

The Conservative and Unionist Party Welsh Manifesto 2024

CLEAR PLAN

BOLD ACTION

SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES



Welsh
Conservatives

Ceidwadwyr
Cymreig



The Conservatives' record of action:

- › £2.5 billion supporting transport, tourism, heritage and culture across Wales
- › Cut taxes putting £700 on average back into the pockets of hardworking Welsh workers
- › Two Freeports delivering thousands of new jobs
- › Investment Zones enabling advanced manufacturing
- › Growth deals across Wales supporting businesses

The Conservatives' bold plan for Wales:

- › Cutting tax further for workers
- › £1 billion to electrify the North Wales Main Line
- › Bringing nuclear power back to North Wales
- › Keeping the Severn crossings toll free and giving communities consent over 20mph speed limits
- › A modern National Service scheme
- › £1 billion in continued levelling-up funding for Welsh communities

Contents

A UK Conservative Government’s plan to deliver a secure future for Wales

- › Foreword by the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Wales 3
- › Our plan for Wales 4
- › Bold actions to deliver a secure future for our country and for your family 5
- › Our plan for a secure, dynamic and growing economy..... 9
- › Our plan to cut taxes and protect pensions..... 13
- › Our plan to get more people into work and build a fairer welfare system 17
- › Our plan to secure our nation from global uncertainty 19
- › Our plan to control immigration and stop illegal immigration..... 21
- › Our plan for safer streets and justice for victims of crime..... 23
- › Our plan for an affordable and pragmatic transition to net zero 27
- › Our plan to strengthen communities 31
- › Our plan to back farmers and fisheries to grow our food security..... 35
- › Our plan to support the creative sector..... 37

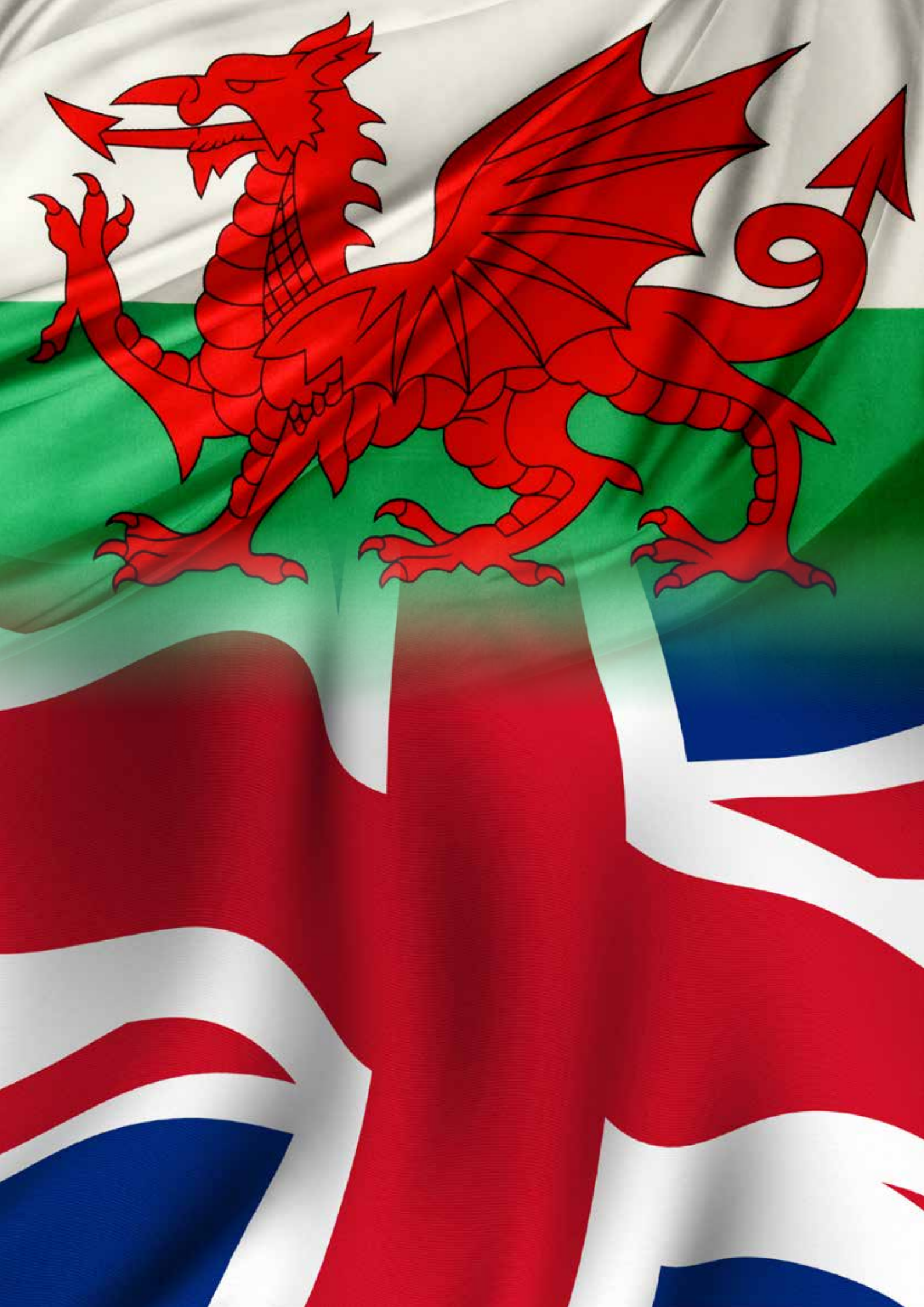
- › Foreword by the Leader of the Welsh Conservatives in the Senedd 41

A Welsh Conservative Government plan to:

- › Save the Welsh NHS..... 42
- › Restore aspiration to Welsh schools..... 43
- › Kickstart the Welsh economy..... 43
- › Put speed, opportunity and aspiration at the heart of house building in Wales..... 44
- › Get Wales moving 44
- › Support the Welsh tourism industry..... 45
- › Protect our rural communities 46
- › Reverse Labour’s wrong priorities..... 46

Read the full UK Conservative manifesto at manifesto.conservatives.com





For 25 years, our Welsh NHS, our schools, our roads, our GPs, our dentists and so much more has been the direct responsibility of the Welsh Government in Cardiff Bay.

Every single Welsh Government since 1999 has been led by Labour.

The issues that matter most to the people of Wales have been managed by Labour. Yet, Labour have prioritised the wrong issues, ignoring the people of Wales.

Labour in Wales is a stark warning to the rest of the UK. Keir Starmer made it clear that Labour in Wales is his blueprint for what he would do as Prime Minister.

Under a Conservative UK Government economic security after Covid and Ukraine has been restored. Inflation is down, real wages are up, growth has returned – and we are cutting taxes to give working people financial security. This did not happen by accident. The economy is turning a corner because we built strong economic foundations before the pandemic and we have stuck to our plan.

We must stick to this plan and take bold action to secure the future of our nation and society. In the next decade, we'll face challenges to our energy and national security from foreign conflicts; to our borders from uncontrolled and illegal migration; to our economy from global shocks and to our society from those seeking to divide and disempower communities. Dealing with these challenges requires a clear plan and bold action.

We have that plan and the courage to take the bold steps necessary to build a secure future for you and your family.

A future where hard work and doing the right thing is always rewarded, not punished with higher taxes and hidden green levies or discouraged with unconstrained welfare.

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak
Prime Minister and Leader of the
Conservative and Unionist Party

A future where aspiration and opportunity are celebrated and young people always get the skills they need to succeed.

A future where public services, like the NHS, serve citizens not vested interests, and every citizen upholds British values of decency, democracy and service.

A future, where national, border, energy and food security are put first, not taken for granted, and immigration is never allowed to run out of control.

A future where family is always supported and communities decide their own priorities, rather than having them imposed from above.

A future where we can have pride – in ourselves, in our communities and in our country.

There is only one way to secure that future – and that is to vote Conservative on 4 July.

We must stick with the plan – a plan that has given four million more people the security and purpose of a job, cut taxes for 29 million working people, protected pensioners with the Triple Lock, recruited record numbers of police officers to cut crime by more than 50%, delivered the largest sustained increase in defence spending since the end of the Cold War and got Brexit done.

The alternative is we go back to square one. To a fragile economy under Labour driven by unfunded spending, higher taxes on working families and debt piling up for future generations to pay off. And where immigration, crime and defence are not taken seriously.

On 4 July, choose lower immigration, lower taxes and protected pensions. Choose a secure future with the Conservatives.

The Rt Hon David TC Davies
Secretary of State for Wales

Our Plan for Wales

Keir Starmer said Wales was his blueprint for governing the UK and it is a damning indictment of his ambition for the country. The Labour Welsh Government have let standards slide across crucial public services while focusing on policies that people in Wales do not want, from putting more politicians in the Senedd to implementing a blanket 20mph speed limit across Wales and banning new roadbuilding.

By contrast, the Conservatives and Unionists are delivering for Wales by cutting taxes again for 1.2 million Welsh workers and making investments in industry, local communities and infrastructure.

And we want to go further.

To improve connectivity across Wales, we'll provide match funding to the Welsh Government to reconsider the M4 relief road and third Menai crossing options as well as wider improvements to the A55 and the A483 around Wrexham. We will provide funding to Monmouthshire Council to develop plans for a Chepstow bypass and prioritise the Pant-Llanymynech bypass.

As a result of our decision to cancel the second phase of HS2 and invest the savings into local transport projects, we can commit £1 billion for the electrification of the North Wales Main Line and ensure Wales starts receiving Barnett consequentials for the projects funded from HS2 savings in England. We will fund rail upgrades at Padeswood to unlock the potential for wider improvements on the Borderlands Line and facilitate the electrification of the North Wales Main Line. We will prioritise development of the Pencoed level crossing and progressing work on the South Wales Main Line, to deliver new stations and services.

We will **expand our Backing Drivers' Bill to cover Wales**, reversing Labour's blanket 20mph speed limit by requiring local consent for 20mph zones and giving local communities the legal right to challenge existing zones.

To support Wales' key sectors and industrial heritage, Welsh farmers will benefit from a £1 billion increase to the UK-wide farming budget, ensuring the ringfenced amount directed to Welsh farmers increases by inflation throughout the next Parliament, as well as grants for innovative

agricultural projects from the £20 million UK Farming Innovation Fund and the extension of the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Scheme.

We will also build on our new UK-wide food security index by putting a UK-wide food security target into law, adopt a consistent approach to biosecurity across Great Britain and require the Welsh Government to provide annual reports on how ringfenced agricultural funding from the UK Government is spent.

The £500 million we are investing to secure a sustainable future for steelmaking in Port Talbot is bolstered by the £80 million the UK Government is providing to support the area to transition. We remain committed to delivering the electric arc furnace and supporting Port Talbot to thrive, including through the new Celtic Freeport. Floating offshore wind is at the heart of these plans and we will continue to support its development in the Celtic Sea. We will deliver the UK's third mega-nuclear power station at Wylfa and support Wales' potential to host small modular reactors.

To strengthen Wales' public services, we will put an additional neighbourhood police officer in every community across Wales, restore trust in policing and introduce tougher sentencing to make Wales safer.

Improving the comparability of data across the UK will ensure the current Labour Welsh Government are held to account for their performance running Wales' schools and hospitals. We will assess options to promote choice in NHS services across the UK, whether provided by the NHS or independent sector, and improve interoperability between the NHS in different parts of the UK, cross-border healthcare processes and joint working to tackle waiting lists.

We will continue working with the Welsh Government on the expansion of Levelling Up Partnerships to Wales and support the Welsh language, including backing Welsh broadcasting and the equitable provision of UK Government services in Welsh.

We will bring forward legislation to reapply the entirety of the Trade Union Act 2016 to Wales. And a Welsh Conservative Government would reverse Labour's plans to expand the Senedd, redirecting the cost towards people's real priorities.

**Bold actions to
deliver a secure
future for our
country and for
your family**

» CLEAR PLAN »
» BOLD ACTION »
» SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES »

To support working people and secure a stronger economy

- › Cut tax for workers by taking another 2p off employee National Insurance so that we will have halved it from 12% at the beginning of this year to 6% by April 2027, a total tax cut of £1,350 for the average worker on £35,000 – and the next step in our long-term ambition to end the double tax on work when financial conditions allow.
- › Cut taxes to support the self-employed by abolishing the main rate of self-employed National Insurance entirely by the end of the Parliament.
- › Cut tax for pensioners with the new Triple Lock Plus, guaranteeing that both the State Pension and the tax free allowance for pensioners always rise with the highest of inflation, earnings or 2.5% – so the new State Pension doesn't get dragged into income tax.
- › Deliver Barnett funding to the Welsh Government, as a result of the childcare expansion in England, to give working parents 30 hours of free childcare a week from when their child is nine months old to when they start school.
- › End the unfairness in Child Benefit by moving to a household system, so families don't start losing Child Benefit until their combined income reaches £120,000 – saving the average family which benefits £1,500.
- › Cut the cost of net zero for consumers by taking a more pragmatic approach, guaranteeing no new green levies or charges while accelerating the rollout of renewables.

- › Seize the benefits of Brexit by signing further trade deals, speeding up infrastructure, cutting red tape for business, and creating new fishing opportunities.

To provide young people with a secure future

- › Give young people the skills and opportunities they deserve by introducing mandatory National Service for all school leavers at 18, with the choice between a competitive placement in the military or civic service roles.

To safeguard our borders and national security

- › Boost defence spending to our new NATO standard of 2.5% of GDP by 2030, so we can protect British interests at home and abroad in an increasingly hostile world.
- › Introduce a legal cap on migration to guarantee that numbers will fall every year, so public services are protected while bringing in the skills our businesses and NHS needs.
- › Stop the boats by removing illegal migrants to Rwanda.
- › Work with other countries to rewrite asylum treaties to make them fit for the challenges we face.

To strengthen our communities

- › Protect female-only spaces and competitiveness in sport by making clear that sex means biological sex in the Equality Act.
- › Recruit 8,000 more full-time, fully warranted police officers to ensure a new police officer for every neighbourhood.

- › **Cut anti-social behaviour in town centres by rolling out Hotspot Policing, expanding community payback.**
- › **Commit £1 billion for the electrification of the North Wales Main Line and ensure Wales starts receiving Barnett consequential for the projects funded from HS2 savings in England, as a result of our decision to cancel the second phase of HS2 and invest the savings into local transport projects.**
- › **Back drivers by stopping road pricing, reversing the London Mayor's ULEZ expansion and applying local referendums to new 20mph zones and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.**
- › **Champion our rural communities by backing farmers with a legal target and additional investment for food security.**
- › **Continue to directly invest in communities across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, protect the UK's internal market and the integrity of our United Kingdom.**



Our plan for a secure, dynamic and growing economy

» CLEAR PLAN »
» BOLD ACTION »
» SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES »

» In 2010 we inherited an economy in tatters, with Labour admitting themselves there was ‘no money’. We have faced three generational global economic challenges: the aftermath of the financial crisis; a global pandemic; and the biggest energy shock since the 1970s.

Against this backdrop, since 2010 the UK has had the third highest growth rate in the G7. We have created four million more jobs, cut taxes for working people and pensioners and repaired the public finances. The UK economy is now growing faster than Germany, France, Italy and the United States, real wages have been rising for nearly a year, inflation has fallen from 11.1% to 2.3%, lower than in Europe and the US, and debt as a share of GDP is forecast to start falling next year. The plan we set out last year, to halve inflation, grow the economy and reduce debt, is working.

Economic security is the bedrock of any future success, which is why we have a clear plan to take the bold action needed to build a strong economy:

- › reducing borrowing and debt;
- › backing businesses to invest, innovate and trade;
- › cutting taxes and reforming our welfare system;
- › delivering world-class education; and
- › delivering an affordable transition to domestic, sustainable energy

Reducing debt and borrowing

Sustainable public finances are essential for a strong economic plan. It was only because of the difficult decisions we took to repair the public finances after 2010, which saw the deficit fall from 10.3% under Labour to 2.1% on the eve of the pandemic, that we were able to provide almost

£400 billion of support to families and businesses to get through Covid and the energy shock.

In the next Parliament, we will continue to meet our fiscal rules of having public sector net debt falling and for public sector net borrowing to be below 3% of GDP in the fifth year of the forecast.

The measures in this manifesto are fully funded and would result in lower borrowing in 2029-30, which will be the target year for our fiscal rules in the first fiscal event of the new Parliament.

Backing business to invest, innovate and trade

A competitive tax system

The Conservative Party will always be the party of business. It is the private sector which will unlock the investment, growth and opportunities of the future.

That is why a tax system that incentivises business to invest is at the heart of our economic plan. We introduced the biggest business tax cut in modern British history, which hundreds of business leaders have described as the ‘single most transformational’ measure for growth and investment. So more businesses can benefit, we will look to extend our ‘full expensing’ policy to leasing, once the fiscal conditions allow. **And we will not raise corporation tax.**

For the very smallest businesses, the four million people who are self-employed, **we will abolish the main rate of National Insurance entirely** by the end of the next Parliament. We will back the risk takers and entrepreneurs who help drive our economy.

Small and medium-sized businesses are the lifeblood of our economy and we are making the UK the best place in the world to start or grow a business. We have great foundations: world-class talent, an internationally envied legal system and a business-friendly regulatory environment. In the next Parliament, we will continue taking steps to support SMEs across the UK.

Investing in infrastructure

A Conservative Government will continue to invest in the digital, transport and energy infrastructure needed for businesses to grow.

We have transformed our digital infrastructure by **rolling out gigabit broadband** to over a million hard to reach premises, helping to deliver high-speed internet to over 80% of the country. We are set to achieve at least 85% gigabit coverage of the UK by 2025 and nationwide coverage by 2030. Our ambition is for all populated areas to be covered by ‘standalone’ 5G mobile connectivity and to keep the UK at the forefront of adopting and developing 6G.

We will **spend £36 billion of HS2 savings on transport projects that will benefit more people**, in more places, more quickly. **As a result of our decision, we can commit £1 billion for the electrification of the North Wales Main Line and ensure Wales starts receiving Barnett consequentials for the projects funded from HS2 savings in England.**

Automated vehicles will be on British roads in the next Parliament, thanks to our new world-leading legislation. We will support people to choose electric cars by ensuring our charging infrastructure is truly nationwide, including rapid charging, and delivering the Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate to support manufacturers to safeguard skilled British jobs.

We will support the growth and decarbonisation of our aviation sector. We will back British Sustainable Aviation Fuel through our SAF mandate, an industry-backed revenue support mechanism and investment in future aviation technology. We will support domestic flights including through Public Service Obligations, protecting vital routes within the UK, including to islands and remote areas.

We can only achieve our infrastructure ambitions if we continue to simplify the planning system to make it easier to build, faster. **We will speed up the average time it takes to sign off major infrastructure projects from four years to one.**

Securing the UK's position as a world leader in innovation

The UK is well positioned to spearhead this transformation and is already leading global work on AI safety. Over the last 14 years, the Conservatives have turned the UK into an innovation superpower. The UK now has the highest level of direct government funding and tax support for business research and development (R&D) of any country in the OECD. We pioneered the fastest development and deployment of the Covid vaccine. The UK has Europe's leading tech ecosystem. We have secured improved financial terms to join Horizon. We will:

- ▶ **Increase public spending on R&D to £22 billion a year**, up from £20 billion this year.
- ▶ **Maintain our R&D tax reliefs.** Recent changes worth £280 million a year have simplified and improved R&D tax reliefs, including by bringing more SMEs into scope of the relief.
- ▶ **Continue investing over £1.5 billion in large-scale compute clusters**, assembling the raw processing power so we can take advantage of the potential of AI and support research into its safe and responsible use.
- ▶ **Push forward with our Advanced Manufacturing Plan**, providing a £4.5 billion commitment to secure strategic manufacturing sectors including automotive, aerospace, life sciences and clean energy.
- ▶ **Build on the success of our nine specialist Catapults**, which support innovation and de-risk the transition from research and delivery, distributing £1.6 billion of funding across the country by 2028.

Building new trade links to help British businesses thrive

Having left the EU, we have seized the opportunity to negotiate trade deals that suit the UK, boosting our exports and creating jobs at

home. UK exports are growing, reaching £850 billion last year and service exports are at an all-time high. We have secured trade deals with 73 countries plus the EU and last year we removed £1 million of trade barriers every single hour.

Last year we signed a deal to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), a modern and ambitious trade deal spanning economies across Asia and the Pacific. With the UK as a member, it will account for 15% of global GDP and in time is expected to boost UK GDP by around £2 billion a year.

In Wales, the partnership will benefit over 450 Welsh companies, exporting over £900 million in products, who currently trade with countries seeing zero tariffs on the majority of goods, reducing red tape, providing better opportunities and increasing the global demand for Welsh goods and services. This is on top of the UK Government securing access for Welsh lamb and beef to the US markets for the first time in 20 years.

We will complete free trade agreements with India and with the Gulf Cooperation Council, home to some of the world's biggest investors. And we will continue to pursue free trade agreements with countries such as Israel and Switzerland.

Our Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) is the most comprehensive FTA the EU has ever agreed. We will build on it, but will not agree to anything in the forthcoming review of the TCA that would infringe our legal sovereignty or involve submission to the CJEU or dynamic alignment. We will take a tough approach on ensuring that the EU are meeting their commitments under the TCA and not discriminating against our exporters.

We have always been clear the NHS and the services it provides are not on the table in trade negotiations. All food and drink products imported into the UK, including those from countries we have trade agreements with, must comply with the UK's high standards. We will always stand up for UK agriculture in our trade deals.

The US is our single largest trading partner. We have signed the Atlantic Declaration and deals with eight US states, including Florida and Texas, with a combined GDP of £5.7 trillion. And we will look to agree a free trade agreement with the US when they are ready to do so.

Using our Brexit freedoms to deliver regulatory reform

Thanks to Brexit, we have taken back control of our laws and freed British businesses from unnecessary burdens. We legislated to remove the principle of EU law supremacy and have undertaken a root-and-branch review of the more than 6,000 laws we had inherited from the EU.

We have already repealed or reformed over 2,000 EU laws and by July 2026 **we will have repealed or reformed over half of the entire stock of EU law we inherited**. Only the Conservatives will keep on removing EU laws from our statute book. Our Smarter Regulation approach has already saved 50 million hours of administrative time for business, saving them an estimated £1 billion.

We have also used post-Brexit tax freedoms, including introducing VAT-free installations of energy-efficient materials and replacing complex EU alcohol duty rates. And to protect our pubs we will **maintain our Brexit Pubs Guarantee** that means the duty on drinks on draught, such as beer and cider, will be less than in supermarkets.

Cutting government bureaucracy

We will deliver a significant productivity boost across UK Government departments. If we returned public sector productivity to pre-pandemic levels that would deliver up to £20 billion of annual savings. The NHS England Productivity Plan shows that the public sector can set out detailed plans for achieving a step-change in productivity, so we will require all Departments to deliver plans for **2% annual productivity growth** at the next Spending Review.

Our plan to cut taxes and protect pensions

» CLEAR PLAN »
» BOLD ACTION »
» SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES »

» As Conservatives, we believe in lower taxes because people, not governments, make the best decisions about how to spend their money. But we can only ever cut taxes responsibly – when we have a way to fund it sustainably, consistent with getting debt and borrowing down and in a way which does not send inflation spiralling.

Because of the support we provided to families and businesses through Covid and the energy shock, we had to make difficult decisions to pay down our debts. But we were clear that once inflation was under control and the public finances were on a sustainable path, we would cut taxes. Because of the progress we have made, with inflation back to normal and debt on track to fall from next year, we have been able to afford to begin cutting taxes as part of our plan to reward work and grow the economy, all without increasing borrowing or cutting spending on public services.

Cutting tax for working people

In the first half of this year, we began cutting National Insurance. It is unfair that working people pay two taxes on their income – income tax and National Insurance – when other people only pay income tax.

Our long-term ambition, when it is affordable to do so, is to keep cutting National Insurance until it's gone, as part of our plan to make the tax system simpler and fairer. As the next step in that plan, **we will cut employee National Insurance to 6% by April 2027 – meaning that we will have halved it from 12% at the beginning of this year, a total tax cut of £1,350 for the average worker on £35,000.** This comes on top of the significant above inflation increase to the personal allowance we have

delivered since 2010, nearly doubling it from £6,475 to £12,750.

This means the tax burden on workers is falling, with the average earner paying the lowest effective personal tax rate since 1975, lower than in the US, France, Germany or any G7 country.

As a further downpayment on our long-term ambition to abolish National Insurance, there is one group for whom we will make that a reality in the next Parliament. Last year, the main rate of National Insurance for the self-employed stood at 9%. To recognise the unique contribution of these risk-takers and entrepreneurs to our economy and the insecurity they face without the rights and protections that employees enjoy, we will abolish it entirely by the end of the next Parliament. **The abolition of the main rate of Class 4 National Insurance contributions builds on our abolition of Class 2 contributions for self-employed people from April this year.** This will not affect their entitlement to the State Pension. This is a massive simplification of the tax system which means that 93% of self-employed people – four million of them – will no longer pay self-employed National Insurance.

As well as cutting National Insurance for 29 million people, we will **also not raise the rate of income tax or VAT.**

Increasing pay for working people

We introduced the National Living Wage in 2016 and this year achieved our ambition of raising it to two thirds of median earnings, increasing it to £11.44 per hour and extending it to cover all workers aged over 21. This ended low pay for those on the National Living Wage, with someone working full-time receiving a pay rise worth £1,800. **As a result of our personal tax cuts and increases in the minimum wage, the take-home pay of someone working full time on the National Living Wage has gone up by 35% in real terms since 2010.**

We will maintain the National Living Wage in each year of the next Parliament at two-thirds of median earnings. On current forecasts, that would mean it rising to around £13 per hour, up from a minimum wage of £5.80 under Labour in 2010.

We will ensure the UK retains the flexible and dynamic labour market that gives businesses the confidence to create jobs and invest in their workforce. The number of payrolled employees is at a near record high, and there are around four million more people in work than when we came to office in 2010.

Cutting tax for pensioners

We believe that those who have worked hard during their lives should have dignity and security in their retirement. We came to power in 2010 after Labour had hit pensioners with a £118 billion pensions tax raid and a paltry 75p per week increase to the State Pension.

Since 2010, we have made it a priority to give people peace of mind in their retirement. We introduced the Triple Lock, which has seen the basic State Pension rise by £3,700 since 2010. This year, the new State Pension increased by £900.

We will continue to provide pensioners with dignity in retirement and ensure the new State Pension is not dragged into income tax for the first time in history by introducing the new Triple Lock Plus. This has two elements:

1. Continuing to uprate the State Pension in line with the highest of prices, earnings or 2.5%. On current forecasts, this will mean the new State Pension increases by a further £430 in April next year to £11,970 and increases by £1,685 a year to £13,200 by the end of the Parliament.

2. Ensuring that from next year the tax-free personal allowance for pensioners also rises by the highest of prices, earnings or 2.5%, guaranteeing that the new State Pension is always below the tax-free threshold. From April 2025, we will increase the personal allowance for pensioners by introducing a new age-related

personal allowance. This is a tax cut of around £100 for eight million pensioners next year – rising to £275 a year by the end of the Parliament.

Under our new Pensions Tax Guarantee, the Conservatives will not introduce any new taxes on pensions. We will maintain the 25% tax free lump sum and maintain tax relief on pension contributions at their marginal rate. We will not extend National Insurance to employer pension contributions.

We will maintain all current pensioner benefits provided by the UK Government to those in Wales, including Winter Fuel Payments, free TV licenses. We are carefully considering the Ombudsman report into WASPI women and will work with Parliament on an appropriate response.

Clamping down on tax avoidance

It is vital we make sure people and companies are paying the tax they owe. That's why, since 2010, Conservative Governments have introduced over 200 measures to tackle tax non-compliance. In total across all the fiscal events we have delivered since 2010, the OBR has scored these measures as raising £95 billion across the forecasts it has produced – £6.7 billion for each year. Building on that, **we will raise at least a further £6 billion a year from tackling tax avoidance and evasion by the end of the Parliament.**

Cutting tax for families

In April, we raised the threshold at which individuals begin to lose Child Benefit from £50,000 to £60,000 and halved the rate at which it is withdrawn. This is the right thing for families and the right thing for the economy.

But it still isn't fair that single earner households can start losing their Child Benefit when a household with two working parents and a much higher total income can keep it in full. We will **end this unfairness by moving to a household rather than individual basis for Child Benefit.** So nobody is worse off than

under the current system, we will set the combined household income at which a family will start losing Child Benefit at £120,000 and gradually remove it until household income reaches £160,000, above which families will no longer receive Child Benefit. This will benefit over 700,000 households, each gaining an average of £1,480 a year.

Our plan to get more people into work and ensure a fairer welfare system

» CLEAR PLAN »
» BOLD ACTION »
» SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES »

» Since the pandemic, new challenges to our welfare system have emerged. The number of people who are economically inactive due to ill health has risen from 2 million to 2.8 million, with a significant increase in mental health conditions among younger people.

As a result, **the number of working age people claiming benefits is projected to grow at an unsustainable rate**, with all the wasted human potential that entails.

We are now spending £69 billion a year on benefits for people of working age with a disability or health condition, a figure which has risen by two thirds since the pandemic. By the end of the decade, that spending is projected to increase to £90 billion. **It would be irresponsible not to take bold action to put the welfare system on a sustainable footing.**

So we will reform the system to make it fairer and more sustainable, unlocking the potential of millions of people and giving them the support they need to get into work.

This next generation of welfare reforms will build a system fit for the post-pandemic world. They will give everyone who can the best possible chance of returning to work, while providing the right support to those who need it. With fewer people moving onto welfare and more people in work fulfilling their potential, we will save taxpayers £12 billion a year.

To deliver this, we will take a two-pronged approach.

First, to address the unsustainable rise in benefit claims for people of working age with a disability or health condition, we will:

- » Reform our disability benefits so they are better targeted and reflect people's

genuine needs, while delivering a step-change in mental health provision.

- » Tighten up how the benefits system assesses capability for work.
- » Overhaul the fit note process so that people are not being signed off sick as a default.

Second, to make sure that being on benefits remains a safety net, not a lifestyle choice, we will:

- » Introduce tougher sanctions rules so people who refuse to take up suitable jobs after 12 months on benefits can have their cases closed and their benefits removed entirely.
- » Accelerate the rollout of Universal Credit to ensure it always pays to work.
- » Continue to clamp down on fraudsters.

We hugely value the work that unpaid carers do supporting their loved ones. We have increased Carer's Allowance by almost £1,500 since 2010 and given employees who are also unpaid carers entitlement to a period of unpaid leave. We will continue to stand behind our carers.

The vast majority of parents work incredibly hard to give their children the best start in life, but sadly a small number shirk their responsibilities. We will **reform the Child Maintenance Service to prevent non-compliance and new laws to help crack down on non-payment**. We'll also look at how the Service can better support victims of domestic or economic abuse, building on recommendations from Dr Samantha Callan's 2023 Independent Review.

Our plan to secure our nation from global uncertainty

» CLEAR PLAN »
» BOLD ACTION »
» SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES »

» The world is an increasingly dangerous place so we will take bold action to keep the British people safe and our homeland secure. Our prosperity depends on our ability to preserve international security. As our record proves, we will do so by deterring our adversaries and acting as a force for peace and stability in the world.

We will fully deliver our new pledge for the defence of the nation.

We will hit **2.5% of GDP on defence in 2030 with our fully funded plan**. This is the biggest strengthening of our defence since the Cold War, ensuring we remain the largest defence power in Europe. It will protect our security, cement our UK leadership in NATO and create more jobs in the UK.

If all NATO partners spent 2.5% of GDP on defence, our collective spending would increase by over £140 billion. Therefore, we will launch a **campaign to set a new baseline of 2.5% for all NATO allies by 2030**.

This investment will support us to deliver our strategic priorities – boosting the UK defence industrial base, accelerating the modernisation of our Armed Forces, investing in technology and guaranteeing Ukraine the support it needs for the long haul. We will deliver our National Defence and Resilience Plan and prioritise growth in UK industries and supporting communities across the UK.

In Wales we promised to save the Brecon Barracks, the main army headquarters in Wales and we did, along with more troops moving to improved barracks at Caerwent. Through our £8.6 billion Future Soldier programme we are expanding the reservist base in Wrexham and HMS Dragon is also now affiliated with the new City.

Our pledge to Veterans

We are proud to have created the United Kingdom's first Office for Veterans Affairs and a dedicated Veterans' Commissioner for Wales, transforming what it feels like to be a Veteran in the United Kingdom.

- » We will maintain the Office for Veterans Affairs and the Veteran' Commissioner for Wales.
- » We will **maintain the base operating budget of the Office for Veterans Affairs at £10 million throughout the next Parliament**. We will retain the National Insurance holiday for those who employ veterans and we will bring forward measures so that War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme awards are not counted as income for the purpose of benefits and pensions.
- » We will **extend the visa fees waiver introduced to cover Commonwealth personnel**, to include their direct dependants. We will fully implement the findings of the independent review into Veterans UK. We will bring forward measures to ensure public bodies record whether someone has served in the UK's Armed Forces.
- » We will **cut the cost of the Veterans Railcard so that it costs the same as the HM Forces Railcard**.
- » We will **pass the UK's first ever Veterans' Bill** to enshrine Veterans' rights in law. Ensuring qualifications from Service are correctly recognised in civilian life, creating a legal duty on government to look after our Veterans and widening the scope of the Armed Forces Covenant in law to include the UK Government and devolved administrations.
- » We will change the law to ensure **Veterans ID cards are valid identification in all future elections**.

Our plan to control immigration and stop illegal immigration

» CLEAR PLAN »
» BOLD ACTION »
» SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES »

» Illegal migration is unfair. It is unfair for people to jump the queue in front of people who play by the rules. It is unfair for taxpayers to pay for the hotels and public services. And it is unfair for illegal migrants themselves who risk their lives in the hands of people smugglers.

The Conservatives are the only party with a plan to stop the boats and reduce the strain that illegal migration places on our communities and public services. Labour have no plan and would grant an amnesty to thousands of illegal migrants.

We have made progress. Last year, small boat arrivals to the UK fell by a third. Our work with international partners prevented more than 26,000 crossings last year. Our Albania deal shows that deterrence works, with numbers down 90%.

But the only way to stop the boats entirely is to remove the incentive to come by making clear that if you come here illegally, you will not be allowed to stay. Only then will the boats stop coming and people stop dying in the Channel.

We will establish a deterrent by establishing a regular rhythm of flights to Rwanda and we will end the merry-go-round of spurious legal challenges by bringing our Illegal Migration Act into force. We will crack down on organised immigration crime, reform asylum rules by working with other countries and return people with no right to be here to their own country. If we are forced to choose between our security and the jurisdiction of a foreign court, including the ECtHR, we will always choose our security. With control of our borders, we can do more to help refugees fleeing persecution.

Delivering sustainable levels of high-skilled migration

Immigration is too high. We want to attract the **brightest and best** skilled migrants to the UK to contribute to our businesses and public services. We must bring migration numbers down to sustainable levels to reduce the impacts on public services and housing and to restore public

confidence in the system.

We have already implemented changes which mean that 300,000 people who were eligible to come the UK last year now couldn't.

Going forward, we will **raise the Skilled Worker threshold and family income requirement with inflation automatically** to make sure they don't undercut UK workers.

We need to control numbers and give the public confidence they will come down significantly. We will **introduce a binding, legal cap on migration**, set on work and family visas, so public services are protected whilst we bring the skills our businesses and the NHS needs.

- » Our cap will be set at a level that explicitly takes into account **the costs and the benefits of migration**.
- » The cap will **fall every year of the next Parliament** and cannot be breached.
- » We will give Parliament an **annual vote on the level of the cap** so that the British people can have confidence that immigration numbers will be controlled.
- » Unlike Labour, we won't allow any form of free movement to return.

We have taken steps to ensure those coming to the UK do not place a burden on the NHS, by requiring them to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge and increasing this to £1,035. We will go further, in line with other countries, by **requiring migrants to undergo a health check** in advance of travel and increasing their Immigration Health Surcharge or requiring them to buy health insurance if they are likely to be a burden on the NHS.

We will increase all visa fees and remove the student discount to the Immigration Health Surcharge to raise more money for public services.

We will continue to attract the **brightest and best students** to study in our world class institutions. We will ensure those who come here are able to integrate into communities and participate in the economy. We want to make sure our immigration system is fair and will continue delivering the **Windrush Compensation Scheme**. We are committed to the EU Settled Status Scheme and the rights it has guaranteed for EU citizens.

Our plan to make our streets safer and deliver justice for victims of crime

» CLEAR PLAN »
» BOLD ACTION »
» SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES »

» The Conservatives will always back our brave police and security services with the powers and resources needed to keep our country safe and we will always work to deliver a justice system that is fair to victims and sees offenders repay their debt to society.

Under the Conservatives, violent crime has fallen by 44% since 2010 and neighbourhood crime is down 48%. Reoffending has fallen from over 30% in 2010 to 25%. We have recruited 20,000 police officers, delivered 6,000 prison places as part of the largest prison expansion since the Victorian era and deported over 18,000 foreign national offenders since 2019 alone. We will:

- ▶ **Give every neighbourhood an additional police officer by recruiting 8,000 more police officers** to patrol communities and catch criminals in every ward in the country. These full time, fully warranted officers will be dedicated to neighbourhood policing.
- ▶ **Back the police**, by giving officers new powers and tools to catch criminals, including technology like facial recognition and powers to seize knives and track down stolen property. We will always back the police in the lawful and professional use of force, alongside a fair and proportionate accountability system.
- ▶ **Restore public trust in policing.** We will license police officers for specialist roles, as we do already for firearms officers. We will legislate to ensure officers are appropriately vetted during their service and those who fail can be sacked.

We will foster greater collaboration between the National Crime Agency and Counter Terrorism Policing.

We will urgently **introduce Martyn’s Law**, in tribute to Martyn Hett, who was tragically killed alongside 21 others in the Manchester Arena terrorist attack in 2017. This will ensure premises are better prepared for terrorist attacks by requiring them to take proportionate steps to mitigate risks.

We will toughen up community sentencing by **increasing the use of community payback and electronic tagging**, so criminals pay their debt to society and communities witness justice being served. We will **fund every police force to roll out Hotspot Policing**, which has cut anti-social behaviour by up to 50% in some areas.

We will keep turning the tide against fraudsters. In the last year we have reduced fraud by 13%, including through our new National Fraud Squad with 400 officers now in post. We will ban SIM farms, which are used to send bulk messages for fraudulent texts, and ban cold calls on financial products so fraudsters cannot dupe people into buying fake investments.

Tackling violence against women and girls

We have made violence against women and girls a strategic policing requirement for the first time, making clear to the police that these crimes are as significant as terrorism, serious and organised crime and child sexual abuse.

We have **strengthened the law to punish predators** with new offences for stalking, controlling or coercive behaviour, non-fatal strangulation and suffocation, sharing of intimate images or ‘revenge porn’, non-consensual taking of images of a woman breastfeeding, ‘up skirting’ and raised the maximum penalties for harassment. We will legislate to create new offences for spiking, the creation of sexualised deepfake images and taking intimate images without consent.

We will support victims of domestic abuse including through our Domestic Abuse Act.

We will toughen sentencing for murders that take place within the context of domestic abuse with new aggravating factors. We will introduce a **25-year prison term for domestic murders**. Those who kill their domestic abusers will not face the same starting point. This will be accompanied by a **review of homicide sentencing**, looking to close loopholes that allow some killers to get off lightly.

We will introduce an **aggravating factor for murders that happen in the context of 'rough sex'**, so it is never used as an excuse to get a lighter sentence.

We will **ensure rape victims get the justice and support they deserve**, with a new investigatory model for rape for police forces and prosecutors and pre-recorded cross-examination for victims in all Crown courts.

We will carefully consider the recommendations of Baroness Bertin's Independent Review of Pornography and ensure we have the right safeguards in place to protect against any harmful impacts of the industry.

A justice system that delivers for victims and the public

We will toughen sentencing for the worst offenders, making **life imprisonment without parole mandatory for more of the most heinous murderers** and require **rapists and other serious sexual offenders to spend the whole of their sentences behind bars**.

We will **toughen sentences for knife crime, grooming gangs and assaults against retail workers** and combat the ability of serious organised crime gangs to use new technology to harm the public. We will prioritise further measures to crack down on hyper-prolific offenders and turn criminals away from the cycle of reoffending, including by delivering our ten-year drugs plan

We will empower judges to **require offenders to attend hearings** or face an increased sentence. We will stand firmly behind the legal

doctrine of joint enterprise meaning that those who assist in crimes, from the getaway driver to the weapon supplier, can be held accountable.

We will **build four new prisons**, completing our programme of 20,000 new prison places by 2030, and **remove more Foreign National Offenders** by increasing removals under the Early Removal Scheme and negotiating more Prisoner Transfer Agreements.

We will **maintain the ban on prisoners voting** from jail.

We will better support victims through measures in our Victims and Prisoners Act.

We will bring the **mandatory reporting provisions** of the Criminal Justice Bill into force as soon as possible. We will design a redress scheme for the victims of child sexual abuse in institutional settings that reflects their needs. We will ensure this includes the victims of grooming gangs and make a national apology to grooming gang victims.

We will ensure sex offenders cannot evade justice or conceal their identity by **restricting sex offenders from changing their names**.

We will continue taking steps to tackling the Covid court backlog and speed up justice for victims, while supporting our world class legal services sector.

We will **expand our Pathfinder Courts pilot in family court** proceedings and continue mediation vouchers to help more families resolve private law child arrangements without an acrimonious court battle. We will help individuals and small businesses bring cases against wealthier opponents with legislation to support third party funding of litigation.

We will ensure that policing and justice remains the responsibility of the UK Government.

A plan to counter extremism and to protect our streets

We have passed tough **new laws to curb disruptive protests**. We will introduce further powers to ban face coverings, pyrotechnics and climbing on war memorials.

We will **strengthen police powers to prevent protests or marches that pose a risk of serious disorder**, by allowing police to take into account the cumulative impact of protests. We will **ban protests outside schools** to stop mobs from intimidating teachers and children. We will always support teachers to uphold and promote fundamental British values and ensure they are protected from accusations of blasphemy.

We will place a **duty on the police and prosecutors** to publish regular guidance on the statements, chants or symbols, for example, the swastika or the term 'jihad', that in the context of political protest may constitute an offence. We will explore ways for the police to recover some of the costs of policing disruptive protests from the groups that organise them.

We will also ensure our **elected representatives get the protection needed** to represent their constituents without fear.

Abuse or discrimination based on religion is unacceptable. **We will not tolerate antisemitic hatred in any form**. We have pledged £54 million for the Community Security Trust to give Jewish schools and synagogues the security measures they need and allocated additional funding to support schools and universities to understand, recognise and tackle antisemitism. We will get the UK Holocaust Memorial built.

We do not tolerate anti-Muslim hatred and will seek to stamp it out wherever it occurs. We have committed to provide £117 million over four years for the Protective Security for Mosques scheme and are proud to support and help fund Tell MAMA's vital work.

Our plan for an affordable and pragmatic transition to net zero

» CLEAR PLAN »
» BOLD ACTION »
» SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES »

» We are proud of our record and remain committed to delivering net zero by 2050.

Today the UK is home to the five largest offshore wind farms in the world. Half of our electricity comes from renewables, compared to just 7% when Labour were last in office. We have reduced emissions further and faster than any of our competitors and the UK is the first major economy to get halfway to net zero. And we have done this while growing our economy by 80%, demonstrating to other countries that there is a positive economic path to tackling climate change.

Delivering energy security

We will boost our energy independence in an increasingly unstable world. We will legislate to ensure **annual licensing rounds for oil and gas production from our own North Sea** to provide energy to homes and businesses across the country and protect high-skilled and well-paid jobs in the industry.

We introduced a windfall tax on oil and gas companies in 2022 to ensure they pay their fair share of tax from extraordinary profits while prices remain abnormally high. We will keep this in place until March 2029, unless prices fall back to normal sooner. In total, this is expected to raise over £26 billion. We will maintain the investment allowances that provide incentives to invest in our North Sea, which Labour have said they would remove.

We will back up renewables and prevent the prospect of blackouts with **new gas power stations** to maintain a safe and reliable energy source for days when the weather doesn't power up renewables. Conservatives know that if we are forced to choose between clean energy and keeping citizens safe and warm, we will choose to keep the lights on.

We are delivering record investment into UK renewables. But we need to go further,

unlocking more investment to secure our energy supply in the future. In the next Parliament we will:

- » **Treble our offshore wind capacity, to deliver low-cost, home-grown energy and support the development of vibrant industrial clusters in places like the North East of England, Scotland and Wales.**
- » **Build the first two carbon capture and storage clusters, based across North Wales and the North West of England and Teesside and the Humber, cutting carbon and creating tens of thousands of jobs in these regions, and progress the second tranche of projects in Aberdeenshire and the Humber.**
- » **Invest £1.1 billion into the Green Industries Growth Accelerator to support British manufacturing capabilities, boost supply chains and ensure our energy transition is made in Britain.**
- » **Scale up nuclear power, building on our work establishing Great British Nuclear. Within the first 100 days of the next Parliament, we will approve two new fleets of Small Modular Reactors to rapidly expand nuclear power, create well-paid, high-skilled jobs and deliver cheaper, cleaner and more secure energy. We will halve the time it takes for new nuclear reactors to be approved.**
- » **Deliver a new gigawatt power plant at Wylfa in North Wales and work with industry to deliver existing projects at Hinkley Point and Sizewell.**

This will help **the UK to become a net exporter of electricity**. And by building more electricity links with neighbouring countries, we can increase exports, make our energy system more efficient and bring additional revenue to the UK. We will ensure offshore cables help reduce the amount of onshore infrastructure, such as substations, that we need to build.

As we achieve this transition to net zero, we will take steps to ensure the technology and infrastructure is made here in the UK. We will provide a bonus, on top of contract payments that support offshore wind, to **reward energy firms that invest in manufacturing in the most disadvantaged places in the UK** or invest in more sustainable supply chains, creating more good jobs as we get more energy from renewables.

We are strong supporters of domestic steel production and have introduced effective safeguards against steel that is heavily subsidised by foreign governments and helped public projects procure more UK-made steel. We agreed a £500 million grant as part of a £1.25 billion commitment by Tata Steel to transform and secure a sustainable future at their Port Talbot works. We will continue working to support production in Scunthorpe and the North East of England, **securing the future of steelmaking across the UK**.

We will **implement a new import carbon pricing mechanism by 2027** to ensure that imports of iron, steel, aluminium, ceramics and cement from countries with a lower or no carbon price will face a comparable carbon price to those goods produced in the UK. This will reduce the risk of industry being displaced to other countries which aren't taking action on climate change.

A pragmatic and proportionate approach to net zero

The UK has led the world on tackling climate change, having cut our emissions more than any other major economy. We will get to net zero on the fairest possible path and in a way that brings people with us.

We will seize the opportunities created by the transition, opening up whole new sectors and creating hundreds of thousands of good jobs in all corners of the country. Our approach leverages the innovation and investment of the private sector to unleash technologies that cut costs for households. This has enabled

us to overachieve on our targets, become a powerhouse in clean technologies, and continue to support households.

We will **cut the cost of tackling climate change for households and business**, and deliver net zero by 2050, by:

- ▶ **Sticking to our pragmatic, proportionate and realistic approach that eases the burdens on working people. Ensuring that families are given time to make changes that affect their lives and never forcing people to rip out their existing boiler and replace it with a heat pump.**
- ▶ **Guaranteeing a vote in the next Parliament on the next stage of our pathway, with adoption of any new target accompanied by proper consideration of the plans and policies required to meet the target, to maintain democratic consent for the big decisions that net zero will mean for our country.**
- ▶ **Ensuring that green levies on household bills are lower. The cost of renewables such as wind and solar has fallen dramatically. We will ensure the annual policy costs and levies on household energy bills are lower in each year of the next Parliament than they were in 2023.**
- ▶ **Reforming the Climate Change Committee, giving it an explicit mandate to consider cost to households and UK energy security in its future climate advice.**
- ▶ **Ruling out creating further green levies, and alongside our commitment not to introduce road pricing schemes, we will also rule out any frequent flyer levy.**

Energy bills are falling, down 63% since the peak. We will take further action to ensure they are low as possible for families, by:

- ▶ **Maintaining our energy price cap**, protecting millions of households from being overcharged by their supplier.
- ▶ **Reviewing and reforming standing charges** to keep them as low as possible.
- ▶ **Delivering our Pumpwatch scheme** that will force petrol retailers to share live information on their prices, helping drivers to get a fair price at the pump.
- ▶ **Introducing more efficient local markets for electricity**, which expert analysis estimates would save £20 - £45 per household per year.
- ▶ Giving households the choice of smart energy tariffs, which can save them £900 a year.
- ▶ Implementing the recommendations of the Winser Review, ensuring networks are able to buy forward with confidence and **cutting waiting times to get a grid connection** to deliver an estimated saving of £15 - £25 per household per year out to 2035.
- ▶ Recognising technological developments over the last decade, we will undertake a rapid review into the advantages of alternative network technologies, compared to overhead pylons. The review will consider moving to a presumption in favour of undergrounding where cost competitive.

Our plan to strengthen communities

» CLEAR PLAN »
» BOLD ACTION »
» SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES »

» Our commitment to levelling up means giving everyone the opportunity to stay local and go far.

Conservatives are committed to delivering stronger communities and safer streets, unleashing the power of the private sector to unlock jobs and opportunity for all and boosting local pride. We have already allocated and will ensure we deliver over £15 billion in dedicated levelling up funding across the UK since 2019 – with more than £2.5 billion coming to Wales. To further strengthen communities, we will:

- » **Provide 105 towns in the UK – including Abertillery, Barry, Cwmbran, Flint, Merthyr Tydfil, Newtown and the City of Wrexham in Wales – with a £20 million endowment fund for local people to change their town’s future.**
- » **Extend our Community Ownership Fund to help more communities across the UK take control of vital community assets like pubs, music venues, libraries, green spaces, leisure centres and more.**
- » **Extend the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for three years at the next Spending Review – investing more than £1 billion in Wales alone – before using this funding to support UK-wide National Service. Both schemes will involve funding community groups focused on increasing life chances, instilling civic pride, and boosting people’s skills.**
- » **Create more Freeports.** Freeports have already generated just under £3 billion in investment, which in turn will create thousands of jobs. We will extend this opportunity to more areas and set out an application round in the next Parliament.
- » **Continue backing Investment Zones across the country, giving areas £160 million to catalyse local growth and investment.**

A plan to support the journeys people make every day

Reliable transport links are critical for thriving local communities. The £36 billion of savings from HS2 will transform local and regional transport, benefitting more people, in more places, more quickly. But we will also take immediate steps to help people now.

Too often over the last few years, local Labour politicians have made the journeys on which people rely harder. We are determined to turn this situation around. Since 2010, the Conservative Government has consistently been on the side of drivers. We have prioritised freezes in Fuel Duty.

Backing drivers

In our first King’s Speech, we will go even further and introduce a **Backing Drivers Bill** that will:

- » **Stop road pricing.** A Conservative Government will not introduce pay per mile road pricing and will ban Mayors and local councils from doing so.
- » **Reverse Labour’s unfair ULEZ expansion in London.** Sadiq Khan’s ULEZ tax rise only has a ‘moderate’ or ‘minor’ effect on pollution. The expansion impacts thousands of people living around London who had no say in his election and can now no longer afford to get to hospital appointments or where they work or study. We will reverse it.
- » **Rule out top-down blanket Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and 20mph zones.** While 20mph zones can help improve road safety in residential areas or outside schools, misuse undermines public trust and risks congestion and pollution. We are clear they must only be considered on a road-by-road basis and with the support of people who live there. We will require **any new**

schemes to be put to a referendum and introduce a ‘right to challenge’ existing Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and 20mph schemes.

We will **expand the Bill to cover Wales**, reversing Labour’s blanket 20mph speed limit by requiring local consent for 20mph zones and giving local communities the legal right to challenge existing zones.

We will also roll out the National Parking Platform this year to simplify paying for parking.

Protecting our heritage and institutions

The Conservative Party will **always protect our national heritage** – including statues,

monuments and memorials. We will work with individuals, businesses, charities and other networks to find opportunities to promote philanthropy. We will complete the review of Gift Aid within the next Parliament.

We will **ensure Royal Mail continues to deliver the universal postal service** in a way which is affordable for customers as well as being efficient and financially sustainable. Saturday deliveries are important, particularly to businesses, which is why we are clear they will not be scrapped.

We have taken exceptional and unprecedented action, legislating to **quash the convictions of those affected by the Post Office Horizon scandal**, one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in our nation’s history. We will ensure the new redress scheme is in place and ready to make payments to claimants by the end of July. We are clear that the Post Office should be a valuable social and economic asset for communities and businesses for years to come. That requires a change of culture at the top to deliver the scale of change needed across the organisation.

We have legislated to require banks and building societies considering closing a branch to consider the needs of all their customers and ensure they continue to have appropriate access to cash in their local community. We have already announced over 100 Banking Hubs which enable customers to access free to use cash and everyday banking services.

We remain steadfast in our support for the **fundamental principles that underpin the UK’s constitutional settlement**. We remain committed to the First Past the Post system for elections, maintaining the direct link with the local voter. We will not change the voting age from 18 in UK-wide elections. We will maintain rules to tackle voting fraud, including the requirement to show ID.

Protecting children online

In the last decade, we have done more to protect children online than any other country.

A new model of modern National Service

We will reinvent **National Service for this century** to give young people valuable life skills and build a stronger national culture. National Service will be compulsory, so it becomes a rite of passage for every 18-year-old, but **young people will be given a choice**, between:

- 1 **civic service.** The equivalent of one weekend a month (25 days a year) volunteering in the community, alongside work or study, for a year. Roles could include special constable, NHS responder or RNLI volunteer; or
- 2 **military service.** A year-long full-time placement in the armed forces or cyber defence. This placement will be competitive and paid, so our armed forces recruit and train the brightest and the best.

We will establish a Royal Commission, the first in a quarter of a century, to design our modernised National Service. It will be backed by funding rising to £2.5 billion in the final year of the Parliament and a new National Service Act.

From next year, our Online Safety Act will make it a legal requirement for social media firms to protect children from illegal or harmful content online. This includes fining social media companies who shirk their responsibilities to keep children safe.

But we need to do more to protect young people and empower parents to make decisions in the best interests of their children.

We will consult on introducing further parental controls over access to social media. We know this is a complex area and we need more effective age verification and parental controls. That's why we will consult widely to get this right, including developing the necessary technology, in partnership with other countries who are considering similar measures. We expect to build on the existing responsibilities set out for social media companies under the Online Safety Act.

Our plan for greater protections around sex and gender

Biological sex is a reality. The overwhelming majority of people in this country recognise that. It is right that we have in place provisions and protections for those whose sense of self does not match their biological sex. However, we will not allow the safety and privacy of women and girls to be undermined.

It has been more than a decade since the Equality Act was passed by a Labour Government. It has not kept pace with evolving interpretations and is not sufficiently clear on when it means sex and when it means gender. The next Conservative Government will **introduce primary legislation to clarify that the protected characteristic of sex in the Equality Act means biological sex.** This will guarantee that single sex services and single sex spaces can be provided, for example in healthcare and sports settings, to ensure women and girls are protected. We are clear that on fundamental matters of personal identity there should be one approach across the country, so we will also legislate so that an

individual can only have one sex in the eyes of the law in the United Kingdom.

We are clear that no one in this country should be harmed or harassed for who they are. That is why we are proud that the UK has one of the world's strongest legislative frameworks to prevent and tackle discrimination and harassment against those with particular protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender reassignment. Attempts at so-called 'conversion therapy' are abhorrent. But legislation around conversion practices is a very complex issue, with existing criminal law already offering robust protections. The challenges involved can be seen, for example, with the SNP re-consulting for views on their proposals in Scotland and Sweden recently concluding that they will not be pursuing a similar ban. In light of the Cass Review Final Report, it is right that we take more time before reaching a final judgement on additional legislation in this area.

Equality of opportunity

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity, not divisive identity politics. We value a society that is inclusive no matter what sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion a person is. **Our United Kingdom is a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-faith success story.** Our Inclusive Britain plan advances opportunity while tackling unfair ethnic disparities across education, employment, health and the justice system. We are seeing some of the most entrenched disparities in our society narrowing, for example in our justice system and our police forces we now have the highest proportion of ethnic minority officers, judges and magistrates since records began.

We are proud of our record on **delivering for LGBT people** and will continue to do so. We passed the Same Sex Marriage Act to give same-sex couples the opportunity to enjoy the institution of marriage.

Our plan to back farmers and fisheries to grow our food security

» CLEAR PLAN »
» BOLD ACTION »
» SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES »

» Our food and farming sectors generate over £120 billion for the UK economy every year. In the last Parliament, we maintained the farming budget to support our food security.

In England, this has supported farmers with a range of options to choose what works best for them, from business advice to new equipment, soil and nutrient management and hedgerow planting. Labour’s actions in Wales show that they will never be on the side of the farming community. Their blueprint involves top-down targets, fundamentally denying farmers the flexibility they need to achieve environmental goals in ways that work for them and making their primary job of keeping the nation fed harder. Conservatives will always be on the side of farmers.

To continue backing our farmers, we will:

- » Increase the UK-wide farming budget by £1 billion over the Parliament, ensuring it rises by inflation in every year.
- » Continue to ringfence agricultural funding so it is passed directly on to farming and rural communities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland alongside a new UK-wide £20 million Farming Innovation Fund.
- » Introduce a legally binding target to enhance our food security. The target will apply UK-wide alongside our UK Food Security Index.
- » Use our significant investment in R&D to prioritise cutting-edge technology in areas such as fertiliser and vertical farming.
- » Stick to our plan to support the agricultural sector with the labour it needs to maintain our food security, while moving away from the reliance on seasonal migrant labour with a five-year visa tapered scheme, alongside clear investment in automation and promoting agri-food careers and skills.

- » Always stand up for farmers when negotiating new trade deals. At the 2023 UK Farm to Fork Summit, an event which we will continue every year, we set out our commitments to ensure UK farming is at the heart of UK trade. We will always look for the right deal for farmers. We will continue to support UK agri-food and drink attachés in our embassies abroad, pioneering new markets and new opportunities for our domestic food and drink industry.

Championing our fishing sector

We have taken back control of our waters post-Brexit and will continue to back our fishing sector. In 2024, we secured quotas worth over £970 million for UK fishermen. We will go further to seek additional opportunities for our inshore fleet in the 2026 negotiations, and ensure inshore voices are better heard by their representative bodies.

We will **replicate the £100 million UK Seafood Fund** to continue to support the sector to thrive. The fund could be used to invest in harbour and fish market upgrades, provide new equipment and technology for fish processing or to support our growing aquaculture sector. We will particularly concentrate funding on small and medium sized businesses and the inshore fishing fleet.

Our plan to support sport and the creative sector

» CLEAR PLAN »
» BOLD ACTION »
» SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES »

» At the core of our national and local identities is culture and sport. We are proud of our investment in grassroots sports across the country, with over £320 million being delivered between 2021 and 2025 to build, renovate and maintain grass pitches and multi-sport facilities.

We will maintain this pace of investment over the next Parliament through the **continuation of the Multi-Sport Grassroots Facilities Programme**. We will look to expand the criteria to ensure more sports benefit from this investment.

We will prioritise equal access for women and girls in our ongoing programme of investment in grassroots sports facilities.

Supporting our world-leading creative industries

We will **ensure our creative sector tax incentives remain competitive** and will ensure creators are properly protected and remunerated for their work, whilst also making the most of the opportunities of AI and its applications for creativity in the future.

The BBC should represent the perspectives of the entire nation with diversity of thought, accuracy and impartiality as its guiding principles. We will carefully consider the findings of the Funding Review ahead of the next Royal Charter and ensure it upholds these principles. We will introduce a new complaints process for the BBC so the BBC does not mark its own homework.

The Conservative Party is a strong defender of freedom of speech and freedom of the press. We oppose state regulation and control of the press, including any attempt to bring forward Leveson 2 or re-open the Royal Charter on self-regulation of the press. We were proud to deliver the Freedom of Speech Act to protect free speech and open debate in our universities.

A Welsh Conservative Government plan to:

1. Save the Welsh NHS
2. Restore aspiration to Welsh schools
3. Kickstart the Welsh economy
4. Put speed, opportunity and aspiration at the heart of house building in Wales
5. Get Wales moving
6. Support the Welsh tourism industry
7. Protect our rural communities
8. Reverse Labour's wrong priorities

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE FOR WALES



In 1997, the people of Wales voted for the creation of a devolved legislature that would ensure that their priorities were put first.

Sadly, 25 years after that historic decision, the people have only ever known Labour Welsh Government, with Wales now a stark warning to the rest of the UK of what Labour in power looks like:

- our Welsh NHS in crisis with the longest waiting lists in the UK, a 50/50 chance of an ambulance arriving on time and targets constantly missed on cancer treatment.
- a forgotten generation of young people being left at the bottom of the UK education league tables.
- nearly 30% of the population economically inactive – the highest in the UK - and the lowest employment in the UK eroding hope, aspiration and opportunity.
- attacks on hardworking people with 20mph speed limits, road charging, the largest increase in council tax and a housing crisis of Labour’s making.
- Increasing the number of politicians in Cardiff Bay instead of more doctors, nurses and teachers in our vital Welsh public services.
- an economy under threat with a nearly £9 billion hit through Labour and Plaid’s 20mph blanket speed limit and a ban on new road building.
- cutting 5,500 jobs from the rural economy, forcing farmers to give up 20% of their land away from food production.

But it doesn’t have to be like this. Whilst on 4 July we will be voting for a UK Government, we can show Labour that Wales has had enough and deserves change from 25 years of Labour.

The Welsh Conservatives have a plan, with bold actions to secure a bright future for Wales.

Our plan will create a Welsh NHS that is resourced, reliable and renowned for all the right reasons.

Our plan will put pupils first and give them the opportunities they deserve to achieve more than they thought possible.

Our plan will kickstart the Welsh economy creating an environment for business to create jobs across Wales.

Our plan will get Wales moving, ending Labour’s war on motorists.

Our plan will support our farmers to deliver the food security that we need in uncertain times.

On Thursday 4 July, send a message to Labour in Wales that enough is enough. They have the wrong priorities, and vote for the Welsh Conservative’s positive plan that puts the people’s priorities first.



Andrew RT Davies MS

Leader of the Welsh Conservatives in the Senedd

Our plan to save the Welsh NHS:

Everyone deserves a Welsh NHS which is reliable and resourced so that it is there when they need it, free at the point of use.

After 25 years of Labour control, the Welsh NHS is renowned for all the wrong reasons; 20,000 people waiting more than two years for treatment, ambulances queuing outside hospitals for hours whilst people are being left in pain on the floor waiting, health boards yo-yoing in and out of special measures driven by not one, not two but three cuts to the health budget by Labour.

Since 2010, Conservative governments in England have invested more in the NHS than at any other point in its history.

Thanks to record funding from the Conservatives in England, they now have more doctors and nurses than ever before, delivering record numbers of GP and hospital appointments. We have a plan to save the Welsh NHS after Labour's abysmal record.

A Welsh Conservative Government would:

- Put into law our Welsh NHS Covenant guaranteeing:**
 - **increased investment in the Welsh NHS, spending the full Barnett Consequential received for health on health**
 - **the Welsh NHS' independence from Welsh Government**
 - **a NHS Reservist Programme helping professionals during periods of high demand**
 - **NHS professionals receive pay as recommended by the NHS Pay Review Body**
 - **the Welsh NHS remains in public hands and free at the point of use**
 - **improved staff well-being and stamping out abuse.**
- **Cut waiting lists by enacting a substantial workforce plan with a tuition fee refund at its heart for those working five years or more in the Welsh NHS.**
- **Ensure the Welsh NHS maximises modern facilities and technology to speed up treatment by completing the roll out of the Welsh NHS app and accelerating investment in new hospitals in Flint, Llandrindod Wells, Newtown, West Wales and finally deliver the North Denbighshire Community Hospital in Rhyl which Labour promised over 10 years ago.**
- **Improve A&E waiting times and ambulance responses with Care Recovery Hubs to free up beds in hospitals for patients who no longer treatment but can't go home.**
- **Reverse the trend of GPs and dentists closing in Wales by reforming contracts to deliver for patients and professionals and rebalancing the Welsh NHS budget back onto community medicine.**
- **Give patients certainty through rapid diagnostic hubs and surgical hubs, while also reducing the pressure of GPs and hospitals.**
- **Ensure parity between mental and physical health by introducing a new Mental Health Act replacing outdated legislation and ensuring the latest thinking is actioned.**
- **Give people dignity and certainty in later life, ending the confusion over social care by creating a cross-party commission to explore the provision and funding of social care in Wales.**
- **End the cycle of health boards languishing in special measures by establishing a new joint Health and Social Care Inspectorate.**
- **Explore adding security and boosting flexibility for the Welsh Air Ambulance service to maximise its coverage across Wales and save lives, by providing additional funding, including to directly**

fund the costs of airbases currently in operation – protecting Welshpool and Caernarfon airbases from closure.

- › Protect young people and maintain standards for medical treatments through implementing the Cass Review, ending the use of puberty blockers for gender dysphoria.

Our plan to restore aspiration to Welsh schools:

We should be giving our young people the best start in life with an education system that enables them to achieve and succeed, provide for their families and own their own home.

Labour has failed our children and created a forgotten generation with the lowest international rankings in the UK.

Our plan for education will give young people the skills they need to thrive, whether that be to go to the best universities, set up their own business, go into a trade – whatever they chose to do, we'll make sure they are prepared.

A Welsh Conservative Government would:

- › **Improve standards in our classrooms by reducing class sizes through recruiting more teachers, refunding tuition fees for teachers who spend five years in teaching in Wales.**
- › **Help kickstart teaching careers in Wales by guaranteeing all newly qualified teachers with one year of employment in a Welsh school or college.**
- › **Tackle violence in schools by backing our teachers.**
- › **Get Wales off the bottom of the UK league tables by restoring targets for reading, writing, numeracy and digital skills.**
- › **Empower parents, pupils, teaching professionals and the wider community by giving schools greater freedom through free schools and academies.**

- › **Open-up more routes for young people to achieve, working with businesses to provide a total of 150,000 apprenticeships over the next Senedd term.**
- › **Boost innovation in Wales, championing the higher education sector in Wales to receive a larger proportion of R&D funding.**
- › **Support people who want to improve their lives with more training, creating a Second Chance Fund for those who have left formal education study up to a level three qualification.**

Our plan to kickstart the Welsh economy:

We have a plan for the Welsh economy that will create an environment that encourages businesses to invest in Wales and the people of Wales ensuring that they can provide for their families and their future.

Only with a strong economy can we invest in our vital public services that people rely on and deliver our plan. However, Labour have made it clear that for the last 25 years they do not know what they're doing on the economy.

Wales currently has the highest business rates in Britain, the lowest level of employment and the highest economic inactivity rate in the UK.

A Welsh Conservative Government would:

- › **Support business to thrive by abolishing business rates for small businesses and reform the outdated tax on growth.**
- › **Enable start-ups to stay local, creating a Local Business Kick Starter Fund enabling councils to directly support start-ups with funding and local mentors.**
- › **Boost home grown Welsh businesses, retaining young entrepreneurial talent in Wales through tapered business rate relief for five years.**
- › **Deliver a one-stop-shop, making it easier for business advice and investment,**

establishing a reformed Development Agency bringing together different organisations providing support.

- › Enable micro businesses to grow with our Jump Start Wales scheme paying employer national insurance contributions for two employees for two years.
- › Provide financial security by guaranteeing no new taxes.
- › Give local people more say over their communities, devolving more powers on economic development to councils.
- › Cut Wales' nearly 30% economic inactivity rate and get people back into work, delivering 30 hours of free childcare a week for children from working families from aged nine months to when they start school.

Fundamental to kickstarting the Welsh economy is ending Labour's housing crisis, getting Wales moving again and backing our tourism sector.

Our plan to put speed, opportunity and aspiration at the heart of house building in Wales:

Everyone in Wales has the right to own their own home. Wales has a housing crisis of Labour's making where barely half the number of homes needed are being built, and more than 20,000 properties are empty, putting additional pressure on the social and rented sectors and depriving young people of the change to move on in life.

We have a plan to speed up planning, create opportunity for housebuilders, put aspiration back into the hands of young people and end Labour's housing crisis in Wales. A Welsh Conservative Government's focus would be increasing the capacity of house building in Wales, looking at the longer-term needs of the

economy, completing 12,000 homes a year.

A Welsh Conservative Government would:

- › Speed up the planning process by creating a joint action taskforce of planners to target the slowest performing Local Planning Authorities, fast tracking applications for affordable housing developments.
- › Bring small developers back to the sector, developing a support scheme to enable SMEs to build homes and prioritising them to build on public owned land.
- › Build the skills necessary to secure the future of planning through establishing a planner apprentice fund for each local authority.
- › Kickstart a house building revolution, conducting surveys on all public authority land to determine suitability for housing.
- › Turn Wales' 20,000 empty properties back into homes, expanding Help to Buy to include those in need of renovation.
- › Reduce social housing waiting lists by empowering local authorities to bring empty homes back into use for social rent and rent-to-buy.
- › Restore aspiration and bring back the Right-to-Buy in Wales.
- › End the creation of ghost towns, ensuring that developers must build appropriate health, education, transport and recreational facilities.

Our plan to get Wales moving:

Only with a reliable, efficient, sustainable transport network which is fully integrated, can we encourage investment in Wales, enable businesses to grow and create jobs. Labour's own figures show that the 20mph blanket speed limit has the potential to hit the Welsh economy by up to £9 billion and despoite

evidence that the M4 Relief Road would have twice the positive impact than it cost, Labour cancelled it.

Hardworking people deserve a transport network which makes it easy for them to get to work, to see friends and family and to explore everything our country has to offer. We have a plan to get Wales moving again.

A Welsh Conservative Government would:

- ▶ **Listen to the people of Wales and remove the economic hit to the Welsh economy, scrapping Labour’s 20mph speed limit, except for outside schools, hospitals, places of worship or areas in conjunction with the local community.**
- ▶ **Support our rural communities and end Labour’s ban on new roads being built by pushing ahead with bypasses for Chepstow, Dinas Powys and Pant/ Llanymynech, along with a third Menai crossing and creating a roundabout at the Pont-y-bat crossroads.**
- ▶ **Boost growth and open up Wales for business with the M4 Relief Road, upgrade the A55, dual the A40 and create passing places along the A470.**
- ▶ **Action our plan for Cardiff Airport with the goal of making it viable and selling it, with direct routes to the USA and bringing back Qatar Airways, ending Labour’s blank cheque for their pet project.**
- ▶ **Encourage people back on to the bus network, making routes viable and reliable with discounts on tickets.**
- ▶ **Continue to improve passenger journeys with the South Wales metro and Crossrail, which has received over half a billion from the UK Conservative Government.**
- ▶ **Enable more people to use local trains through exploring, with the UK Government, ways to maximise the railway**

network in Wales, including options to build new local train stations at St Athan, Towyn, and West Wales Parkway.

- ▶ **Deliver faster and more reliable journeys, working with the UK Government to electrify the North Wales main line.**

Our plan to support the Welsh tourism industry:

The Welsh tourism industry not only showcases Wales to the World but it provides over 150,000 jobs and contributes around £5 billion to the wider Welsh economy. From the North Wales coast, through mountainous Mid Wales, West Wales’ historic buildings and South Wales heritage, along with our capital city, tourism is fundamental to Wales.

During the pandemic the sector was hit hard but instead of helping the industry get back on its feet, Labour want to put people off coming to Wales with their toxic tourism tax. A tax not just for people visiting from outside of Wales but Welsh people holidaying in Wales. We are committed to giving Welsh tourism the respect it deserves and the hand up it needs to create jobs and play its part in boosting the Welsh economy.

A Welsh Conservative Government would:

- ▶ **Encourage people to visit Wales, saving Welsh jobs and scrap Labour’s toxic tourism tax saving the average family £75.**
- ▶ **Widen the positive benefits of tourism and highlighting Wales’ culture through creating a Valleys and a North Wales Visitor Pass.**
- ▶ **Reverse Labour’s damage to smaller, independent accommodation, cutting the 182 day self catering threshold to 105 days.**
- ▶ **Secure a future for Welsh tourism with the establishment of a Tourism and Hospitality Academy.**

- › Save our important national cultural and heritage institutions by ensuring the Welsh Government properly funds them.
- › Showcase Welsh culture, opening up a new tourism offer with a National Poetry Library for Wales.
- › Give Welsh tourism the freedom it needs to grow by making Visit Wales independent of Welsh Government.
- › Open-up opportunities to create jobs through capitalising on Wales' film and tv sector, religious tourism and major events.

Our plan to protect our rural communities:

No one can deny that without our farmers, there would be no food. But it doesn't end there. Without farmers who would protect our countryside for the future, supporting tourism, rural communities and creating jobs.

Farming is the beating heart of our rural communities. No farmers, no communities, no jobs. The Welsh Conservatives get it, but Labour don't. Labour's attack on our agriculture sector has been sustained from Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZ) to the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) which would have cost 5,500 jobs and slashed £200 million from the rural economy.

The Welsh Conservatives were proud to stand with the thousands who attended the farming protest in Cardiff and we will always stand up for our rural communities. We understand that farmers have been the custodians of our countryside for generations, protecting it for the future.

A Welsh Conservative Government would:

- › Return common sense to farming, scrapping the Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs).
- › Listen to our farmers and secure our food security by scrapping Labour's agricultural

land grab and develop a farming scheme that works with farmers to produce food.

- › Reduce carbon emissions and increase high quality food in our schools through enabling more food to be locally sourced for the public sector.
- › Prevent the devastating loss of life of herds and the wider financial impact through using every tool at our disposal to eradicate Bovine TB from Wales and backing a consistent approach to biosecurity across Great Britain.
- › Protect the sector for the future, introducing a National Food Strategy placed in law and supporting a UK-wide food security target.
- › Showcase Wales' high welfare standards through enhance food labelling.
- › Ensure our waters are safe and clean, splitting Natural Resources Wales to be fully focused on enforcement and deliver on annual targets to improve water quality.

Welsh Conservatives will campaign to ensure that commitments in future trade deals that imported food products must comply with the same high standards that Welsh farmers adhere to are honoured.

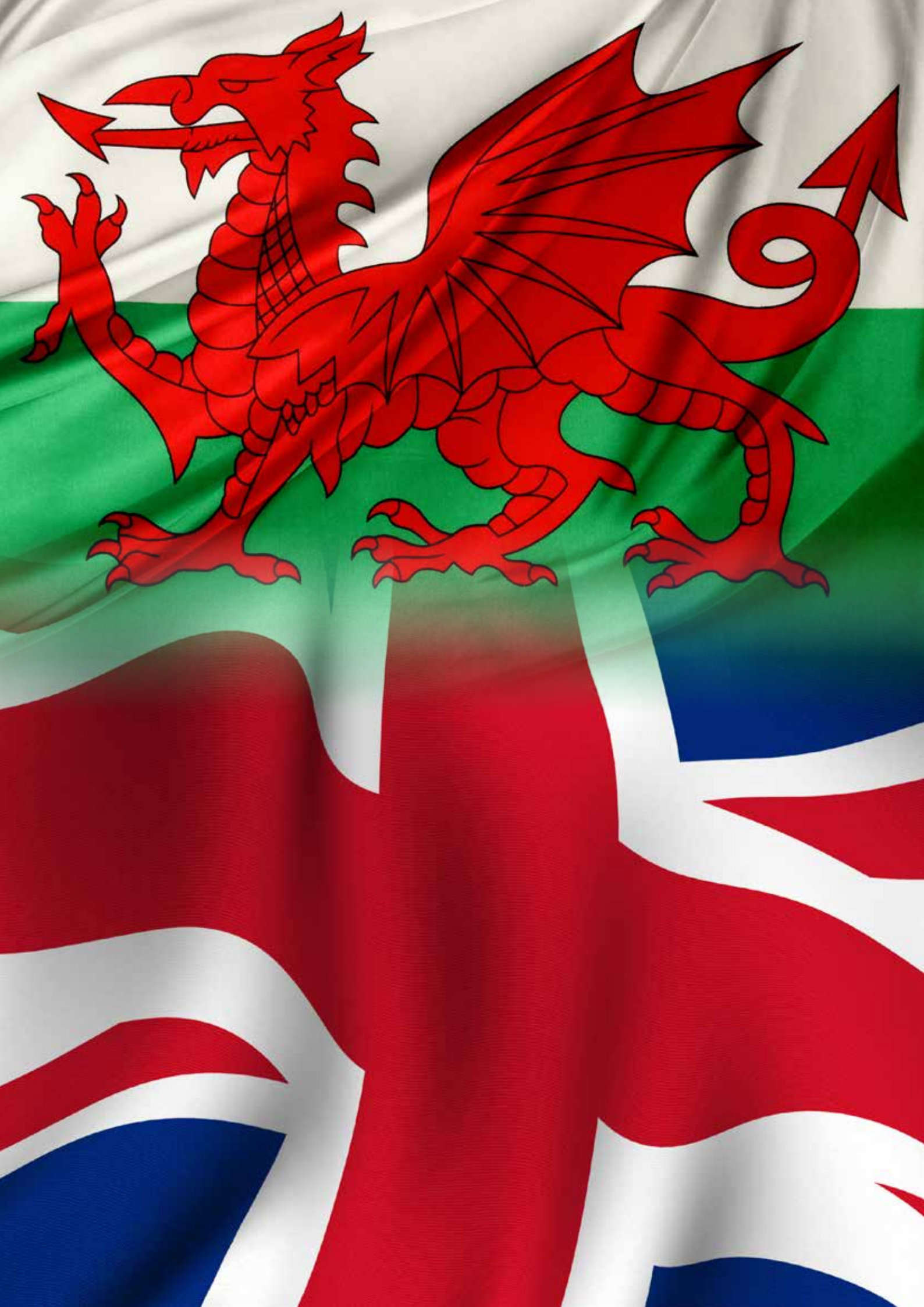
Our plan to reverse Labour's wrong priorities:

Labour is focussing on the wrong priorities and need to put the people's priorities first.

A Welsh Conservative Government would:

- › Maintain steel making in Wales, working with the UK Government – who have invested over £500 million – to help transition steel to a cleaner, securer future, unlike Labour who haven't spent a single penny in the last five years on supporting our steel workers.

- › Give our Welsh NHS the funding it deserves, never cutting the Welsh NHS budget unlike Labour and Plaid.
- › Let people hold their representatives to account by introducing a right of recall for Members of the Senedd who fall below the standards expected of them, which Labour voted against, and repeal Labour's Senedd expansion.
- › Reverse Labour's proposals for gender quotas in politics.





**Welsh
Conservatives**

**Ceidwadwyr
Cymreig**

The Conservative and Unionist Party Welsh Manifesto 2024

Promoted by Thomas James on behalf of the Welsh Conservatives, all at Pro-Copy Business Centre, Parc Ty Glas, Cardiff CF14 5DU.
Printed by Paragon, 1 Hawkley Drive, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, BS32 0GE.