

The Manifestos of the main parties in the Welsh Assembly Elections 2007 have been scanned using the key words 'Youth' and 'Young People'

Lib Dem

Foreword

A party that looks forward to the future. To a better tomorrow. That believes in giving everyone, especially our young people, the opportunities to reach their potential

Cutting Crime

We can cut crime and make our communities safer and more pleasant places in which to live. We propose commonsense solutions to the problems of crime and anti-social behaviour that can often plague our communities. **We will:**

Seek to devolve powers and funding on policing and prisons, with appropriate transfer of funds, to Wales. In line with our wish for a Welsh Parliament with comparable powers to the Scottish Parliament we would also like to see many more criminal justice issues devolved to Wales, so that we can develop a sentencing and justice system that is responsive to the Welsh context.

Oppose the expensive and illiberal ID cards scheme that already costs almost £100,000 a day. That money should instead be spent on putting more police on the beat in Wales and across Britain.

Ensure funding for an extra 500 police community support officers across Wales when and where communities and the police want them.

Promote community-based policing, including the identification of named officers for each community and the development of part-time community police offices in community halls. We also support a reduction in the burden of paperwork that keeps police officers off patrol, by encouraging greater use of the latest IT systems and communications technology, and by using civilian auxiliary staff in the police station.

Tackle anti-social behaviour through Acceptable Behaviour Contracts agreed between the individual, their family, the police, local authority and housing association, specifying behaviour they will not engage in. A breach of this contract can be used to apply for an anti-social behaviour order on the individual.

Improve the provision of all youth services by putting them on a statutory basis. Local authorities will then be obliged to meet the demand amongst young people for leisure and education-based facilities that can get them off the streets and into constructive engagement with each other and with their communities.

Enable children and young people to participate within community safety partnerships. This would help deal with community based bullying and aggression experienced by children.

Cut down on the inconsiderate, aggressive and dangerous driving that blights many of our communities. We will encourage measures such as confiscation of motor vehicles from persistent joy-riders, promote the use of mobile speed-cameras to enforce speed limits and promote events that raise awareness of the dangers of joy-riding, speeding and drink driving amongst young people.

An Educated Workforce

Promote schemes, run through colleges, schools and business forums which encourage and promote business skills amongst young people. We will introduce all-Wales competitions that recognise, promote and celebrate entrepreneurship and innovation amongst our young people and promote opportunities for businesspeople to go into schools to enthuse pupils about becoming entrepreneurs.

Seek to pilot new business incubators in colleges and universities which can attract and develop people, especially young people, who are not in formal education or training.

Education and life-long learning

A Safe Environment

Develop the national anti-bullying guidance, making it a role for the Assembly Government to give a stronger lead in tackling bullying of children and young people. We will consult on the feasibility of local authorities formally assessing individual schools' anti-bullying measures, helping to ensure that best practice can be rolled-out. **We will encourage greater use of specially trained youth workers to help pupils who have been identified as needing extra targeted behavioural support.**

Develop a national gateway scheme for youth volunteering to promote and co-ordinate opportunities for volunteer, charity and community work by young people across the country.

Crime and Substance Misuse

Support the development of community justice panels to give local people a say in the punishment offenders carry out in their community, putting right the harm caused to victims, property and community, as an alternative to jail for non-violent offenders like shoplifters or petty vandals. Where appropriate we will promote youth conference where families and victims are involved in deciding on what can be done as reparation in the community, alongside an apology and repayment to the victim.

Local Government

We believe that reconnecting local government with the local communities it serves is an essential part of reinvigoration. We want to improve the effectiveness of local government and increase the accountability and engagement of local government with communities. **We will:**

Give local authorities and town and community councils a specific power of promoting community integration and inclusion.

Permit community and town councils to co-opt up to two non-voting representatives from residents of the community aged between 16 and 25. This would enable all councils to increase youth representation, help give young people a direct say in the governance of their communities, and promote civic participation among young people.

Culture, Language and Sport

Encourage closer co-operation between schools so that, for example, primary school children have taster sports sessions at their local secondary schools.

Work to establish an entitlement to a certain amount of out-of hours activity, through our policies to promote youth volunteering and making schools community hubs.

Conservative Party

Welsh Language

The National Eisteddfod and the International Eisteddfod are among the biggest cultural events held anywhere in Europe. And the Urdd Eisteddfod is a wonderful celebration of youth culture.

A good education opens the door to life's opportunities. Good schools don't just teach children how to read, write and add up. A good school inspires young people to learn and follow their interests, and teaches them to be responsible adults. Welsh Conservatives would reverse the current centralised education policies of the Welsh Assembly Government. We would strike a careful balance between local choice, core national standards, and effective spending.

Housing: The Foundation of Community Life

The lack of affordable housing blights many lives. It deprives communities all over Wales because young people are forced to leave their local areas. Not enough homes are being built, and so we face stark divisions between the young – who cannot afford to buy family homes – and older people who bought before the house price boom. A Welsh Conservative government would introduce an Assembly Measure to meet this challenge.

Sport and Leisure

invest in an 'access for all' grant to provide funding for sporting kit and equipment, so that children and young people from low income families can more easily take up sport.

Labour

Eleven for Eleven

1. 25,000 Apprenticeships
2. An extra Children's Bond for all children entering school
3. Maximum 26 weeks NHS waiting times from referral to treatment
4. Pharmacy-based NHS Drop-In Centres
5. 100,000 homes made energy efficient and 30,000 micro generation units
6. New not-for-profit nursing homes
7. Discounted rail travel for pensioners and 50 new train carriages
- 8. £20 million national fund for the youth service**
9. 6500 new affordable homes
10. Tidy Towns - £16 million Clean-Up Fund for Welsh cities, towns and villages
11. Mobile Mamas - extra support for Child Care

Introduction

For Labour, education and lifelong learning has always been the route to greater prosperity and social justice. We are proud of our record of building an education and training system that is made in Wales to meet the needs of Wales. It is thanks to Labour's investment and reform that education achievements have risen, more childcare places have been created, free primary school breakfasts introduced, school councils established and workplace learning expanded. Today, Wales is once more a country famed for its passion for learning. Our commitment is to provide education and training opportunities as good as any in the world.

Excellence, opportunity and social justice are the values on which we will continue to transform our education system in a third term. In order to achieve this we will continue to increase investment in every area of education, lifelong learning and skills and improve standards. Teachers, lecturers, youth workers and other practitioners all play crucial roles in providing ever better education and training. We will continue to support their professional development and expect high quality contributions from them.

Best start in life

We will offer dedicated professional support to young people aged 16 to 19 and not in employment, education and training, to encourage them to re-engage in education, training or in some form of volunteering. We will invest in the appointment of specially trained outreach youth workers to work with young people not in education or training.

Learning for Life

A third term Labour Assembly Government will transform provision for lifelong learning in Wales. We will ensure all adults have the opportunity to learn new skills and gain qualifications, whether in a reformed post-16 sector, work based learning, community and adult education and higher education.

We will invest £20 million in the youth service to give more opportunities for young people and to support the development of our Youth Service Strategy. The youth service has a critical role to play in ensuring that our young people are offered opportunities within their communities to participate in learning and community development.

Tackling anti-social behaviour

We intend a radical improvement of the youth service – a national strategy to ensure local authorities, the voluntary sector and the youth justice service all work better together to provide young

people with the opportunities they deserve. We will take action to ensure that young people and communities can have access to facilities in schools. To make all this happen we will set up a £20 million capital fund to improve local youth services and continue to increase access to school facilities.

At the heart of our approach is a commitment to the three 'R's' of safer communities: rights, responsibilities and respect. Young people deserve the respect of the other generations but in turn young people need to respect one another and the communities they are part of. There is no excuse for anti-social behaviour. However we recognise that more opportunities and services are needed to help young people to be more active, have fun and to develop that culture of respect for each other and other generations.

Improving public services

Labour understands that tackling child poverty is about more than just raising incomes. Our focus will be on raising the aspirations of children from the poorest backgrounds by providing opportunities and experiences normally denied to them. We will therefore boost investment in the youth service and we will help schools to build creative partnerships with musicians, artists and sports clubs to make sure every child in Wales has the opportunity to take part in a rewarding extra curricular activity. Beyond school age we will monitor participation in further and higher education to promote the take-up in those areas where the fewest young people remain in education.

World-class schools

We will develop the curriculum for seven to fourteen year olds so that it is a distinct and coherent part of our education system, building on the approaches started in the Foundation Phase and preparing our young people for the key choices they will need to make before they proceed to their 14 to 19 education and training. In particular, we will ensure that they continue to make progress when they move from primary to secondary school.

We will extend the choice of courses available for 14 – 19 year olds, reforming the school curriculum and providing new vocational learning opportunities. In order to close the gap in education achievement between schools we will expand the targeted RAISE programme so that young people in our most disadvantaged communities can improve their level of qualifications.

We will offer dedicated professional support to young people aged 16 to 19 and not in employment, education and training, to encourage them to re-engage in education, training or in some form of volunteering. We will invest in the appointment of specially trained outreach youth workers to work with young people not in education or training.

We will continue to improve school sport and aim for young people taking part in at least two hours of school sport every week.

Plaid Cymru

Freeing our young people from the burden of debt

The young people of Wales deserve a better chance in life and the security to succeed. One of the biggest barriers they face is student debt.

A Plaid Government will support students who graduate from Welsh Universities and Colleges and work in Wales for five years by paying their student loan repayments during that period. We will continue to rule out top-up fees at Welsh Universities. By doing this we can help create a generation that is forward looking and confident.

Strong foundations

Our children are our future. A Plaid Government will lay strong foundations for our children and young people to succeed in life by implementing innovative and inspiring policies.

Plaid believes that education is a fundamental right. Our children and young people must be equipped with the skills needed to thrive and everyone must have continued access to education and training to enhance their employment prospects and enrich their lives.

Schools are at the heart of our communities, offering opportunities to all. The resources which our school buildings contain should be enhanced and made accessible to the communities they serve.

Educare, in which all care is educational and all education involves caring, will be the foundation of our early years' policy. Through an early years' curriculum which emphasises learning through play, we will encourage and stimulate those social and independent learning and living skills which will lay strong foundations for our children's development.

A Plaid Government will prioritise universal, affordable, and high quality childcare, provided by a range of deliverers, for every family in Wales. High quality childcare has proven educational benefits, giving children an early chance to develop important social and educational skills. Affordable and accessible childcare will provide economic benefits for families by enabling parents who wish to do so to return to the workplace. Universal affordable childcare available from the end of maternity leave will also help close the gender pay gap in Wales.

We believe there is an urgent need to promote good health among children and young people. **A Plaid Government will bring forward a comprehensive action plan to ensure that the children of Wales are healthier and fitter. A minimum provision of one school nurse for every secondary school** and its associated primary schools will lay strong foundations for promoting good health from an early age. A school-based dental service will help address the tooth decay crisis among children and young people. We will pilot the introduction of **free nutritious school meals for primary school children.** This will help pupils to perform better academically and lay the basis for healthy eating habits. Plaid will seek a ban on the advertising of unhealthy food and drink on children's television and encourage schools to get rid of junk food

vending machines. Free fruit at primary schools will help educate children's palates as well as delivering immediate health benefits.

We will encourage greater out-of-classroom learning, countryside and other outdoor activities, and increased walking and cycling to improve children's health and national wellbeing. We will direct more resources towards Physical Education and end the sell-off of school-playing fields and playgrounds. We will also give children free access to council-owned swimming pools.

Rising mental and emotional problems among our children and young people is of grave concern. Wales has insufficient adolescent inpatient beds, leading to children and young people being placed inappropriately on adult wards, at times a considerable distance from home. **A Plaid Government will invest heavily in mental health services, and provide schools, parents and children access to the specialist support they need and deserve.**

Looked after children are entitled to the same life opportunities as their peers. We will work to ensure that every school in Wales has a designated teacher for looked after children, and that a holistic and flexible education framework is in place for them. A Plaid Government will ensure that all looked after children have access to an independent and centrally funded advocacy service providing a reliable voice to speak on their behalf, and will ensure that leaving grants will be standardised across Wales, offering young people the same opportunities wherever they live. We will require Local Authorities to exercise responsibility for looked after children until they are 21 years of age, as well as contributing on their behalf to the Child Trust Fund.

Safer Communities

A Plaid government will aim to make every community in Wales a safer place in which to live. **We will develop a national Safer Communities Strategy, which will seek to break the links between substance misuse and crime and which prioritises rehabilitation.** This will reduce repeat offending and the recycling of offenders through an overcrowded prison system. To help ensure that the strategy can be fully implemented we will seek the devolution of criminal justice services from the UK Home Office to Wales, beginning with the Youth Justice Board to enable us to take action to reduce the number of children in prison.

In consultation with local communities, we will ensure that crime trouble spots are targeted with tactics adapted to local or changing circumstances. Where appropriate we will increase police or community police officer visibility and promote local projects and services which tackle the causes of crime, such as youth facilities and easily accessible detoxification and rehabilitation services. We will seek means of applying the measures contained in the Children Act 2001 instead of anti-social behaviour orders. Over the course of a four-year term a Plaid government will seek to fund up to 500 additional police officers.

Communities will benefit from better amenities for young

people to help counter the attractions of 'hanging around the streets', drugs and alcohol misuse. The new **national citizen's service** will help young people develop a sense of public service and responsibility. This service will also provide a bridge between young and older generations, which will help to reduce fear of crime in the long term. We will work in partnership with the Westminster Government to establish 'turnaround' centres where persistent young offenders will be able to learn a trade and work on community and environmental projects, instilling in them a strong sense of personal responsibility.

Sport

Sport can play a role in making society healthier as well as raising Wales' profile on the international stage. We will make sure that the Sports Council uses its funding to create more sporting opportunities for women and for people with disabilities. We will cooperate with the national bodies responsible for particular sports in Wales to ensure that young people have more opportunities to develop their skills.