

Welsh Liberal
Democrats
Democratiaid
Rhyddfrydol Cymru



A STRONGER WALES IN A STRONGER UK

Welsh Liberal Democrat Manifesto 2026



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Foreword

Jane Dodds Leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrats

The stakes could not be higher for Wales. After decades of failure from both Labour and the Conservatives, people are clearly ready for change.

But they are also worried. Worried about our NHS being run down or privatised by a Reform-led government, and worried about the damage that Plaid and the Greens' divisive push for independence would do to jobs, investment and Wales' future.



In this election, only the Welsh Liberal Democrats can be trusted to both protect our NHS and stop independence. We are focused on what really matters: making Wales healthier, fairer and more successful: investing smarter in health and education, helping people into work and on to better opportunities, and protecting our environment for future generations.

Wales is a proud nation with huge potential. We believe our best days can still lie ahead – but only if we focus on what really matters to people: health, opportunity and the future of our communities, not endless constitutional arguments.

Every vote for the Welsh Liberal Democrats in May's Senedd elections is a vote to protect our NHS, stop independence and help Wales thrive.

Our Top 5 Priorities for Wales



Protect the NHS

investing in social care, supporting unpaid carers, and ending the crisis in our hospitals.



Stop independence

keeping Wales focused on the issues that matter to people's daily lives.



Help Wales thrive

by reforming business rates and helping people get back into work.



Give every child the best start

with quality, free, universal childcare from nine months, giving every parent real choice.



Clean up our rivers and seas

protecting public health, wildlife and our tourism economy.

A Stronger Wales in a stronger UK



A Stronger Wales in a Stronger UK

We believe that Wales is stronger and better off within the United Kingdom, and the United Kingdom is stronger and better off with Wales in it. The Welsh Government and Welsh taxpayers' money should be focused on delivering for the people of Wales, not on pursuing separation from the rest of the UK.

We will not spend a single penny of Welsh Government money on the independence agenda.

Instead, we will fight for a much fairer deal and stronger voice for Wales within the UK. Welsh Liberal Democrats believe Wales should have much greater control over its own affairs through a federal UK where power is shared fairly across all four nations. We have long been arguing for more powers for the Senedd, and opposing unfair decisions by Conservative and Labour governments in Westminster, such as classifying HS2 and East-West Rail – both to be built entirely in England – as 'England and Wales' projects, denying Wales the extra funding it deserves.

Liberal Democrats across the UK will continue to fight for a fair deal for the people of Wales by:

- Giving the Senedd the power to make St. David's Day a bank holiday.
- Completing the next stage of devolution in Wales by implementing the remaining Silk proposals, substantially reducing the number of powers reserved to Westminster, and increasing borrowing powers and conferring full powers to change income tax rates and thresholds in line with Scotland.
- Devolving responsibility for rail services and infrastructure to Wales, with fair funding and shared governance on cross-border services.

A stronger Wales in a stronger UK cont.

- Creating a distinct legal jurisdiction for Wales to reflect the growing divergence in law as a result of devolution.
- Devolving powers over policing, prisons, youth justice and probation services to allow Wales to create an effective, community-based approach to tackling crime.
- Strengthening the devolution of powers over broadcasting to tackle the lack of trusted sources of information and democratic accountability, which were highlighted during the pandemic.
- Devolving Air Passenger Duty to put Wales on a fair playing field with Scotland and Northern Ireland, and put Cardiff Airport on a fair playing field with regional airports in England.
- Devolving the Welsh Crown Estate to Wales.
- Ensuring that the Barnett floor is set at a level that reflects the need for Wales to be funded fairly.
- Creating a United Kingdom Council of Ministers to bring together the governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland with regional leaders across England.
- Removing the ability for the UK Parliament to unilaterally change the powers of the devolved parliaments or pass laws in their areas of responsibility.

Health and Care

Protect the NHS



Health and Care

Protect the NHS

Good health gives people the freedom to live their lives as they choose. A thriving economy needs a healthy population. Universal high-quality healthcare, free at the point of use and accessible wherever and whenever it's needed, is therefore essential for both individual freedom and national prosperity.

The NHS used to be the envy of the world, but after years of neglect and mismanagement, too many people in Wales can't access the care they need.

Getting a GP appointment can take weeks, and for many an NHS dentist is simply out of reach. People are no longer confident that when they ring 999, an ambulance will turn up in time. Hundreds of thousands are waiting for treatment, unable to work. The frontline workers who were rightly applauded are now overworked and burnt out.

Welsh Liberal Democrats believe that everyone should get the care they need, when they need it, where they need it. Instead of just spending money firefighting crisis after crisis, we will invest now to save money, and lives, in the long run.

Our plan will tackle the crisis at both the front door and the back door to the NHS: investing in public health and early access to community services - including GPs, pharmacists, and dentists - so fewer people need to go to hospital in the first place, and fixing the crisis in social care to stop so many people being stuck in hospital beds. Welsh Liberal Democrats understand that we need to fix social care to save our NHS.

We also understand the need to be honest with voters about the cost of protecting our public services. That's why if Westminster fails to reform Wales' funding formula and fails to tax banks and large social media companies effectively, then the Welsh Liberal Democrats would, for an emergency period, raise the Welsh Rate

Protect the NHS cont.

of Income Tax (WRIT) by 1p in the pound to fund urgent investment in our social care system.

We will:

- End corridor care by investing in up to 5,000 new or refurbished nursing-care placements, built to modern standards and designed around independence, dignity, and person-centred care, which will help hospitals to focus on treating patients and bring down waiting lists.
- Train more GPs and Allied Health Professionals in Wales to end the shortages and give everyone quicker access to local health services.
- Boost cancer survival rates and introduce a guarantee for 100% of patients to start treatment for cancer within 62 days from urgent referral as part of a National Cancer Plan for Wales.
- Guarantee access to an NHS dentist for everyone needing urgent and emergency care, ending DIY dentistry and 'dental deserts'.
- Deliver the world-class mental health services Wales needs, treating mental health with the same importance as physical health. Improving early access to support and addressing the chronic underfunding, in particular, of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- Give people five more healthy years of life through a preventative mid-life health programme for over 40s, catching problems early before they become serious.
- Fix cross-border healthcare and end unacceptable delays for communities along the Wales/England border through

Protect the NHS cont.

shared data, fairer funding and clear accountability between Welsh and English NHS officials, and by making the 'England / Wales Cross-border Healthcare Services Statement and Principles' a legally binding document.

- Improve NHS data collection, ensuring comparable data between health boards to identify inequalities in delivery and inform actions to achieve person-centred, holistic care for everyone.
- Protect and invest in grassroots sport facilities, arts, and culture, recognising their vital role in prevention, community connection, mental health and social well-being.
- Deliver an NHS and social care workforce strategy that has safe staffing at its heart, improving data to inform commissioning of the right education and training places.
- Support national clinical leadership to drive improvements in care that benefit people in all parts of Wales.
- Begin a capital investment programme to repair, replace and upgrade Wales' ailing hospital buildings, including at Cardiff's University Hospital of Wales and Haverfordwest's Withybush Hospital.
- Work to address the rural access to services inequality by continuing the development of rural diagnostic and day surgery hubs, prioritising the delivery of all phases of the North Powys Wellbeing Programme to reduce the need for cross-border healthcare in the Severn Catchment and developing similar business cases where applicable.

Protect the NHS cont.

We will also expand on support for carers and the care sector, by:

- Supporting local authorities to allow a transformation to a strengths-based approach to care delivery with a stronger focus on early intervention and prevention, including action to reduce frailty, lower dementia risk, prevent falls, and tackle social isolation before problems escalate.
- Supporting the foundation of a Royal College of Care Workers, raising professional recognition, standards, and clear routes for progression.
- Showing greater leadership in closing the gap between unpaid carers' rights in Welsh law and reality on the ground to ensure more carers receive the support they are entitled to receive.
- Extending the Regional Integration Fund by a further year to allow time for projects to move to core funding models, and implementing a replacement scheme to support the development of a preventative care approach to the integration of health, social care and the third sector.
- Reviewing the processes in determining the funding balance between residential and Continuing Health Care (CHC), including a balancing fund to enable the initiation of care packages while funding arrangements are finalised between local government and the NHS.
- Creating a new statutory duty on the NHS and local authorities to prepare transition plans for all individuals known to the services who will receive long-term support as a result of their disabilities from the age of 14, so that they have clear funded pathways in place for when they turn 18.

Economy, Business and Jobs

Help Wales thrive



Economy, Business and Jobs **Help Wales thrive**

We believe that everyone deserves the chance to get on in life and see their hard work and aspiration properly rewarded, but that isn't the reality for too many people in Wales today. For too long, Labour and Conservative governments in Cardiff Bay and Westminster have pushed up the cost of living and held back Welsh businesses and entrepreneurs.

People are working hard and playing by the rules, but still struggling with energy bills, food prices and housing costs. The Conservatives crashed the economy. Labour promised change, but has delivered infighting and timidity instead.

Welsh Labour has shown time after time that they do not understand the needs of our small businesses, hospitality, tourism or farming sectors across Wales, leaving our high streets in decline and rural communities without certainty.

Wales needs more than damage control. It needs a modern, fair economy where families can afford a decent life, businesses are incentivised to grow, and Wales builds new partnerships in an uncertain world.

Welsh Liberal Democrats are working with our colleagues across the UK to get the economy growing and end the cost of living crisis by:

- Helping people get back to work and get on in work, with a focus on retraining, cutting NHS waiting lists and helping family carers work.
- Rebuilding Wales' trade with Europe through a new UK-EU Customs Union and putting us on the path back to membership of the Single Market.

Help Wales thrive cont.

- Backing small and growing businesses by prioritising access to capital to enable innovative businesses to scale up and create more jobs.
- Cutting high energy costs for people and industry, investing in cheap renewables, moving existing renewable projects off expensive legacy contracts, and improving energy trading with the EU.
- Introducing a dedicated Welsh Industrial Strategy focused squarely on entrepreneurship, innovation and building on Wales' industrial strengths of high value manufacturing, creative industries, financial technologies and cyber, thereby delivering real benefits for Welsh workers and communities.
- Investing in innovation and incentivising businesses to make the most of new technology, boosting productivity by helping good ideas and tools to spread quickly.
- Supporting Welsh SMEs by revising procurement rules for government funded products and services.
- Ensuring that Growth deals work for whole regions with increased scrutiny and ministerial oversight.
- Empowering our universities to be the drivers of research and innovation for a modern and ambitious Wales.
- Calling on the UK Government to increase Wales' share of UK Research & Development funding.
- Investing in high-quality apprenticeships and training, and deepening the connections between our colleges and universities to support research, innovation, and address skills shortages for 'new' jobs and technologies.
- Expanding degree apprenticeships, including at

Help Wales thrive cont.

postgraduate level, diversifying the subject areas available, and creating more routes into employment.

- Creating regional engineering and technical skills hubs aligned with employer demand.

Save Our High Streets

High streets are the beating hearts of our towns and cities. They are vital to community life and local prosperity, but spiralling costs, unfair business rates and empty shopfronts have pushed many local businesses to the brink, leaving too many of our town centres a shadow of their former selves.

Under Labour, Wales now has the highest business rates in 26 years, higher than anywhere else in the UK. Our high streets have paid the price.

Our communities deserve better. Welsh Liberal Democrats will support local shops, protect jobs, and bring pride back to our town and city centres by:

- Creating a £400 million town centres fund, which will be invested in making our streets cleaner, safer, and greener.
- Permanently extending business rate relief on the retail, leisure, and hospitality sectors, freezing the rates multiplier on struggling businesses, and exploring the introduction of an Online Sales Levy of 2% on large online retailers.
- Regularly reviewing business rate relief thresholds across all sectors to reflect inflation, sectoral needs, and changing economic conditions, whilst developing a long-term reform plan for business taxation in Wales.

Help Wales thrive cont.

- Introducing faster change-of-use approvals for commercial premises.
- Introducing a stronger Community Right to Buy based on the Scottish model.
- Introducing planning rules encouraging town-centre residential development.

Education, Children, and Families

Give every child the best start



Education, Children and Families

Give every child the best start

Education is the greatest investment we can make in our children and in Wales' future, but under Labour, schools have been forced to cut back on teachers, teaching assistants and even the subjects that pupils can study. College staff are at breaking point, and our universities are in crisis.

Every child deserves the best possible start in life, no matter their background, but the lack of access to flexible, affordable childcare and early years education leaves too many behind and entrenches inequality. Families come in all shapes and sizes. Parents should have the support and flexibility to balance work and family life in the way that works for them.

We will invest in education, starting in the crucial early years and continuing throughout adulthood. We want every child to get the support and attention they need at school, so they leave with the skills, confidence and resilience to be happy and successful – whatever they choose to do next.

To give every child the best start in life, we will:

- Guarantee free, high-quality childcare for every child from nine months to four years old: 30 hours a week, 48 weeks a year.
- Develop a career strategy for early years staff - and ensure every setting is equipped to identify and support children with additional learning needs.

Continuing support through schools and colleges, we will:

- Increase school and college funding per pupil above the rate of inflation every year.

Give every child the best start cont.

- Provide free school meals to eligible children throughout the school holidays.
- Create a teacher workforce strategy to tackle the crisis in recruitment and retention.
- End the scandal of crumbling school and college buildings by continuing to invest in new facilities.
- Update the Schools Organisation Code for Councils to provide (individually or in partnership) at least one Welsh medium and one English medium point of education within a 1 hour drive in rural areas and 30 minutes in urban areas by 2035.
- Introduce a Welsh medium transition grant to support local authorities with the additional running costs associated with delivering new Welsh medium provision in areas where there is no current provision, in line with the costs determined by their school funding formula.
- Ensure every child in Wales leaves school confident in both Welsh and English by investing in bilingual teaching resources, requiring every Council to provide access to education in both languages, and promoting Welsh medium education through encouragement and choice, never compulsion.
- Strengthen early intervention by identifying pupils at risk of disengagement from education at age 14 through closer working between schools and Careers Wales.
- Revise intervention rates under the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme so that state schools receive the same rates as church provision.
- Work towards a School Leavers' Guarantee so that every

Give every child the best start cont.

young person leaving secondary education in Wales receives, within three months, a clear offer of further or higher education, a paid apprenticeship or traineeship, paid work with recognised training, or tailored supported employment - ensuring that no one is left without a pathway into learning or work.

Addressing the crisis in our universities cannot be fixed by Wales alone. In Wales, we will:

- Continue to deliver the most generous system of student finance anywhere in the UK for Welsh students, no matter where they study.
- Ensure opportunities for young people to study, teach and volunteer abroad through continued investment in Taith and by returning to the Erasmus Plus programme as an associated country.
- Increase access to university-level education so that all our ambitious young people have the opportunity to thrive.

In Westminster, Liberal Democrats will support Welsh universities and safeguard the future of our world-leading universities, by:

- Reversing the damaging national insurance hike and international student levy.
- Working towards ending pension inequality between pre- and post-1992 institutions.
- Creating a network of regional innovation centres across the UK, ensuring every nation and major region can

Give every child the best start cont.

support university-industry collaboration with state-of-the-art research facilities.

- Reintroducing maintenance grants for those on Student Finance England on top of existing student loans, aiming to cover 35 per cent of undergraduate students, rising to 50 per cent when public finances allow.

Learning should be an opportunity throughout life, whether for the joy of learning and sense of community, to develop skills or retrain for a new career, or to have another chance at qualifications to build confidence and unlock new pathways. We will continue support for life-long learning, working with the Further Education sector, employers, and key stakeholders to develop a vision for post-16 education that works in the best interest of learners and staff, providing flexible and valid qualifications.

Environment

Clean up our rivers and seas



Environment

Clean up our rivers and seas

Protecting Wales' natural environment lies at the heart of who we are. Everyone should be able to enjoy open green spaces, clean rivers and our glorious coastline — and we intend to keep it that way.

Nowhere is the nature crisis more visible than the sewage scandal. Filthy waste being dumped into our rivers, lakes and coastlines by water companies and other polluters, killing wildlife and putting public health at risk. Labour in Westminster and Cardiff Bay have the power to act. They have chosen not to do so.

Welsh Liberal Democrats have a bold plan to restore Wales' natural environment, and give everyone access to a clean and healthy natural world.

We will:

- End the sewage scandal by legislating to ban raw sewage dumping in our waterways, banning bonuses for water bosses until discharges and leaks end, and replacing Ofwat with a tough new Welsh regulator with real powers to prevent sewage dumps.
- Introduce a 'blue corridor' programme for rivers, streams and lakes to ensure clean and healthy water and setting new 'blue flag' standards.
- Set meaningful and binding targets to stop the decline of our natural environment and double nature by 2050.
- Pass a comprehensive Wildlife Act for Wales to clarify and strengthen protections for animals.
- Give Natural Resources Wales the funding and resources it needs to monitor pollution properly and tackle it

Clean up our rivers and seas cont.

effectively.

- Deliver a long-term national strategy for flood and coastal erosion resilience, with a 30-year vision and a catchment-based approach to protecting communities.
- Ensure that nature-based solutions form a critical part of tackling climate change, storing carbon and reducing flooding.
- Provide adequate financial support for woodland planting, habitat creation and SSSIs based on realistic cost assessments and use of low-cost, close-to-nature approaches, and seek to reduce regulation to facilitate natural approaches.

Energy and climate change

Clean jobs and lower energy bills



Energy and Climate Change

Clean jobs and lower energy bills

Climate change is an existential threat. Soaring temperatures leading to wildfires, floods, droughts and rising sea levels are affecting millions of people directly, and billions more through falling food production and rising prices. Urgent action is needed – in Wales, the UK and around the world – to avert catastrophe.

At the same time, sky-high energy bills are hurting families and businesses, fuelling the cost of living crisis. The wars in Ukraine and Iran have reinforced the need to significantly reduce the UK's dependence on fossil fuels and invest in renewables – both to cut energy bills and to deliver energy security.

Welsh Liberal Democrats will take the bold action needed to cut energy bills, create well-paid green jobs and lead Wales to net zero, making sure that no household is left behind in the transition.

We will:

- Make homes warmer and cheaper to heat with a ten-year emergency upgrade programme.
- Invest to make Wales a world-leader in tidal and hydro power - finally delivering the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon after years of broken promises by successive governments.
- Accelerate floating offshore wind in the Celtic Sea thereby attracting turbine and foundation manufacturing to Welsh ports.
- Support pilot projects to determine the potential for the development of green hydrogen.
- Use new technologies to help people use energy more

Clean jobs and lower energy bills cont.

flexibly, at times when it's cheaper – and pay less as a result.

- Oppose any plans to reverse the ban on fracking, which would put our precious Welsh countryside at risk.
- Drive a rooftop solar revolution through new legislation to ensure that solar panels are installed on all new homes and large buildings, as well as car parks and other grey spaces.
- Protect funding for small-scale hydro projects, which Labour have tried to cut multiple times since 2021.
- Press the UK Government to explore zonal electricity pricing, incorporating a separate Welsh zone, to make electricity cheaper in areas with plentiful renewable energy and end the scandal whereby Welsh consumers and businesses subsidise electricity for consumers in London and South East England.

Crime and Policing

Make our communities safer



Crime and Policing

Make our communities safer

Everyone deserves to feel safe in their own homes and communities, but for too many people in Wales, that's simply not the reality today.

Serious violence is destroying too many young lives. Burglaries, fraud and anti-social behaviour blight our communities, and violence against women and girls remains horrifyingly common. Too many crimes go unsolved because our police are overstretched and under-resourced.

Much of the decision making that causes us to be less free, less able to thrive, rests with Westminster, but that won't stop us from fighting to create a more generous, more liberal society where all of us can thrive and flourish.

We will use every power at our disposal to deliver changes - and will lobby for increased powers at every opportunity so that decisions that affect Wales can be made right here in Wales.

Liberal Democrats will prevent crime and build communities where people can truly feel safe, including by:

- Restoring proper community policing, where officers are visible, trusted and focused on preventing and solving crimes – especially rape and other violent crime.
- Devolving powers over policing, prisons, youth justice and probation services to allow Wales to create an effective, community-based approach to tackling crime.
- Opposing any plans to centralise Wales' four police forces into a single national force that is less accountable and less responsive to local needs.
- Ensuring that survivors of violence against women and girls are properly supported throughout the criminal

Make our communities safer cont.

justice process, with mandatory trauma-informed training for police and prosecutors.

- Establishing a commission to determine what education, justice, and Council services can do to create a safer, fairer society for women and girls.
- Improving data on hate crime prevalence to inform services, funding, and strategies to prevent crimes.
- Working with Police and Crime Commissioners to halt the use of facial recognition surveillance by police forces in Wales.

Food and Farming

Back Welsh farming



Food and Farming

Back Welsh farming

Wales' farmers are the best in the world. They are key allies in tackling the climate and nature crisis, caring for and restoring the countryside, while producing high-quality food for our tables.

However, farmers have been failed by a Labour government that clearly doesn't understand rural communities. Meanwhile, they have had to contend with increases in bills for energy, fertilisers and feed. It is hardly surprising that we have seen food shortages in the supermarkets.

The botched Brexit deal has severely damaged farmers' and fishers' ability to export to their main European markets, whilst new trade deals undermine animal welfare standards and undercut responsible Welsh producers.

Welsh Liberal Democrats will stand up for Wales' farmers and ensure that everyone can get affordable, healthy and nutritious food, produced to high welfare and environmental standards.

We will:

- Invest an extra £50 million a year to support profitable, sustainable and nature-friendly farming in Wales.
- Enable an orderly and just adoption of the new farming payments scheme through investment in training and advice, and transition grants for those in need.
- Introduce a National Food Strategy for Wales to ensure food security, tackle food poverty and improve the health and nutrition of every family.
- Champion the formation of young farmers' cooperatives to give the next generation collective bargaining power, shared resources, and better access to markets.

Back Welsh farming cont.

- Establish mentorship and apprenticeship programmes connecting experienced Welsh farmers with young people entering the sector, ensuring traditional knowledge is passed on alongside modern sustainable practices.
- Fight to ensure that all future trade deals meet high health, environmental and animal welfare standards, ensuring that Welsh farmers and food manufacturers are not put at an unfair disadvantage.
- Strengthen animal welfare protections to ensure the highest standards possible.
- Give consumers confidence in the food that they eat with honest, clear food labelling that includes strong protections for Welsh produce.

Housing

Tackle the housing crisis



Housing

Tackle the housing crisis

A home is the foundation of a good life. Welsh Liberal Democrats believe that everyone deserves a safe, warm, affordable place to live, and we will fight to make that a reality across Wales.

However, in Wales today, many people cannot afford to buy or rent a good quality home in the area where they live. Too many people live in housing so poor that it damages their health.

Under Labour, housebuilding targets have been repeatedly missed, affordable and social housing is at a crisis point, and homelessness across Wales remains shamefully high. Rates of planning approvals for new homes in Wales are declining and are way below what is needed to meet demand.

Too many new houses are built as leasehold and leaseholders still face large bills, not least because of the building safety scandal. Local Authorities' powers to build the type of homes needed in their areas are inadequate.

We will:

- Build the homes that Wales needs, including 30,000 social homes, prioritising brownfield land and ensuring new developments strengthen local communities.
- Make homes warmer and cheaper to heat with a ten-year emergency upgrade programme.
- Urgently publish a cross-government plan to end rough sleeping and all forms of homelessness, ensuring access to prevention and advice services, and support multi-year funding for Housing First.
- Ensure that gigabit broadband is available to every home and business, including in rural and remote communities,

Tackle the housing crisis cont.

and support local bespoke solutions so that no property is left out.

- End the scandal of leasehold tenure, ensuring that all new homes are offered as either freehold or commonhold.

Transport

*Make travel safe, convenient
and affordable*



Transport

Make travel safe, convenient and affordable

Everyone in Wales should have convenient, affordable ways to get around, whether to work, school, hospital, or simply to stay connected with family and friends. Good transport is essential to Wales' economic prosperity, to tackling climate change, and to ensuring that no community is left behind.

Thanks to the Welsh Liberal Democrats, everyone in Wales aged under 22 can travel by bus for just £1 per trip or £3 per day, making it easier for young people to get to school, college, university or work.

By investing in electric vehicles and clean public transport, as well as by encouraging walking and cycling, Liberal Democrats will enhance local, regional and national connectivity while boosting the economy, protecting the environment and improving public health.

We will:

- Continue to fight to make the UK Government add rural Wales to its Rural Fuel Duty Relief Scheme, cutting the cost of driving for rural communities.
- Strengthen and extend the existing £1 single and £3 day youth bus fares, ensuring affordable, nationwide access for everyone aged under 25 as part of a wider programme to grow public transport use.
- Tackle the backlog of road repairs, and ensure that the Welsh Government prioritises road and public transport improvements that help to link people to jobs and study.
- Transform how people travel by creating new cycling and walking networks with a new Active Travel Strategy.
- Ensure upgrades to railway services and infrastructure

Make travel safe, convenient and affordable cont.

continue at pace, including by introducing hourly services on the Cambrian Line, electrifying both the North Wales and South Wales mainlines, and further improvements to Heart of Wales line services.

- Devolve Air Passenger Duty to put Wales on a fair playing field with Scotland and Northern Ireland, and put Cardiff Airport on a fair playing field with regional airports in England.

Rights, Equality and Democracy

Freedom, power and dignity for all



Rights, Equality and Democracy

Freedom, power and dignity for all

Every person matters. Liberal Democrats believe that basic rights and dignity are the birthright of every individual, to be respected, cherished and enhanced. Everyone should have equal power in our democracy and be able to hold politicians properly to account.

Liberal Democrats exist to build a free society where every person's rights and liberties are protected. Everyone should be able to live their lives as who they are: free to pursue their dreams and fulfil their potential, safe in the knowledge that their fundamental rights will be protected.

In decades past, Wales and the United Kingdom have led the world in advancing human rights, civil liberties and equality for women, LGBTQ+ people and disabled people. However, in recent years, in too many ways, progress has stalled, and now, both the Reform and Conservative parties are threatening to rip up the UK's Human Rights Act, which protects our fundamental British freedoms.

Liberal Democrats champion the freedom, dignity and well-being of every individual. We will combat all forms of prejudice and discrimination, wherever they exist, including where intersectionality means individuals face particular disadvantages.

We believe that Wales' rich diversity is one of its greatest strengths, and people should be involved in running their communities. We will celebrate that diversity and ensure that it is better reflected throughout public life. We will apply the principles of openness, transparency and accountability to tackle institutional biases, promote equality and hold power to account.

We will:

- Make sure that everyone's vote counts equally, and that

Freedom, power and dignity for all cont.

no politician can take you for granted, with proportional representation by the Single Transferable Vote for all elections in Wales.

- Champion the Human Rights Act and resist any attempts to weaken or repeal it.
- Uphold the UK's commitment to the European Convention on Human Rights and oppose any attempts to withdraw from it.
- Enshrine the rights of children and young people in Wales through Bil Pob Plentyn.
- Make it easier for disabled people to access public life, including the world of work, and incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into Welsh law.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive Race Equality Strategy to address deep inequalities, including in education, health, criminal justice and the economy.
- Recognise the growing risk that religious intolerance poses to community cohesion, and work with communities to tackle the rise of religious hate crimes, including Antisemitism and Islamophobia.
- Respect and defend the rights of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, including access to life-saving medical care.
- Work across nations to establish a consensus for reforming equalities and gender recognition laws to protect trans people's rights.

Welsh Language, Culture and Sport

Celebrate who we are



Welsh Language, Culture and Sport

Celebrate who we are

Our language, culture and sporting life are at the heart of our national identity. They connect our communities, enrich our everyday lives, and showcase Wales to the world with pride and confidence. We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to experience, participate in and contribute to our shared cultural life.

Yet too many people still face barriers to accessing cultural opportunities, learning and using the Welsh language, or taking part in sport. Welsh speaking communities across Wales, and particularly those in our rural heartlands, are under pressure with young people leaving in search of opportunities.

Welsh Liberal Democrats will support the growth of the Welsh language through encouragement and opportunity, invest in our creative industries and local cultural spaces, and ensure that sport and physical activity are accessible to all, whatever your background or where you live.

By celebrating our heritage and investing in our future, we can build a more confident, connected and thriving Wales.

To celebrate who we are and ensure these opportunities are available to everyone, we will:

- Protect and invest in grassroots sports facilities, arts, and culture, recognising their vital role in prevention, community connection, mental health and social well-being.
- Work with local authorities to safeguard swimming pools and leisure centres as vital grassroots community health infrastructure.
- Ensure long-term stability for regional and local rugby

Celebrate who we are cont.

clubs so they can continue supporting some of Wales' most vulnerable and disconnected communities.

- Introduce cultural transport subsidies to enable free travel for schools in rural and deprived areas, ensuring that access to museums and cultural experiences is truly open to all.
- Enable Wales to build stronger cultural and educational partnerships with European countries, including in the arts and creative sectors.
- Pass a Welsh Language Education for All Act, normalising the Welsh language in education including for life-long learning and in post-16 education.
- Support and enable the growth of rural, Welsh-speaking communities through a package of policies and funding.
- Ensure that public services and health and care services are available to all users through the medium of Welsh, by providing improved workforce planning, access to training and funding.

**PROTECT
THE NHS**

**STOP
INDEPENDENCE**

**Welsh Liberal
Democrats**

**Democratiaid
Rhyddfrydol Cymru**

