



10 PLEDGES TO YOUNG PEOPLE



Plaid Cymru
Party of Wales

1. Climate emergency

Facing up to the climate and nature emergency is the defining challenge of our time. We are committed to tackling the climate emergency so that Wales and the world is protected for the next generation.

We will set a target for Wales to have net zero carbon emissions by 2035; 15 years sooner than the current target. We want all our electricity, heating and transport to be powered by renewable energy by then.

We will plant the equivalent of 100,000 hectares (or 100,000 rugby pitches) of new woodland per decade. The trees planted will help lock in carbon, encourage biodiversity, and prevent flooding.



2. Plastic

Plastic waste is polluting our oceans, our green landscapes, our water and food systems, and even our own bodies.

We will ban non-essential single use plastics straight away such as plastic bags, straws, cutlery and nonbiodegradable wet-wipes. We will work towards the goal of having zero waste ending up in landfill by 2030.

We will make it easier to recycle, and make the ending of plastic pollution the responsibility of those who make it.



3. Mental Health

The impact of Covid-19 has affected us all in different ways. For young people, it has caused huge uncertainty when it comes to education, wellbeing, and social life. We need to make sure that young people can get the support they need.

We will set up a number of mental health and wellbeing hubs to be able to offer support and advice as you walk-in, rather than being faced with a waiting list.

We want to increase mental health care for anyone suffering from depression, anxiety, eating disorders and all other mental and emotional ill-health. We will increase the amount we spend in this area if we are in government.

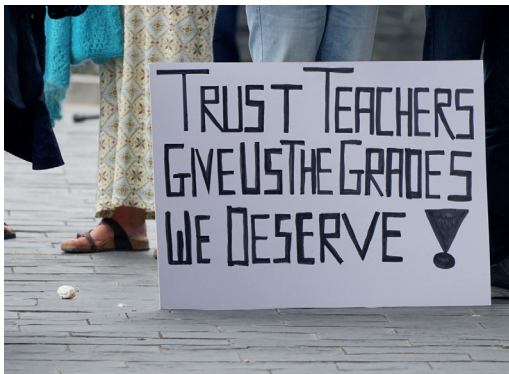


4. Exams

We want to change the way young people are given grades and qualifications. The new curriculum for Wales encourages creativity, teamwork, and big ideas and we think that should be reflected in assessments too.

We will move away from GCSEs and A-Levels to a system which continuously evaluates performance. This should be based on real world experiences and community projects for example, and teachers should be given the time focus on being in the classroom rather than extra paperwork.

We will stand up for the young people who have faced uncertainty during this strange global pandemic and make sure that the assessment methods used are fair and take into account the circumstances of the past year.



5. Post-16 Education

One of our greatest resources in Wales are our people and our minds. We should be able to offer exceptional courses and qualifications to anyone who wishes to study here. As a first step towards making university education free, we will reduce the maximum tuition fee for Welsh students studying at universities in Wales to £7500. We will also protect inward and outward student mobility between Wales and the European Union post Brexit.

To ensure parity of esteem across all pathways of post-16 education, we will increase funding to careers services and advice in schools and colleges – reversing cuts over a number of years.



Wales's network of Further Education Colleges will be made community hubs for collaboration with businesses and local authorities to create more coherent work opportunities.

We will increase the cash value of the Educational Maintenance Allowance to £45 a week and Welsh Government Learning Grant for FE students to £2,350 a year.

All apprentices under the age of 21 should be partnered with a Further Education college to ensure appropriate support, including access to college days or off-site training/education for key skills or other appropriate education choices. We will tackle under-representation of women and people of colour in apprenticeships with stretching targets, linked to funding.



6. Jobs

Across the UK, 47% of jobs filled by workers aged 24 and under were furloughed for at least some time between March 1st and June 30th, 2020, compared to 32% of all jobs.

We must recognise the economic impact of the uncertainty arising from the pandemic on young people. There is a real risk that school leavers and university graduates will face unemployment when they join the post-Covid jobs market.

We will establish a national Youth Jobs Guarantee to provide secure employment, earning at least Living Wage, for every 16 to 24-year-old that needs one, working on a green recovery, caring for our children, for our elderly, for our planet.



7. Free Bus Travel

An unstable job market, low wages and the high cost of car insurance are all challenges to overcome when considering travel to education, training and job opportunities.

Plaid Cymru will provide free bus travel for young people between 16 and 24 year olds. Increasing spending on public transport will allow us to improve bus connections and frequencies.

We may even see the added benefit of reducing emissions if we create an active travel and public transport infrastructure suitable to end our dependency on cars.

8. Housing

We want to see a Wales where you can choose to stay and thrive in your local community and expect high-quality housing rights wherever you want to live in Wales. For too long, our young people have been priced out of their local communities because of a property market dominated by unaffordable second homes, or are unable to move out of their parents' houses as rent is too high.



We will end no fault evictions during the economic fall-out from Covid-19 and implement a new system of fair rents for the future. We will strengthen the powers to deal with poor landlords that don't meet housing standards or social responsibilities.

Our aim is to make it affordable again for young people in all parts of Wales to buy their own home.

To make young people's savings go further and to broaden chances to access the housing ladder we will build or convert 50,000 public homes over the next five years, including 15,000 genuinely affordable homes to buy. We will also take steps to address the second homes crisis which is especially gripping Wales' eastern seaboard and driving local people out of the property market.



9. A Socially Just Wales

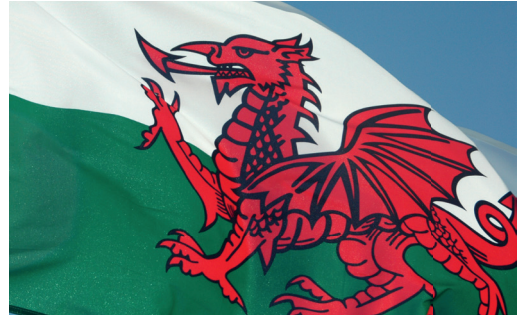
The circumstances of Covid-19 have highlighted inequalities and injustices already deeply embedded in our society: systemic racism, violence against women, gender inequality, and economic disparity. We need a Welsh Government that will do all it can to alleviate these issues, and effectively tackle the root causes of such inequalities and injustices. In terms of visibility and representation, we will aim to achieve a 50:50 gender balanced Senedd, at the same time increasing representation of people of colour, LGBT+, disabled and working-class women. We will also create a Cabinet-level post of Minister for Equalities and Women's Empowerment.



We reaffirm our commitment to actively promote the rights of LGBT+ youth by ensuring that relationships and experiences of the LGBT+ community are included in the statutory element of Relationships and Sex Education of the new curriculum. We will continue to fight for rights and equality for trans people, supporting the reform of the Gender Recognition Act

to introduce a streamlined, demedicalised process based on self-declaration and in line with international best practice.

We will create and implement a Race Equality Action Plan for Wales. We will promote anti-racist training such as unconscious bias and gender stereotyping training in workplaces and education settings. We will fund more mentoring, shadowing and anti-racism programmes and investigate the culture of public and political bodies at all levels to identify potential barriers.



10. An equal, independent Wales

We know that there is a growing interest in Welsh independence. There is nothing the people of Wales cannot achieve when we work together for Wales's best interests.

We want a Wales for all, where all individuals, groups and communities feel included, supported, and listened to. Our goal is to build a national community based on the equal worth of every person, whatever their race, language of choice, nationality, gender, colour, faith, sexuality, age, ability or social background.

We want to harness the energy and passion of young people and put Wales on a path towards a Wales which stands on its own two feet. We will work towards an independence referendum where 16-17 year olds will be able to have their say on the future of Wales.