



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

New Ambition for Wales

Programme for Government
2026-2030

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Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers



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Foreword

The new Welsh Government has kept its promise to the people of Wales.

In our first 100 days, we hit the ground running, delivering a strong start and taking action on the issues that matter most to those we serve.

Those first months were about laying the foundations for change and demonstrating that government can move at pace when it is focused on the right priorities.

This Programme for Government will build on that progress over the next four years.

Our focus now is on turning early action into lasting results by getting waiting lists down, ensuring a more sustainable future for our NHS, helping families with the cost of living, creating good jobs, raising standards in our schools, tackling child poverty and standing up for our nation.

We were elected to get Wales moving after years of drift and stagnation. That remains our mission.

By building on the momentum of our first 100 days, we will continue to repay the trust people have placed in us and deliver the practical improvements that make a real difference to their lives.

We will be uncompromising in standing up for Wales and demanding fairness from Westminster. This means making the case for empowering the Senedd with the tools that will enable us to be bolder and more radical in how we change our citizens' lives for the better and taking people with us on the next steps on our nation's constitutional journey.

This government will always be a strong voice for our nation, fighting for a fair deal on funding, investment and opportunity, and ensuring Wales is treated as an equal partner without exception.



Where there is common ground, we will work constructively across the Senedd to deliver for the people of Wales.

For too long, silo working has stood in the way of progress. This new government is taking a different approach. By bringing imagination and innovation to the way decisions are made and priorities are set, we will work across government departments – not just within them – to address the greatest challenges facing our society today.

It is incumbent on government to address these long-term challenges, to lay the foundations for a healthy population for decades, to invest in the infrastructure for a thriving economy and to protect our environment for future generations.

Rt Hon Rhun ap Iorwerth MS
First Minister of Wales

Introduction

New Ambition for Wales

This is our blueprint for change to realise our vision of a modern, thriving, ambitious and confident nation. It marks the start of a new chapter for Wales and reflects our vision for a country where its people can expect better outcomes through more effective government and improved public services.

We will concentrate on our key priorities; bringing down waiting lists, supporting families with the cost of living, creating good, well-paid jobs, raising educational standards, tackling child poverty, and in everything we do, we will always stand up for Wales.

There is nothing inevitable about the challenges facing our nation. By taking a new approach to governing, we will tackle the root causes of ill-health, poverty and weak economic growth. These goals will form a common thread across all the work of government – no more silo working, disjointed policy making or sticking-plaster solutions which lead to stagnation or worse, decline. We want to create a nation that is confident in its own identity, its culture and its languages – and the role of these in promoting the wellbeing of our people.

We will build on the first phase of devolution and seize the nation-building opportunities ahead of us. We will stand up for Wales and its people in the face of previous injustices, to make sure we have the funding and the powers we need to improve people's lives in every community. This means pressing the case for Wales to have the same powers as Scotland as a bare minimum, and a fairer funding formula to help us build resilience in our public services.

The challenges we face are complex and interconnected but they are not insurmountable. Building on the strong foundations put in place during the First 100 Days, we will now move to the next phase of building a fairer, greener and more prosperous Wales.

Chapter 1

“In the first 100 days we have begun the shift of resources to primary care services, and to embedding a cross-government approach to prevention.”

Building a health and care service fit for the future, and cutting waiting lists

A healthy population is the basis for a thriving nation and this Government takes seriously the need to rebalance resources towards the prevention of ill health, better access to services and much improved social care. For too long, people in Wales have spent too much time in ill health and services increasingly struggle to keep up with 21st century health conditions and social care demands.

A different future is possible; where preventing ill health is given the same priority as treating illness, where services are designed around people and communities, and where every part of government works together to improve health and wellbeing.

In the first 100 days we have begun the shift of resources to primary care services, and to embedding a cross-government approach to prevention. This will help keep people healthier for longer, reducing future demand on health and care services through co-ordinated actions across all Ministerial portfolios.

This is a long-term goal, and whilst we make this generational change, we will continue to treat people when they need it, by developing a health and care service fit for now and responsive to future changes. Underpinning our approach is a commitment to

the founding principles of NHS Wales: providing high-quality healthcare that is free at the point of need, based on clinical need rather than ability to pay, and maintaining universal access to services, including free NHS Wales prescriptions. Services will increasingly be available in English and Welsh on the basis of choice.

Research and development, innovation and continuous improvement will be fundamental to building a health and care system that is both sustainable and fit for the future. By strengthening collaboration between NHS Wales, social care, universities, industry and communities, we will ensure that services and treatments are informed by the best available evidence and rapidly adopt and scale proven innovations. We will create a culture where frontline staff are empowered to be part of research and can evaluate and innovate; helping to improve outcomes, reduce inequalities, deliver more sustainable services and drive inward investment and economic prosperity.

Further, by strengthening collaboration across health, social care and community services, we will improve transitions between services, support timely discharge when people are ready to leave hospital, and help people remain independent for longer within their own communities. These actions will improve patient flow across the health and care system, reducing delays and ensuring people receive care in the right setting, ultimately bringing an end to corridor care in Wales.

These principles will continue to guide decisions about service design, delivery and investment across the health and care system.

Reducing waiting lists

Reduced waiting times can lead to positive outcomes, such as improved health conditions and easier treatment, improved quality of life, and reduced pain and stress caused by uncertainty.

The impact of waiting lists is not felt evenly across Wales so, by reducing them, we are also tackling inequality. By improving waiting times, we will help people to return to work and activity more quickly, supporting our productivity mission, and reducing the demand for long-term social care.

We will:

Cut waiting times and improve delivery of planned care by transforming and modernising outpatient services, expanding diagnostic and surgical capacity and establishing up to 10 surgical hubs across Wales.



Improving outcomes through person-centred care

Everyone in Wales deserves access to high-quality care that is timely, effective and centred around need. We are committed to improving both health outcomes and people's experiences of care, ensuring services are designed so that people can access the right support, in the right place, at the right time and as close to home as possible. We will work to build on the *Mwy na Geiriau* action plan – so that health and care services are available through the medium of Welsh, including through digital and telehealth services.

We will continue to champion the rights and wellbeing of people with learning disabilities and neurodivergent people, ensuring they are able to access high-quality care, support and opportunities to live independent and fulfilling lives. We recognise the challenges associated with waiting times for neurodevelopmental assessments and will work with partners to identify improvements.

We will continue work to prioritise the prevention of suicide and provide support for those who self-harm through strengthened early intervention. We will empower people to listen and understand, ensuring that everyone can access timely support before

crisis point. This will ensure people receive the right help at the earliest opportunity supported through protected funding. Alongside this, embedding mental health considerations across government policy, decision-making and public service delivery will help create a more joined-up approach to wellbeing. This will improve outcomes and tackle the issues that most impact mental health for those at risk.

Through better use of data, research, innovation and the voices of people with lived experience, we will improve the effectiveness of services, reduce unwarranted variation and create a more connected system that delivers consistently high standards of care across Wales.

We will:

Ensure integrated care is delivered closer to home with prevention at its core, to support earlier diagnosis, reduced admissions and delays in discharge.

Strengthen national clinical pathways for all age groups, with a particular focus on mental health, stroke, diabetes, ophthalmology and cardiovascular care, to ensure safe, equitable and high-quality care across Wales, embedding patients' rights and reducing regional variation. The ambition for NHS Wales will be set out through a National Clinical Services Plan.

Deliver a National Cancer Strategy focused on prevention, earlier diagnosis, research and innovation, equitable access to services and more person-centred cancer care.



Improve health and care outcomes and experiences for women and girls including through a strengthened NHS Wales Women's Health Plan, ensuring women are heard, listened to and actively involved in shaping the services they use and the decisions that affect their care. We will also continue to deliver improved outcomes for women, families and babies through our broader maternity and neonatal care initiatives.

Improve outcomes for people living with dementia through earlier diagnosis, timely access to assessment and treatment including strengthened support and prevention as well as the publication of a Dementia Strategy.

Work to address the key challenges facing palliative and end of life care.

Improve access to mental health support including same-day access pathways and strengthen the no wrong door approach.

Embed an outcomes-focused approach to health and care, using evidence, data and patient experience to shape, deliver and improve services that achieve better health outcomes for the people of Wales.

Improving workforce and system infrastructure sustainability

A sustainable health and care system depends on the people who deliver services and the infrastructure that supports them. Our workforce is our greatest asset, and we will support our health and care professions, equipping them to meet the needs of our population.

People across Wales will benefit from safe, high-quality, and joined-up care from teams that are well supported, appropriately skilled and adaptable as needs change.

We will work with health boards to make NHS Wales a place where people can do their best work, where staff have a meaningful voice in improving services and where workforce decisions are based on a clear understanding of patients' needs, staff experience, quality, affordability and outcomes.

Investment in our workforce, modernisation of our estate, embracing digital transformation and strengthening system-wide planning will ensure that health and care services remain sustainable, responsive and fit for the future.

We will:

Build a sustainable and skilled workforce through the delivery of a long-term workforce strategy which increases the number of GPs by up to 100, improving access to out-of-hours care, reduces pressure on hospitals and Accident & Emergency departments, and supports flexible working and continued professional development.

Improve access to dental services, including exploring options to establish a new dental school in partnership with Aberystwyth University and Bangor University, and ensuring health boards assess local dentistry needs and take reasonable steps to ensure sufficient dental provision for their populations.

Review and, where necessary, strengthen or change organisational and governance structures to improve the effectiveness and accountability of the system.

Develop a Sustainable Health and Care Facilities programme, prioritising high-risk maintenance and urgent repairs, modernisation and more efficient utilisation of the estate.

Implement a 10-year Digital Strategy that promotes innovation and the strategic use of AI and other emerging technologies across NHS Wales, improves health literacy, and strengthens the use of data to enhance patient outcomes, informs decision-making and delivers more effective services.

Strengthening social care

The long-standing division between the health and social care systems is inefficient and unsustainable and does not reflect the real needs of people. We will build a stronger social care system that empowers people to live well, maintain their independence and remain connected to their communities. Through a valued and skilled workforce, support for unpaid carers, a focus on prevention, and closer partnership working, we will deliver high-quality, person-centred care and support that is consistent, sustainable and focused on improving outcomes for people across Wales.

More than 300,000 people provide invaluable care and support to family members and friends across Wales, making an extraordinary contribution to society and the economy, saving our public services billions of pounds each year. Their dedication has a profound impact on the health, wellbeing and quality of life of those they care for. As we continue to support unpaid carers to receive the recognition, support and practical help they deserve, the development of a new National Strategy for Unpaid Carers is underway and will help shape future support for carers.

We are committed to creating a Wales where caring is properly recognised and valued, prevention and community support are prioritised, and unpaid carers receive the services and support they need to manage their caring role. We want unpaid carers to be treated with dignity and respect and not be disadvantaged because of the care they provide.

We will:

Move towards a National Care Service by strengthening social care through a National Service Programme ensuring consistent standards, improved data collection and a better supported workforce.

Ensure seamless transitions between health and social care services to deliver more joined-up, sustainable and person-centred care.



Safeguarding children and adults

Providing children and vulnerable adults with protection throughout their lives is an important responsibility of government and acts as a critical safety net. We will strengthen safeguarding arrangements across Wales so that children and adults at risk receive consistent, effective protection regardless of where they live or which services they access.

Through the Stronger Safeguarding for a Safer Wales programme, we will strengthen national leadership, oversight and accountability, improve learning and continuous improvement, and support more consistent multi-agency safeguarding practice. These reforms will help ensure safeguarding arrangements are better equipped to respond to current and emerging risks while keeping the voices and experiences of children and adults at the centre of decision-making.

We will:

Deliver safeguarding reform that strengthens the protection of children and adults through clearer accountability, stronger leadership and better use of data and intelligence to drive continuous improvement in practice.



Chapter 2

“Throughout this ambitious Programme for Government, we will take action to reduce the financial pressures facing families.”

Helping households with the cost of living

Families and businesses are feeling the financial impact of decisions taken in Westminster and the consequences of destabilising events across the world. Using the limited levers that we currently have, we will take action to mitigate the impact on Wales, by growing our economy and creating the conditions to fulfil our potential. We will also take immediate action to relieve the cost of living pressures that so many citizens are experiencing and provide them with crucial support to help them through this difficult period and beyond.

At a time when many families are facing significant financial pressures, affordable childcare will reduce pressure on household budgets and make an important contribution to tackling child poverty. Our new Childcare Offer will transform access to childcare, helping more families access high-quality provision, improving opportunities for children and supporting parents and carers to fulfil their ambitions.

The benefits extend beyond individual families. Communities and wider society benefit from stable and happy families. Our productivity mission will benefit from the economic return on the investment in parents' skills, training and experience that they will be able to use to full effect in employment or entrepreneurship.

Affordable childcare is a central part of our approach, but it is not the only way we will help ease pressure on household budgets. Throughout this ambitious Programme for Government, we will take action to reduce the financial pressures facing families. Free prescriptions, the continuation of reduced bus fares and free access to museums are just some of the ways we can help with the cost of everyday life.



A new Childcare Offer

Every child deserves the best start in life, and no family should be held back by the cost of childcare. Access to affordable, high-quality childcare unlocks opportunities for parents, children and families, and for our wider community and economy.

Children can play, socialise and learn in professional and nurturing settings. Parents have more opportunities to work, study or increase their hours, benefiting family finances and career ambitions. Meanwhile, communities and wider society benefit from greater participation in the workforce and a stronger economy that makes the most of everyone's skills and talents.

We will:

Deliver a transformative and universal new Childcare Offer for children from the age of 9 months to 4 years, building progressively to 20 hours of funded childcare a week for 48 weeks a year, while maintaining the existing 30-hour offer for eligible 3- and 4-year-olds.

Introduce a single, streamlined application system so families can easily access funded childcare.

Expand Welsh-medium early years provision through our new Childcare Offer.

Work closely with childcare providers to build capacity across the sector and grow the workforce in order to absorb the expansion.



Developing a Welsh welfare system

The social security system provides an essential safety net for people when they need support most. We want a fairer and more compassionate welfare system that reflects the needs and values of Wales and provides effective support for individuals and families.

Our work to pilot *Cynnal*, the Welsh Child Payment, is an early step towards that ambition, demonstrating what could be achieved at full rollout when feasible. We will continue to make the case for Welsh control over social security so that decisions about support can increasingly be made in Wales. As we work towards that goal, we will also help people access the financial support to which they are entitled through the current system.

We will:

Improve the Welsh Benefits System to make support easier to access and fit for purpose.

Press the UK Government to devolve social security so that we can design and deliver made in Wales social protections that better reflect the needs and values of our people and communities.



Housing

Whether renting or paying a mortgage, housing costs have a significant impact on household budgets. A safe and stable home is essential for good quality of life and supporting our ambition for a healthier population.

The quality of housing can also reduce monthly outgoings, as well as bringing environmental benefits. We will relieve some of the pressure on household budgets through our drive to improve housing conditions and security. We will make housing more affordable, reduce vulnerability for renters and ensure that housing costs better reflect local incomes.

We will:

Introduce new measures to strengthen the rights and protections of renters, including fair rents, and we will improve the overall quality of rental properties.

Work towards realising a right to adequate housing in Wales.

Deliver more social housing – at least 20,000 additional social homes by 2030 – and support community-led housing that meets local needs.

Establish Unnos to enable the delivery of more publicly owned, energy efficient homes.

Expand access to retrofitting by adopting a tenure-neutral, area-based approach whilst retaining existing energy efficiency schemes for low-income households.

Focus on the pace of remediation of properties with fire safety defects.



Fair tax

A fair tax system is part of a compact made between government, individuals and businesses. Tax revenue funds the services that we all rely on to live our daily lives and fuel our ambitions for the future.

As a Government we will never take for granted the trust that is placed in us when it comes to making taxing decisions. We are committed to ensuring that revenues are raised fairly and simply, and that taxes from our residents and businesses are carefully spent to deliver for all of us. That principle is never more important than at times like this when we have seen a constant squeeze on family and business incomes.

We will:

Explore ways to make Council Tax fairer.

Use our devolved tax levers to support essential public services, and design our taxes to support our goals, including helping home buying, and reducing waste in landfill.



Chapter 3

“We are committed to generating wealth and retaining it within our communities as well as addressing regional inequalities.”

Unleashing the potential of the Welsh economy, and creating good, well-paid jobs

Our ambitions for Wales rest on a flourishing economy that fuels our public services, creates fulfilling and rewarding jobs, and provides the foundation for a stronger future.

We are committed to generating wealth and retaining it within our communities as well as addressing regional inequalities. Economic growth increases funding, through devolved tax receipts, for the public services we rely on and helps government to invest in long-term actions for the future.

Too often in the past we have seen economic ambitions not matched by actions that support our economy to grow. As a society we all depend on a strong economy. We will draw on international evidence of what works to invest in Welsh based businesses, helping them to grow and prosper. We will use all of the levers available to us to ensure that there is a supporting infrastructure that fosters them, and that our public services work to support a healthy and skilled workforce. In return businesses can help us invest in the services, and economy, of the future.



National productivity mission

Increasing productivity is at the heart of our economic plans – ending generations of low productivity and halving the productivity gap with the rest of the UK within ten years.

An economy with healthy productivity growth creates more value from the skills, time and resources available to it. This helps businesses grow, invest and compete. It helps to create jobs, increase wages and improve living standards. It can also lead to higher levels of innovation, entrepreneurship and business growth which can attract private investment for critical local, national and digital infrastructure.

We will:

Progress our productivity mission which will consider all government activity with reference to driving up productivity.

Establish a new Economic and Fiscal Commission to help us set targets, collect relevant data and measure progress to make government more accountable for its economic decision making.



Backing Welsh businesses

We have many businesses in Wales that already punch above their weight, but we know that our economy is bursting with untapped potential.

Medium-sized businesses (those employing between 50 and 249 people) are the backbone of our communities. We will seek to sustainably grow the numbers of these businesses in Wales. We will create the conditions to unlock the existing potential and build a more sustainable economy that puts money into people's pockets.

We will:

Create a new, business-led National Development Agency, at arms-length from the Welsh Government, to help Welsh businesses to grow, innovate and trade internationally, secure inward investment, and increase numbers of good quality, well-paid and sustainable jobs. The agency will work for people across the nation and across the economy.

Reform the Development Bank of Wales and the financial products it offers to support the growth of medium-sized businesses and ensure that its financing promotes and embeds fair work and a Real Living Wage.



Re-investing in Wales

Welsh public bodies spend more than £11bn every year procuring goods and services.

We want to see as much of this money as possible spent with Welsh businesses, fuelling our communities and transforming regional economies. It is an effective way for us to invest in Welsh businesses, increasing both the competitiveness and sustainability of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and supporting the creation of tens of thousands of well-paid jobs. It can also contribute to our wider goals of fairness and environmental sustainability.



We will:

Aim to increase the level spent on procuring goods and services from Wales-based suppliers towards 70%, using public procurement as a driver of economic growth. We will introduce a new measure of Welsh economic value from public procurement to maximise the economic and social benefits that public spending delivers for Wales.

Develop the supply chain for Welsh timber, using public procurement to stimulate demand, and promote innovation and business growth in the sector, whilst improving resilience and working with the sector to deliver on the Welsh Timber Industrial Strategy.

Adopt a Fair Work First approach to awarding public sector grants, loans and contracts.

Supporting small businesses and high streets to thrive

At the heart of our town centres are successful businesses that make our high streets vibrant places to work and socialise.

Town and city centres must be welcoming, liveable and thriving, and this can only be achieved through a holistic, integrated approach to planning, policy and funding.

We will:

Reform and rebalance business rates to better support high street businesses in hospitality, leisure and retail.

Use the Town Centre Taskforce to explore the options around revitalising our town centres including bringing empty properties into use as social housing.



Building more community wealth

Communities across Wales are taking their economic futures into their hands by establishing social enterprises, community-owned enterprises and co-operatives.

Our ambition is to make it easier for valued local assets to be brought into community ownership.

We will:

Legislate for a community right to buy to empower communities to take ownership of local assets.

Provide more specialist support to create, grow and sustain new co-operative, employee-owned, and social businesses, and improve their access to finance through the Development Bank of Wales.



The skills that Wales needs

An effective skills system depends on a clear understanding of our skills requirements ensuring that education and training opportunities – including apprenticeships – are in line with the needs of Welsh employers and industries and are those which will help us build strong and cohesive communities with effective public services.

With a rapidly changing economy and society, we will be agile enough to adapt quickly to future opportunities and workforce needs. We will be clear with our universities and colleges, the cornerstones of the skills system, on what those needs are. It is also imperative that we have a skills system that is easily accessed by learners, with accessible education and training options to prevent people slipping into economic inactivity or becoming NEET.

We will:

Develop a Skills Strategy for Wales, informed by a national skills audit, to align skills provision, vocational education and qualifications with current and future economic needs. We will support a system that strengthens pathways into education, training and employment, helping people gain the skills, support and opportunities they need to enter, remain and progress in fair, secure and sustainable work.

Take steps to create a financially sustainable tertiary education system that delivers high-quality education, skills and research, supports collaboration across the sector, and secures long-term value from public investment, starting with our independent review of higher education funding.

Work to ensure that young people in Wales can live, study and work in Europe – including by maximising the opportunities for Welsh students that stem from the UK rejoining the Erasmus+ scheme and examining options for the future of the Wales-specific *Taith* programme.

Digital connectivity and transformation

Boosting digital and transport connectivity is key to unleashing the economic potential of Wales, delivering modern and efficient public services, and in turn raising our living standards.

We cannot ignore the opportunities and risks now seen by artificial intelligence (AI) in everyday lives. We must harness the potential of digital and AI innovation, whilst maintaining a clear focus on safe, ethical and cyber secure adoption, and ensuring access to superfast connectivity.

We will:

Deliver a new Digital Strategy which will support digitisation and innovation in the Welsh economy, drive forward public service digital transformation, and deliver the conditions to support safe and ethical adoption of AI to support productivity and more efficient public services.

Continue to work with UK government and telecoms providers to ensure businesses and homes have access to superfast broadband at a minimum.



Transport

We are creating a modern, integrated and inclusive transport system, run for the benefit of passengers not shareholders. Better connectivity within Wales, across the UK and internationally will support our economic ambitions by helping businesses to grow, making it easier for people to access work and promoting equity of access to culture, heritage, and sports provision.

We will review and refresh the Wales Transport Strategy to provide a clear framework for delivery, ensuring our transport system supports economic growth, improves access to opportunity and better connects communities across Wales. The delivery of Transport for Wales’ £14 billion *Today, Tomorrow, Together* vision, which the UK Government has committed to fund, would transform rail services, making it easier for people to access jobs, education and leisure activities.

We will:

- Prioritise the resilience of connections across the Menai Strait through short and medium-term improvements whilst planning for long-term solutions.
- Work with partners to address road resilience in the South-East Wales corridor.
- Promote road safety and ensure that our roads are safely maintained.
- Bring forward a renewed pipeline of short, medium and long-term priority rail projects.
- Create a more integrated public transport network by expanding tap-on, tap-off, pay-as-you-go ticketing, introducing simpler and fairer fares across bus and rail to improve services for passengers and communities across Wales, making travel simpler and more affordable.
- Continue to provide £1 single bus fares and £3 day tickets for children and young people aged 5-21 and retain bus passes for over 60s and disabled people.



Transform bus services through franchising, bringing routes, fares and standards under a single publicly accountable system that puts passengers first. We will enhance links between communities through the new North-South coach service and deliver an integrated network that improves access to services, supports economic growth, and helps reduce carbon emissions.

Deliver a renewed EV strategy for Wales.

Put active travel at the heart of Wales's transport system, making it a practical, safe and inclusive choice for more everyday journeys. We will reduce barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling to support our ill health prevention mission, and promote wellbeing and economic opportunity.

Put children and young people at the heart of a joined-up approach to learner travel, strengthening cross-government working so that public services work together to improve access to education, including by addressing barriers to Welsh-medium education.

Take a strategic approach to secure Cardiff Airport's long-term sustainability and maximise its economic potential.

Work with Welsh ports to strengthen their resilience and maximise their contribution to the Welsh economy, while pursuing full devolution of port regulation.

A stronger, more resilient rural Wales

Farmers, fishers and the food sector are the backbone of the rural economy, supporting the Welsh language and culture, stewarding the rural environment and improving food security.

We are proud of our tradition of producing high-quality food and produce that is enjoyed across Wales and exported around the world, creating jobs and raising Wales' profile globally.

Rural areas face particular challenges, and we will take action to address these barriers so that communities are empowered and businesses are supported. We will support a thriving rural economy as well as supporting communities to flourish and sustaining Cymraeg as a living language in many rural areas.

We will:

Support the agriculture sector in Wales in a way that underpins the long-term sustainability of farm businesses and protects the future of the Welsh family farm in a changing climate. We will evolve and refine the Sustainable Farming Scheme, in strong collaboration with the farming community, so that it supports a thriving agriculture sector to produce food while also progressively delivering key environmental outcomes.

Implement a new approach to managing nutrients across catchments, moving away from the “farming by calendar” approach and supporting farmers to reduce agricultural water pollution.

Introduce a new Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) Plan, taking a holistic approach to eradication that is evidence-based and science-led, incorporating the three pillars of cattle, people and wildlife.

Develop a renewed and science-led Animal Welfare Plan, addressing the welfare of both companion animals and farm animals.

Support a sustainable fishing and aquaculture industry, and the communities that rely on it, as part of the food system and economy.

Deliver a Rural Development Strategy for Wales.

Legislate to require rural proofing of spending plans and policy programmes to ensure they are fully responsive to the needs of rural communities.

Deliver a new comprehensive National Food Strategy.

Examine options for extending permitted development rights for single dwellings and converting farm buildings for residential use to improve access to affordable housing in rural areas.

Towards energy independence

Generating more renewable energy will achieve greater energy security but also underpin our approach to net zero by 2040. We are setting out a long-term plan to provide greater certainty for developers and communities, harnessing emerging green technologies.

We will make sure that Welsh people and communities have more ownership of renewable energy initiatives and that they and their communities receive their fair share of the profits. Our ambition for devolving the Crown Estate is also central to this aim.

We will:

Develop a National Energy Strategy, mapping Wales's current and future energy needs and setting out a clear, long-term plan for the infrastructure required to meet them.

Coordinate action across government and key sectors through delivering a new Renewable Energy Sector Deal.

Merge Trydan Gwyrdd Cymru, Ynni Cymru and the Welsh Government Energy Service to create a strengthened national energy company to grow community ownership.



A more sustainable tourism sector

Wales is a top-quality tourism destination, and we will promote it as such, with a focus on increasing local ownership in the sector.

We will ensure that tourism – and any visitor levies – benefit local communities and we will celebrate and strengthen Wales's unique culture, creativity, heritage and language. This will build on best practice like the *Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy 2035 Strategic Plan*.

We will:

Review the 182-day threshold for holiday accommodation and create clear and reasonable new exemptions where that accommodation would not qualify as a private home.

Work with local authorities to review the effectiveness of existing measures on second homes and holiday lets and assess what further action is needed to help young people remain in their communities and to promote the Welsh language and culture.

Review the role of Visit Wales and consider whether it is the best model for supporting tourism and promoting careers in the industry.



Community-led planning and a “made in Wales” approach to regional development

Planning must reflect and respond to local needs and be grounded in a system that is consistent, clear and efficient in every part of Wales.

An effective planning system underpins our ambitions for Wales, supporting our productivity drive, our vibrant communities and a bright future for the Welsh language. Over time, a patchwork of different regional development initiatives and structures tasked with promoting regional development has emerged.

To ensure that planning supports our vision for Wales, we need a new integrated, logical framework which will provide strategic oversight and vision, turning our ambition into reality.

We will:

Reform the planning system, so it better serves our people, communities and businesses, building a more connected and prosperous Wales.

Overhaul spatial planning and produce a National Development Framework for Wales that provides renewed vision and oversight on an all-Wales basis.

Replace the current fragmented and overlapping approaches to marine management by delivering a Marine Planning Framework, built on genuine co-management with fishers, environmental, community and industry stakeholders.





Chapter 4

“We will create the conditions to ensure that many more young people leave the education system equipped for the next stage in their journey, whether that is education, training or joining the world of work.”

Raising standards in our schools, and ensuring the best conditions for learning

The skills of our people are amongst our most valuable resources. Built up across every stage of life, they support our public services, fuel our economy and contribute to our own quality of life. Building on the foundation of our funded Childcare Offer, our education system provides a springboard for children and young people to gain knowledge, develop the skills they need throughout life and to be part of the thriving economic future we see for Wales.

Regular school attendance and strong skills are linked to better outcomes helping learners reach their potential whilst also tackling inequality in society. A joined-up education system, spanning early years, primary, secondary and tertiary education and training gives young people the best chance of achieving the career they want in the future.



School standards

Raising literacy and numeracy standards is one of the most urgent challenges our education system faces.

The most recent PISA results again show that too many young people are leaving school without these basic skills. We will create the conditions to ensure that many more young people leave the education system equipped for the next stage in their journey, whether that is education, training or joining the world of work.

We will:

Publish a Literacy and Numeracy Plan and raise standards by establishing national targets, including a baseline assessment for learners entering school. We will support our workforce to develop individual targets for all learners.

Review curriculum and assessment arrangements to simplify and clarify expectations for schools and settings. This will include ensuring clear expectations for knowledge and education about our nation's culture and history.



Wellbeing and inclusion in schools

The pandemic has had a lasting impact on our young people, many of whom experienced the impact at key developmental points in their lives. This lasting impact on their ability to engage, if not addressed, will affect their ability to live healthy and prosperous lives.

Persistent absence rates, along with behavioural challenges and poor mental health, have left teachers spending too much time managing the learning environment and not enough time teaching. We will support teachers with a multi-agency holistic approach to behaviour and wellbeing, and share data and best practice locally and nationally.

We will:

Develop a coordinated framework bringing together schools, health and social care, and youth services to address behaviour, attendance, wellbeing and educational inequality. These also reflect wider societal issues, and we will work across government to address them. We will improve professional learning, reporting of incidents and information sharing between schools, and test implementation through our Community Schools Plus pilots.

Strengthen the long-term sustainability of the Additional Learning Needs system. We will work in partnership, including with health partners, to strengthen system clarity, capacity and workforce confidence to deliver inclusive education in Welsh and English, so that children and young people receive the right support at the right time to meet their needs.



Learner pathways

Post compulsory education and training opens opportunities for lifelong skills development and career progression, leading to new career opportunities, higher pay and enhanced wellbeing.

Wales's colleges and universities facilitate a range of pathways from level 1 and 2 vocational options to internationally recognised academia. We will champion these options, ensuring learners have real choice and clear signposting.



We will:

Develop a tertiary education system with clear and coherent learner pathways, supporting lifelong learning and enabling people of all ages to progress confidently between education, training and employment throughout their lives and to reach their full potential.

Reform Academi Seren, building on its strongest elements to support more learners, including from disadvantaged backgrounds, to fulfil their potential and progress into higher education, training or employment including here in Wales.

Strengthen opportunities for young people to fulfil their potential including increasing access to vocational pathways such as junior apprenticeships and ensuring the contribution of youth work is better valued and understood.

Cymraeg in education

Every child in Wales has the right to become a confident Welsh speaker, and to receive their education through the medium of Welsh. Ensuring accessible and inclusive opportunities for all learners will be a central objective at every level of the education system.

We want to make full use of the powers in the Welsh Language and Education Act. By publishing the new National Framework for Welsh Language Education and Learning Welsh, and the Code to describe Welsh language ability, we will ensure that every child in Wales is on the journey to becoming a confident Welsh speaker by the time they leave school.

We will:

Grow the proportion of children and young people receiving Welsh-medium education, and improve accessibility to Welsh-medium education, setting local targets to ensure the steady growth of Welsh-medium provision in all schools.

Increase the number of students able to access tertiary pathways in Welsh, supporting and developing the work of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and working with the Coleg and Medr to increase opportunities to study Welsh as a subject.

Support an increase in the number of teachers able to teach through the medium of Welsh, promoting and developing the Welsh-language skills of practitioners and developing new sabbatical opportunities.



Supporting teachers

We cannot achieve our ambitions for young people without the support of a dedicated and motivated school workforce. Teachers and support staff are the foundation of the education system and are essential partners in delivering the best start for our children.



We will:

Work with our education workforce and social partners to make teaching an attractive, respected and rewarding career.

Improve recruitment and retention by reducing workload, providing more flexibility for planning, preparation and assessment and supporting high-quality professional development for all teachers, leaders and teaching assistants.

Build on our increase of the Initial Teacher Education Priority Subject Incentive from £15,000 to £20,000 to help attract more teachers into shortage subjects and explore opportunities to increase this further.

Strengthen safeguarding leadership and governance across education by ensuring learners and educators can recognise and report grooming. We will provide comprehensive digital safety and media literacy education, and ensure safeguarding and educational standards are consistently upheld and independently scrutinised.



Chapter 5

“A Wales where every child can thrive will be a fairer, healthier and more prosperous nation.”

Tackling child poverty and securing the best future for every child in Wales

Tackling child poverty is a defining mission of this Government. It is both a moral imperative and an investment in Wales's future.

Every child should be able to learn, participate and fulfil their potential, regardless of their family's income. Yet too many children continue to experience the effects of poverty, which can impact health, educational attainment and life chances.

A Wales where every child can thrive will be a fairer, healthier and more prosperous nation. Reducing child poverty can improve life chances, strengthen communities and develop the next generation of workers, thinkers and leaders our country needs.



Breaking the cycle of poverty

Years of flawed strategies and unfocused spending by previous administrations, compounded by austerity policies pursued by Westminster, have left child poverty levels stubbornly high.

We need to create expectations across government and society of the role that housing, health, education and the economy can have in breaking the cycle of poverty. We need to establish mechanisms that make it easier for us to embrace these links.

We will:

Work with partners to develop and deliver a new plan to tackle child poverty, setting clear targets, benchmarks and milestones to drive ambitious, deliverable change.

Press the UK Government to use the levers they have, including removing the benefit cap, increasing Local Housing Allowance, and introducing social tariffs to deliver real change for families living in poverty.



Cynnal – the Welsh Child Payment

We want Wales to be a country where every child can thrive. For too many families, financial pressures can limit those opportunities from the earliest years of a child's life. Direct financial support can help reduce those pressures, improve family wellbeing and contribute to better outcomes for children.

Cynnal will allow us to test the impact a Welsh Child Payment could have on reducing child poverty and improving outcomes for children and families. In piloting this approach, we will build the evidence needed to inform future decisions about how direct financial support can help improve life chances.

We will:

Seek to pilot Cynnal, a Welsh Child Payment, providing a direct weekly payment for young children in families claiming Universal Credit.



Free school meals

No child should miss out on learning because they are hungry. We will build on our record of delivering universal free school meals in primary schools by extending the offer to secondary schools.

Ensuring more young people have a filling and nutritious meal during the school day will promote health and wellbeing, help them concentrate in school and enable them to actively participate in lessons and social activities.

We will:

Expand access to free school meals in secondary schools, starting by ensuring that all students in Years 7-11 from households claiming Universal Credit are able to claim a free school meal, with no income limit. We will align provision with the work on a new National Food Strategy.



A just society

Everyone in Wales should be treated with dignity, be able to fulfil their potential and feel that they belong. A just society benefits everyone, providing equal opportunity, connected and thriving communities, and access to services free from discrimination and prejudice.

Our success as a nation depends on ensuring that everyone can contribute, participate and realise their potential.

We will:

Work across all areas of government to end violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, through a whole-system, prevention-led and society-wide approach.

Support victims and survivors by protecting funding for specialist, survivor-centred services, and by exempting refuges from the Renting Homes Act to ensure access to safe accommodation.

Work with people with lived experience to advance equality, including LGBTQ+ equality, disabled people's rights, gender equality and an anti-racist Wales. We will strengthen delivery and accountability, and report on progress and impact.

Support the UK Government in taking forward a full, trans-inclusive ban on so-called 'conversion therapy', maximising Welsh Government action to tackle these harmful practices and support survivors.

Uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant and work across public services to improve support for veterans and their families.

Take forward proposals to develop human rights-based legislation for Wales.

Work with partners to support sanctuary seekers to participate and integrate into Welsh society, helping them rebuild their lives safely and with dignity.

Chapter 6

“We believe in our people and will take every step possible to unlock their potential and to build a fairer, stronger, more resilient Wales.”

Standing up for Wales and demanding fairness from Westminster

As a Government, we will not apologise for the ambitious vision that we have for Wales. This vision is explicit in every chapter of this Programme for Government. We believe in our people and will take every step possible to unlock their potential and to build a fairer, stronger, more resilient Wales.

We have taken early action to reset the relationship with the UK Government, making the case for Wales to be treated with fairness and respect at every opportunity. We will also continue to work closely with our counterparts in the Scottish Government, in line with the commitments made in the Cardiff Agreement, and the Northern Ireland Executive on areas of common interest.



Demanding fairness from Westminster

Too many decisions affecting the daily lives of our citizens are made by the UK Government.

We will constantly examine the current constitutional settlement and challenge where it fails to meet our ambitions for Wales. We are committed to securing the powers, levers and financial settlements we need to govern effectively and coherently to improve people's lives.

Fair funding

Too often in the past, the UK Government has not delivered Wales's fair share of funding and we will use every possible opportunity to right this wrong.

We will:

Pursue fiscal reform, including fairness in the way Wales is funded, the operation of the Barnett Formula, greater fiscal flexibilities, fair funding of devolved powers, and further responsibilities for the Senedd over taxes in Wales.

Fight for the rail funding we are owed and that we need to invest in Welsh rail – including consequential funding from HS2 – and for rail to be devolved.

Deliver a national programme to secure and restore disused tips, ensuring every tip is properly monitored, maintained, and managed. We will continue to insist that the UK Government funds this work properly and in full.

Establish a Wales-wide strategy on remediating contaminated land to map, prioritise and progressively restore post-industrial land so communities are no longer exposed to derelict sites, toxic soils, and polluted waterways. We will continue to press the UK Government to fund this restoration.

Seek the devolution of air passenger duty.

Explore new and innovative forms of financing.



Powers for a purpose

Further devolution will improve the lives of the people of Wales, arming us with the fiscal and constitutional tools to take our nation forward. Greater control over areas such as transport, justice, policing, natural resources, energy and the Crown Estate will help Wales develop and deliver policies that better meet local needs and circumstances.

Securing additional powers will also allow Wales to take a more integrated approach to challenges that have an impact on people's lives and their experience of public services. For example, decisions about policing, courts, probation and support services can have broader impacts, not only affecting community safety but also health and wellbeing, educational attainment and employment and economic opportunities.

Every citizen should have a voice in the debate on their nation's future. Our central commitment rests on establishing a Commission to take this debate forward, and to make sure that we have the powers to allow Wales to make all the decisions that matter.

We will:

Establish a new National Commission for Wales to provide independent advice to the Welsh Government on Wales's constitutional future, building on the work of the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales. The Commission will support an inclusive and informed national conversation, build the evidence base for debate and decision-making, and provide advice on devolution priorities and wider constitutional reform.

Formally request the devolution of the right to decide on the timeline, question, and process for an independence referendum.

Pursue the full devolution of justice and policing to Wales with the urgency this deserves.

Formally request the full devolution of power over water in Wales.

Work to secure devolution of powers for the Senedd to legislate to establish a new economic regulator and planning body for Wales, so all decisions about water are made in Wales for Wales.

Prioritise securing the devolution of the Crown Estate.

Work towards the devolution of powers over broadcasting, including powers to regulate, supervise, and ensure accountability for broadcasting and communications in Wales. We will begin by establishing a Shadow Broadcasting and Communications Authority for Wales to protect and strengthen local and national public service media platforms.

Pursue the full devolution of welfare powers.

Pursue the devolution of further powers on energy regulation and pricing.

Pursue full devolution of port regulation.

Strengthening Wales through culture, heritage and sport

Culture, our creative industries, heritage, sports and Cymraeg shape who we are as a nation.

We recognise their unique power to unlock Wales's economic potential, sustain vibrant and cohesive communities and promote the wellbeing of our people.

With a new strategic vision, the right investment, and strong leadership for Welsh culture and sports, we will strengthen Wales's position as a cultural powerhouse, rooted in the diversity of our unique Welsh identity.

We will prioritise equality of access for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities and drive national outcomes including improved public health, economic growth and community cohesion. We will harness cultural and sporting opportunities to promote the daily use of the Welsh language.

We will build firm foundations through increased participation, improved grassroots facilities, strengthened national institutions and increased international impact as a creative and confident nation. We will strengthen our cultural and sporting infrastructure and support a skilled workforce, building a sustainable and diverse sector for the future.

We will:

Work with the sector including our creative industries to create and deliver a targeted Culture and Sport Strategy for a healthier, wealthier and more resilient Wales.

Prioritise equality of access to the arts, culture, heritage and sport for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, considering how our entry policies can support this.



Wales in the world

With a rich heritage, thriving culture and huge untapped potential, we believe in Wales's ability to assert its place in the world.

Our commitment to a Climate and Nature Plan demonstrates how seriously we take our global responsibilities and our commitment to building strong international relationships with countries that share our values.

This international outlook will be captured in all our commitments where we will look to learn from best practice throughout the world. A key strength in taking this forward will be the sheer number of Welsh people that are spread across the world.

We will:

Bring forward a European Strategy which will include our determination to align with world-leading European standards in environmental protection, public health and food.

Evolve and progress a comprehensive bilateral cooperation framework with Ireland to strengthen cultural and trading ties.

Develop and implement a comprehensive Diaspora Strategy to promote Wales as a place for diaspora entrepreneurs to invest, and encourage and incentivise recent emigrants to return.

Hosting international events – both domestically grown ones and opportunities to be part of global events – allows us to showcase Wales and what we have to offer.

We will:

Provide strategic and long-term support to national governing bodies to attract and host international events in Wales.

Deliver a lasting legacy as hosts of the Tour de France 2027 and Euro 2028 men's football events.



Building a better Wales

We will only be able to stand up for Wales and fulfil our international obligations if we are a strong and confident nation. We will support all of our communities to aspire and to create a framework in which all of our public agencies work together to meet common objectives.

To reflect the Well-being of Future Generations Act, we are committed as a government to remove the boundaries between different policy areas which too often in the past have stopped us working seamlessly in the interests of Wales.

We will:

Build a coherent and effective Welsh public service that is open, cooperative, and focused on improving people’s lives.

Progress plans for a Welsh National School of Government.

Renew the relationship between the Welsh Government and local authorities, ensuring that they are full partners in the design and delivery of public services.

Establish a national approach to coordinate crime prevention and diversion across police forces, NHS Wales, local authorities, schools, and third-sector partners – sharing best practice and addressing the root causes of crime.

Maintain Welsh Government support for Police Community Support Officers within the context of negotiations on devolution of policing.

Bring forward a Welsh Tribunals Bill early in the Senedd term, to create a clearer, more coherent and more independent tribunals system – with modernised procedures, stronger accountability, and a sharper focus on improving the experience of service users.

Review the Well-being of Future Generations Act and collaborate with the Future Generations Commissioner to ensure it delivers measurable change.



Chapter 7

**“Cymraeg is one of Wales’s
greatest strengths.
Rooted in our history
and central to our
future, it enriches our
communities, culture
and public life.”**

Delivering our priorities

This is an ambitious and far-reaching Programme for Government which sets a clear agenda for the whole of government and our partners for the coming four years. We know that taking traditional approaches to government is not going to achieve the scale of change that we want.

We are committed to using all of the levers of government to support our goal of improving the lives of people in Wales.



Governing effectively

We are taking a new approach to governing to realise our ambitions for Wales. Good intentions and strategies are not enough to deliver meaningful outcomes. They need to be matched with action. Building on our interactive digital dashboards, we will continue to develop a set of outcomes which will measure the impact that we are having and to help ensure that these commitments deliver changes for the people of Wales.

We also recognise that many of the challenges that we face are deep rooted and stubborn. It is only when all Ministers work together that we can be confident that we will deliver our priorities and find solutions to complex issues that have scarred our communities for too long. Our work has to be developed and delivered across government.

All of our work will be shaped by this ethos and considering how each area of spend can contribute to our wider objectives will be a core consideration. However, there are some areas where we recognise that we need to do more to join up. We will therefore take a dedicated and structured cross-government approach in a number of areas to make quick progress on key actions.



Climate and nature emergency

It has long been recognised that reducing carbon emissions and adapting to a changing climate are objectives that will shape the work of all departments, and require us to change how we deliver programmes in many areas.

We will strengthen climate resilience and tackle pollution and ensure that working towards our climate and nature ambitions delivers healthier communities, stronger rural and coastal economies and greater resilience for future generations.

We recognise the inter-connectedness of action on housing, preventative health, energy infrastructure, food and farming along with the impact of a changing climate and the human cost of flooding, heat and pollution.



We will:

Ensure climate action and nature are prioritised and effectively coordinated across government, embedding decarbonisation, sustainability and environmental protection across all portfolios.

Take bold action to improve air quality, reduce waste and tackle pollution by keeping materials in use for longer, and ensuring the polluter pays as we transition to a circular economy.

Apply a whole-system, catchment-based approach to improve water quality and strengthen climate and nature resilience in Wales. Our ambition is for every water body in Wales to be on a clear trajectory towards good status. Working in partnership across sectors, we will accelerate delivery of nature-based solutions that reduce pollution and build resilience to future environmental pressures.

Develop and implement a cross-government Climate and Nature Action Plan for Wales, supported by a Climate and Nature Board. The Plan will strengthen climate and nature resilience, enhance environmental sustainability, support a just transition and identify practical action towards a pathway to net zero by 2040. As part of the plan, we will set ambitious targets to achieve substantive nature recovery by 2050.

Establish a strong and independent Office for Environmental Governance Wales to hold public authorities to account for delivering environmental targets.

Cymraeg: a language for everyone

Cymraeg is one of Wales's greatest strengths. Rooted in our history and central to our future, it enriches our communities, culture and public life. Our commitment to a thriving language underpins everything that we do, and promoting and embedding it is the responsibility of every Minister.

We want Welsh to be a language that belongs to us all, with opportunities for people to learn it, use it and live their lives through it – and so do the people of Wales. This is central to how we will deliver services in Wales, with services available in English and Welsh. Supporting a thriving Welsh language will help drive prosperity, empower communities, foster a sense of belonging and ensure Cymraeg continues to flourish for future generations.

We will:

Publish and implement a new strategy for Cymraeg with a renewed focus on increasing the number of speakers to a million and more by 2050, doubling the daily use of the language, and ensuring that the language belongs to us all in Wales.

Work to strengthen the resilience of Cymraeg as a community language and in workplaces, implementing the recommendations of the Commission for Welsh-speaking communities, and work towards designating areas of higher linguistic sensitivity and protecting Welsh place names.

Work towards extending Welsh Language Standards to UK Government bodies and to services operating in Wales, and ensure that Cymraeg is at the heart of all public policy, including health, housing, planning, transport, education, culture and the economy.



Prevention of ill health

Good health is a prerequisite for a happy, long and active life. It unlocks our ability to reach our potential and to play an active part in our communities, education and in the economy. Equally, creating a healthier environment and delivering effective services – such as housing, education and culture – can shape behaviours and improve our overall health. The greatest opportunity lies in preventing disease before it starts or progresses, and in narrowing the wide gaps in health outcomes within communities.

We are taking collaborative and targeted action across government to create a healthier population and tackle root causes of ill health and health inequalities. Improvements in population health are fundamental to achieving our ambitions for economic renewal, the best start in life for children, learning outcomes, equality, climate transition, strong public services and national resilience.

We will promote a healthier environment that supports healthier choices and transforms life chances for people of all ages. This includes supporting children to have the best start in life and improving physical and mental health and wellbeing for everyone.

Drawing on all the levers of government, we will work towards increasing healthy life expectancy across Wales through action at both national and local levels.

Through our National Food Strategy, we will build a healthier, fairer and more sustainable food system that supports Welsh producers, strengthens food security and ensures everyone can access nutritious, affordable food wherever they live.

Better access to our culture and heritage, and opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity are crucial and will be reflected in our Culture and Sport Strategy and Climate and Nature plan.

Our commitments for the transport system recognise the importance of active travel to making exercise an easy daily choice. All of these actions will improve the health of the nation, reducing economic inactivity, enabling more people to work and contributing to our national productivity mission.

We will:

Improve public health and wellbeing at population level by developing a new, comprehensive Public Health Strategy and Framework for Wales, based on a root and branch review of current and future public health needs.

Embed health prevention in all policy development across government ensuring strategic alignment of government action on the social determinants of health and wellbeing.

Harness expertise and plans to minimise the impact of communicable diseases with a focus on elimination targets by 2030 for tuberculosis and blood-borne viruses including HIV.

Make the renewal of Welsh housing stock a national mission, along with reforms to ensure greater security for renters and increased availability of social housing. Safe and adequate housing is an essential bedrock of health.

Embed a Housing First, trauma-informed and person-centred approach to tackling homelessness, ensuring our new homelessness legislation is implemented effectively and kept under review. Our Housing and Regeneration Strategy will be rooted in the ambition that everyone should have a safe and secure home.

Invest in the preventative role of culture, heritage and sports to promote good health for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

Deliver a national School Swimming and Water Safety programme, giving every pupil in Wales a foundation for an active, healthy life, building their confidence, and keeping children safe around water.

This new approach to healthy living places as much emphasis on preventing avoidable illnesses as it does on treating illness when it occurs. This is about putting the tools for healthy living within reach of people, and delivering services in a way which help to make people's lives healthier.

We outline a number of actions that we will take, but we know that in order to meet our ambitions we will need to do more. This is an ambition that stretches across Ministerial responsibilities, and where we need to work differently to devise programmes that can make a difference. To support work on this and help us to work differently, we will convene a cross-government ministerial working group. This will ensure that actions in Housing, Culture and Sport, Transport and Education are all contributing to the prevention of ill-health and the eradication of social determinants of poor health and shorter healthy life expectancy. We will report on that work to the Senedd.

Productivity

We have identified closing the productivity gap with the UK as the thing that will unlock Wales's potential and drive economic growth. This is an agenda that is about supporting businesses directly, but is also about ensuring that there is the right infrastructure around them to help them scale up. We know that this is about the transport links, the planning system, the skills of people as well as the way that a range of government policy can make it easier, or more difficult, for businesses to operate.

Establishing a new National Development Agency will be key to our productivity mission, but we also want to ensure that all departments play their part in creating the conditions for success. Our national productivity mission is a galvanising force across government, recognising that decisions taken across all departments will have an impact on our local and national productivity. As we develop policy and deliver actions in this Programme, we will continue to consider how they can support this mission.



Legislation

Our programme of primary and secondary legislation plays an important part in delivering this agenda. Legislation is not always the best way of delivering our objectives, but there are areas where putting something on a statutory footing will help us to deliver and embed the changes we are committed to making. We will legislate where needed to improve outcomes for the people of Wales, but we will also consider non-legislative solutions through policy and partnership working where this can be effective.

Across the whole of the term of this government, we will bring forward legislation to deliver our agenda. The First Minister has already announced the first phase of this Government's legislative programme for the Seventh Senedd, including housing, community ownership and rural proofing, important first steps in delivering this Programme for Government.

We will regularly update the Senedd on our legislative proposals, and on subsequent phases of our legislative programme, as we work through the detail of delivering the commitments set out in this Programme. Our preference will always be for the Senedd to pass legislation that shapes people's lives in Wales. However, there will be occasions when UK legislation is the most practical and effective approach, and we will work with the UK Government on this. This reflects the constitutional principle that the UK Parliament only legislates in these areas with the Senedd's agreement.



Governing responsibly

This Programme for Government sets out the steps that we will take to drive change across all of the communities in Wales.

Governing Wales is not just about a change agenda; it is also about making sure that there is constancy in the delivery of high-quality public services.

We are clear about how we can make these better, but we are also committed to maintaining effective and efficient services that people depend on in their day-to-day lives.

Governing is also about keeping Wales safe, and this is a responsibility that we take seriously. That means making sure we have services that people can rely on in emergencies, such as wildfires. It is also about making sure that we are prepared for all eventualities and undertake the necessary emergency preparedness and resilience arrangements, working with the police, fire and rescue services and other partners to take action in the event of emergency. We are also committed to learning lessons from our response to incidents – most importantly we are committed to ensuring we learn the lessons from Covid.

As our climate changes, we know adverse weather events will become more common and building flood resilient communities in particular becomes more pressing. Whilst we cannot prevent all flooding, we will need to support communities and business to prepare to mitigate the economic, social and mental health impacts of flooding when it happens.

We will:

Work with our newly created Flood Forum for Wales to bring together local authorities, Natural Resources Wales, emergency services, and community organisations to coordinate national strategy on flooding.

Partnership working

There are many organisations and people across Wales who share our objectives and who can help us deliver our agenda. Arm's length bodies and government agencies are important delivery agents, and we will give them a clear mandate and work collaboratively to achieve better outcomes for the people of Wales.

We recognise the important role that the voluntary sector plays in delivering public services, along with our schools, colleges, universities, health services and the wider public sector. We are committed to ensuring efficiency, good value for money, sharing of best practice and enhanced productivity across the whole public and third sectors.

Local government are a key partner in many of our endeavours – delivering effective education, providing social care and helping us to expand funded childcare. We will build effective partnerships so that we can deliver our shared objectives together.

We will:

Renew the Strategic Partnership Agreement between the Welsh Government and local authorities, ensuring they are involved in the design and delivery of public services and we will support effective regional collaboration.

Review the funding formula for local government to better reflect the real cost of delivering services in different parts of Wales and introduce a funding floor to ensure that no local authority is disproportionately impacted.

Partnership working in Wales is made easier by the Well-being of Future Generations Act which gives public bodies a framework to help them drive action that contributes to the wellbeing goals.

We have brought our Programme for Government and wellbeing objectives together into a single framework for action. The priorities set out in this document are also our wellbeing objectives. They reflect the priorities on which we were elected, the long-term outcomes we want to achieve for Wales, and our commitment to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of current and future generations.

The commitments in this Programme for Government represent the reasonable steps we will take to achieve these objectives. Together, they provide a clear line between our long-term ambitions for Wales and the practical action we will take to deliver them. Delivery of our commitments will be accompanied by impact assessment. This mechanism, which requires meaningful involvement, is an essential part of building a comprehensive and balanced case for policy options or legislative proposals and covers a wide range of areas including equality, Welsh language, children's rights and environmental impact.

This Programme is intended to cover the entire period of the Government. However, we will carry out a mid-term review. This will allow flexibility for the Government to respond to unforeseen policy shifts, economic or geopolitical shocks in a conscious and considered way.

Our accompanying Well-being Statement explains how these objectives contribute to the seven wellbeing goals, how they have been developed in accordance with the sustainable development principle, how we will work with others in delivering them, and how progress will be monitored and reported throughout this Senedd term.

Our wellbeing objectives are:

Building a health and care service fit for the future, and cutting waiting lists	Raising standards in our schools, and ensuring the best conditions for learning	Better government – delivering our priorities
Helping households with the cost of living	Tackling child poverty and securing the best future for every child in Wales	
Unleashing the potential of the Welsh economy, and creating good well-paid jobs	Standing up for Wales and demanding fairness from Westminster	

