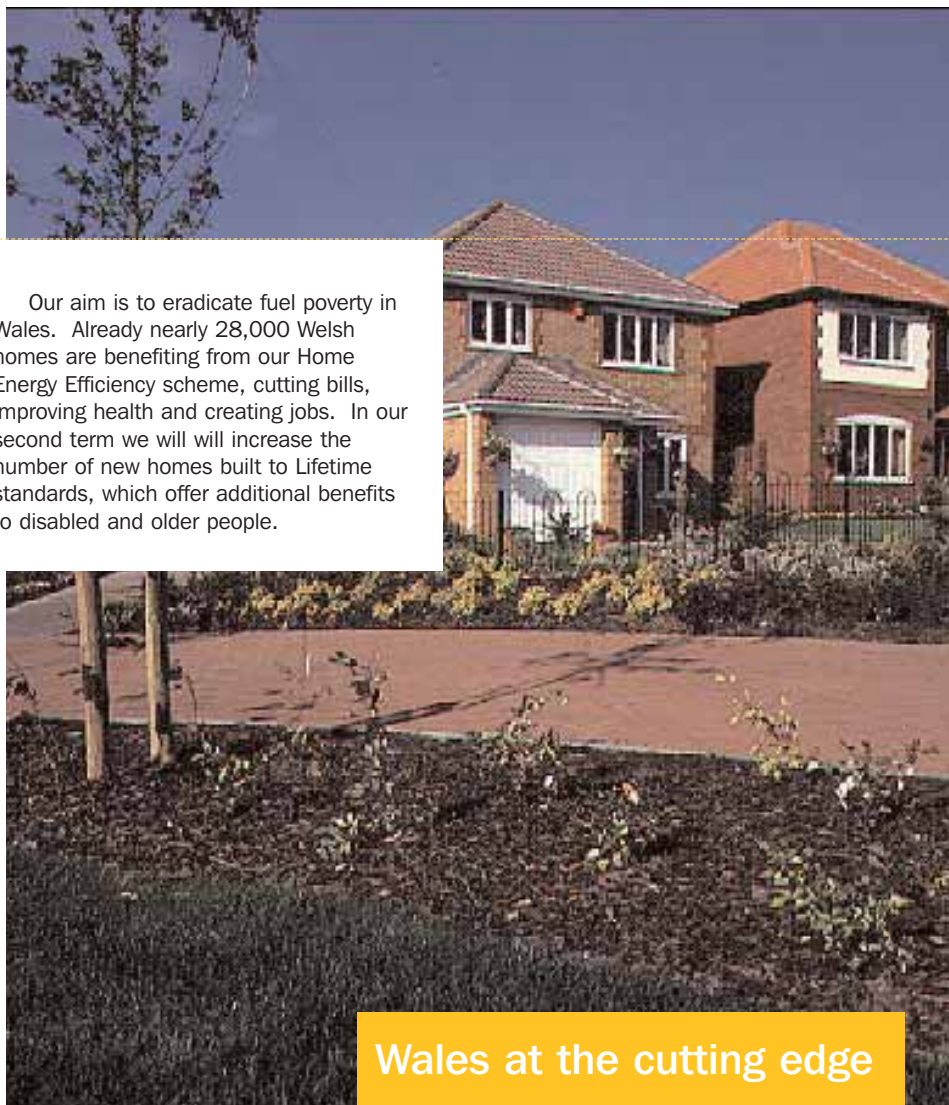
Labour’s ambition is a decent home for everyone. Our goal is that all social housing will be up to standard by the end of the decade. Home ownership now accounts for three quarters of all homes. Labour will widen the scope of housing renovation grants to assist individual homeowners who struggle to maintain and repair their properties.

Bringing run down Council housing up to standard requires massive new investment. We have introduced a new community mutual model of ownership, allowing tenants to share in the ownership of their homes and providing opportunities for financing housing and community regeneration. The voluntary transfer of housing stock to registered social landlords is also open to local authorities, but only where it is supported by tenants in a fair ballot.

We have launched a £3 million scheme of voluntary registration for houses in multiple occupation to help improve standards in the private rented sector. In our second term we will extend this to all such properties. We will work with local councils to help tackle the backlog of repairs and identify future improvements in social housing.

In areas of housing pressure Labour has introduced low-cost home ownership schemes. In our second term we will look to designate new areas of housing pressure where the right to buy can be suspended.

Our aim is to eradicate fuel poverty in Wales. Already nearly 28,000 Welsh homes are benefiting from our Home Energy Efficiency scheme, cutting bills, improving health and creating jobs. In our second term we will increase the number of new homes built to Lifetime standards, which offer additional benefits to disabled and older people.



Wales at the cutting edge

Wales leads the world in encouraging sustainable development. From new housing and the purchase of materials for new hospitals to our groundbreaking “ecological footprint” project, Labour is making sure that our actions today won’t damage future generations.

Leadership for communities

Labour has ended the Tory era of ‘cash strapped councils’ with significant new investment in frontline services; education, social services, environmental improvement and transport. In our second term we will work with councils to improve these services, according to clear goals and targets, together with improving the procurement of goods and services to promote local suppliers. We have increased local government’s powers and enhanced accountability, helping councils to act quickly and decisively while being open and transparent. In our first term we

improved the way councils work with other public services, such as the NHS. In our second term we will encourage more joint working between authorities to improve the provision of services.

We want councils to take advantage of new legislation allowing easier and more accessible voting. We want to encourage a new generation of council candidates who reflect the wide diversity in Welsh society through, amongst other initiatives, improved allowance schemes. Labour will retain the existing system for council elections.

“We have increased local government’s powers and enhanced accountability...”

Sports and culture

Culture and sport contribute to stronger communities. They are also important as ends in themselves. Through policies such as free entry to the National Museums and Galleries we have opened up culture and sports to many more people. In our second term we will go further.

Labour has amalgamated the different arts funding into one Culture Fund, which we will increase by 60% over three years. Communities where participation in the arts has been lowest will be prioritised for new funding. More touring exhibitions will bring important works of art to all parts of Wales. We will examine the potential for a

Labour wants to see more people of all ages and abilities taking part in sport. We will make local authority leisure centre swimming facilities free for all school age children during school holidays. We will design a sports curriculum to increase participation from girls and promote women in sport at all levels. Summer school provision will be widened to include sports. We will improve facilities and open up community use of school playing fields. Labour will encourage every council to provide jogging tracks and cycling tracks. In conjunction with local charities we will provide facilities for new recreations such as skateboarding and mountain biking.



“Labour has amalgamated the different arts funding into one Culture Fund, which we will increase by 60% over three years.”

new National Gallery of Welsh Art and a National Digital Gallery for the visual arts and provide new support for Wales’s thriving crafts industry. We will develop library services with greater use of new technology, increased opening times and on line access to catalogues, reservations and community information. Labour will strive to ensure that digital broadcasting is accessible to the whole of Wales, together with improved availability of TV channels originating in Wales, particularly in border areas. We will give maximum support to Cardiff’s bid to become European Capital of Culture in 2008.

The Welsh language – our unique asset

For the first time in 100 years the number of Welsh speakers is on the increase – bucking the global trend of minority languages in decline. This is a cause for optimism, although we need to ensure that Welsh survives as a community language in those areas where it has traditionally been strongest.

Labour has always supported the Welsh language. In government we have boosted investment by some £10 million. In the next three years we will invest a further £27 million through the Assembly alone. We have extended

the number of public bodies who come under the scope of the Welsh Language Act and launched the first ever action plan for the Welsh language. We will oppose new Welsh language legislation that imposes new burdens on business and the voluntary sector. Labour will now go on to implement practical, community based solutions – backed by firm government support. We will continue to support the excellent work of the Welsh Language Board and the Mentrau Iaith. We will introduce Language Action Plans to promote Welsh as a living, working language.

Jobs and Prosperity

More jobs and higher skills are the building blocks of a world class Wales. Every extra skilled person entering decently paid work takes us one step closer to a more prosperous and fairer country.

As we develop the Welsh economy, it will be based on world class education and training, more spin-offs from universities and colleges, more environmentally based businesses, more innovation and enterprise. We cannot afford to go back to Tory economic disaster, nor down the Nationalist route of throwing up barriers to the major markets across Britain, now the fourth largest in the world. Jobs and prosperity depend on a partnership with the UK Labour Government. That partnership has delivered lower unemployment and will continue to deliver it.

In the past, when the world economy did badly, Wales did much worse – always first into the recession and last back out. Today, with the global economy again contracting, Wales is doing far better. Unemployment continues to fall – to a quarter of the level it was during the height of Thatcherism. In 1999 Wales still had an unemployment rate a third higher than the UK average. Today we have closed that gap completely. The unemployment rate in Wales is now back at its lowest level for almost 28 years, having fallen by a third since Labour came to office in the Assembly.



“I’m backing Labour because they are serious about supporting small businesses. We need more small businesses run by local people and employing local people.”

Jamie Rowland, Shop owner, Porth, Rhondda

Did you know?

Wales now has a lower rate of unemployment than the USA, Canada, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain, according to the International Labour Organisation measure of joblessness.

More jobs, better jobs

Labour's New Deal is the biggest and most successful assault on long term unemployment ever mounted by government, cutting youth unemployment by 76%. Labour has also built in extra Wales-only incentives for job creation. Wales now tops the UK league for government grant assistance to create and safeguard employment, helping us to create jobs much faster than the UK as a whole. In the last year alone over 50,000 jobs were created. By the end of the decade, we aim to create 135,000 jobs, many of which will be in expanding sectors such as financial and business services. Our goal is full employment, something not seen in Wales for a generation.

Our first priority has been those areas hardest hit during the Tory years. Unemployment has fallen faster in the parts of Wales targeted for Objective One money - the South Wales Valleys, west Wales and parts of north Wales – than it has elsewhere in Wales, or indeed in the rest of the UK. In our second term we will ensure that rising prosperity benefits all communities. We will increase opportunities for the over 50s, lone parents, the disabled and ethnic minorities. We will increase investment in community business, stimulating the social economy from the grass roots up through a new Community Development Financial Institution, taking full advantage of Labour's Community Investment Tax Credit Scheme. We will support the expansion of Credit Unions, ensuring that financial services are available to those who are currently excluded.

We will tackle the barriers that stop people returning to work. We will boost childcare and long term provision to assist those looking after dependants. We will increase part time and job share opportunities. We will focus these efforts initially where they are needed most, together with programmes to tackle long term sickness, helping us to continue to push up levels of economic activity still further.

Boosting skills is a vital component in getting Wales working. We have increased apprenticeship numbers by 40% in Wales by removing the upper age limit. In our first term we launched the Modern Skills Diploma for Wales and the Skills Development Fund. In our second term we will raise skills throughout the workforce, piloting free provision up to NVQ Level 3, tailoring training for all ages and working more closely with trade unions. The lack of management training and the low take-up of Investors in People amongst small and medium sized enterprises will be addressed. We will work to eliminate the basic skills deficit in the workforce in Wales, building on the recent agreement between Wales's trade unions and employers.



First steps:

- Unemployment cut by a third
- Over 50,000 new jobs in the last year alone
- Unemployment lowest for 28 years
- Modern skills for more people
- More new businesses surviving
- Finance Wales for small and medium sized business
- Over 6,000 new jobs through Objective One funding
- Biggest public sector investment in cutting edge 'broadband' technology

Helping business grow

Economic stability is the backdrop against which Labour is shaping a more competitive Welsh economy. The lowest inflation in Europe, the lowest interest rates for 40 years and steadily falling unemployment are the vital ingredients in this change.

Manufacturing remains a significant part of the Welsh economy, a major source of investment, jobs and skills. Labour will press forward with support for manufacturing, with incentives for higher value-added production. We will build on the success of our sectoral fora, for example in the automotive industry, in areas such as the creative industries. These encourage local sourcing of products and services, together with the establishment of long term buyer-supplier relationships and producer development. Where communities have been hit by job losses we have often been able to respond swiftly, helping new owners to save jobs that would otherwise be lost, and providing

“Labour initiatives in Wales now lead the UK in investment support”

multi-million pound packages to regenerate those communities.

Labour is broadening the range of business activity and occupations in Wales and will seek to increase the number of decision-making, head office level jobs based in Wales. This includes increasing the proportion of companies doing their research and development in Wales rather than just their manufacturing. We will develop closer links between universities and colleges and business, exploiting the commercial potential of HE and FE research and providing graduate level recruits for local business.

We will encourage innovation through a new single innovation grant scheme worth £25 million over three years, with £5 million to boost highly specialist support services and £15 million to promote the application and exploitation of new and

existing technologies. We will increase the number of Technium centres throughout Wales. These ground-breaking business ‘incubators’ will help high technology business get off the ground, including three new Hub Centres in north Wales, west Wales and the Valleys. They will promote local areas of research excellence, bringing together successful initiatives and boosting the number of quality local jobs. We will develop a Technology Commercialisation Centre, making sure Welsh businesses reap the benefits around the globe of their innovations.

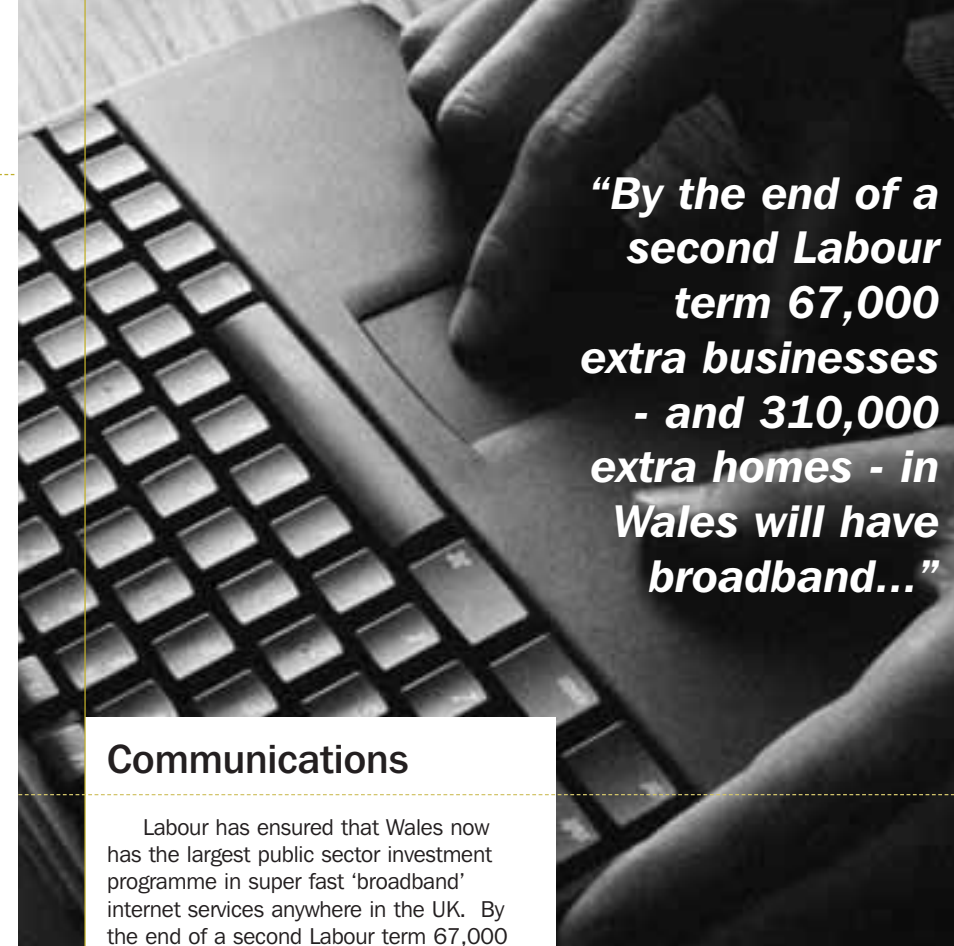
Wales needs more new businesses. In our first term we pushed the business start-up rate towards the UK average, while helping a greater number of new businesses to survive. We are investing £235 million to help people launch their own businesses, with extra support for home grown companies with high growth potential. We will establish new scholarship schemes for young entrepreneurs, together with support for the development of entrepreneurs in the social economy and amongst groups who have previously not been able to start their own business.

There is a wide variety of support available to business, but this leads to duplication and bureaucracy. In our second term we will draw this support together, establishing a single point of

access. We will simplify and improve access for medium sized businesses looking to grow.

Labour initiatives in Wales now lead the UK in investment support given to those with the ideas but not the other assets to be successful. Finance Wales, the new user-friendly lending institution that has been sought after for generations is providing investment capital for small and medium sized firms. It will continue to grow, and grow its customer base. In our second term we will establish a Knowledge Bank to support ideas and intellectual property throughout Wales, providing entrepreneurs with funding for their ideas in early stages as well as business skills and mentoring.

Labour has already committed £1 billion of extra investment in the south Wales Valleys, west Wales and parts of north Wales through the Objective One scheme - just as we promised. Objective One money, provided over and above the Assembly’s normal budget because of an unprecedented decision by a Labour Government, has already helped create over 6,000 new jobs, with the promise of 30,000 more to come. We will continue to make the most of this unique opportunity during our second term, while Objective Two and Three and other structural funds will continue to develop jobs and training opportunities in other areas of Wales.



“By the end of a second Labour term 67,000 extra businesses - and 310,000 extra homes - in Wales will have broadband...”

Communications

Labour has ensured that Wales now has the largest public sector investment programme in super fast ‘broadband’ internet services anywhere in the UK. By the end of a second Labour term 67,000 extra businesses - and 310,000 extra homes - in Wales will have broadband, allowing new business based on this new technology to be established in all corners of our country.

“In our second term we will reverse other line closures, including the Ebbw Vale to Cardiff and Newport line...”

A good transport infrastructure is vital to a stronger economy. In our first term we increased investment in Welsh rail services, funding work to re-open the Vale of Glamorgan line and refurbish rail stations. In our second term we will reverse other line closures, including the Ebbw Vale to Cardiff and Newport line, and work with the new all Wales franchisee to improve essential rail services. Our rail network should make a major contribution to the economy, sustainability and communities of Wales, linking valleys to coast, north to south and encouraging the spread of prosperity across Wales. Labour will seek powers for the Assembly to make this vision a reality.

We will work to provide the best possible access to a strengthened Wales

International Airport in Cardiff in order to secure Wales’s place in the wider European network of airports. We will explore the feasibility of a public service obligation for a north/south air service. We will invest £175 million for trunk road improvements over the next three years, including the long overdue dualling of the Heads of the Valleys road beyond the already underway Dowlais to Tredegar section.

Next steps:

- More jobs – as we head for full employment
- Better jobs – more R&D, more head office posts
- Support for grass roots business – spreading prosperity
- Eliminating the basic skills deficit
- Entrepreneur Scholarships
- £25 million innovation grant
- Knowledge Bank for entrepreneurs

A window on Wales

Flagship projects and world class events are helping to mark Wales out as an exciting place to visit, an attractive place to locate and a growing source of quality goods and services.

Welsh Labour is putting more resources than ever into promoting tourism, an industry employing 100,000 people and contributing £2 billion to the Welsh economy. We will continue to attract major events such as the



FA Cup Final, the Ryder Cup and Wales Rally GB to Wales. We will develop higher quality tourism facilities, promoting Wales as a year round destination. We will support improved booking and enquiry facilities together with joint ticketing schemes. In partnership with Westminster we will look to provide a statutory registration scheme for all tourist accommodation linked to quality standards and with incentives for improvements. We will support a tourist industry based on skills and clear career prospects, with tailored training for identified gaps in the workforce.

Labour initiatives to increase Welsh exports such as Wales Trade International have already paid dividends. The second term will enable us to do more to promote Wales and Welsh goods and services abroad, while continuing to market our country as a place where business can do good business. We will vigorously promote Wales as a film location.

“We will help farmers diversify into waste management, renewable energy, horticulture, aquaculture, fisheries and tourism while at the same time cutting red tape and streamlining business support services.”

The rural economy



Despite increased direct support, wide scale reform is needed to raise farm incomes. Labour is working to change the European system of subsidy, itself part of the problem. But Welsh farming must also change so that it competes on quality rather than quantity, and farmers can make sure that the small family farm remains an important part of Welsh rural life through diversifying their activities.

In the Assembly's first term we have done a lot to help the agricultural industry adapt and prosper. We have boosted organic production. Our Agri-Food schemes help farmers keep a greater share of the value of their produce, while the Tir Gofal programme makes the conservation of non-arable land more viable. And we have channelled basic production subsidy money into wider rural development programmes, matched pound for pound with new Treasury money.

In the Assembly's second term we will go further by encouraging schools and hospitals to purchase more Welsh produce within strict competition rules. We will help farmers diversify into waste management, renewable energy, horticulture, aquaculture, fisheries and tourism while at the same time cutting red tape and streamlining business support services. Farms will be encouraged to enter into co-operative arrangements, strengthening their bargaining power in the marketplace. With a new emphasis on organic production, and with the most restrictive possible policy toward Genetically Modified Organisms, we will

work to gain a bigger share of the quality food sector for Welsh farming. The rural economy, like the wider Welsh economy, needs to become more diverse. The extension of broadband technology is helping rural Wales develop more knowledge based businesses. We will develop skills training specifically suitable for rural settings and use European and other funding to stimulate the rural social economy.



“In the Assembly's second term we will go further by encouraging schools and hospitals to purchase more Welsh produce within strict competition rules.”



Harnessing Welsh strengths

Wales is sitting on a largely untapped energy resource – our windy hills, rugged coastlines and fast flowing tidal currents.

Energy from renewable sources such as wind and tidal flows is set to become a huge market, as well as an environmental necessity, and Labour is ensuring Wales makes the most of it.

By 2010 we aim to ensure that 10% of energy consumed in Wales will be from renewable sources. And we will look to create many new, high skilled jobs in this expanding international market.

Welsh Labour Working For You

We are proud to have delivered devolution for Wales. Our Assembly is there to effect real change in real people's lives – it will never be a Nationalist project of dragging Wales out of the UK, against the people's will.

What works is what matters, so we have established an independent commission to examine in detail the powers and the electoral system of the Assembly. We will consider carefully the recommendations of the commission, themselves based on a detailed examination of how our new devolved institutions have worked. Any proposals for change will be judged against the only criterion that matters to Labour - the ability to improve the quality of life of people in Wales. If this test is met we will submit proposals for change to the people.

In the next Welsh Assembly term Labour will:

1. Abolish all prescription charges
2. Create a £100 million crime fighting fund
3. Extend free bus travel for over 60s and disabled people – develop a scheme for half-price bus travel for 16 to 18 year olds
4. Rule out Top Up fees in Welsh universities
5. Provide for all primary school children to have free breakfasts in school
6. Set up a Knowledge Bank for entrepreneurs
7. Extend the 20mph zone and Safe Routes to Schools schemes
8. Enable free access to local authority swimming pools for older people
9. Scrap home care charges for disabled people
10. Invest £560 million to improve school buildings, invest £550 million modernising GP surgeries and hospitals