

Policies for a Sustainable Society in Wales

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Introduction

Wales is a quite distinct part of the United Kingdom. It has its own national rugby and football teams, it has a very old language and with it, its traditions and culture. It has devolved powers. These powers are likely to grow over the years.

The Green Party of England and Wales has always supported subsidiarity, the notion that decisions are made at the 'lowest' level of government suited to a particular policy area. Wales Green Party is more than a regional branch of England and Wales Green Party; it represents the nation of Wales. It is therefore apt that it has its own set of policies, created specifically with Welsh needs in mind and democratically supported by the Wales Green Party membership who are able to update and amend them at conferences.

The document before you, Policies for a Sustainable Society in Wales (PfSSiW) in many instances replicates the Policies for a Sustainable Society (PfSS) in England and Wales, in other instances it is more specifically honed to take Welsh conditions into consideration. The policy headings reflect the devolved matters. PfSSiW is not a manifesto for a particular election; each specific election will have a manifesto that is detailed and tailored to it.

The PfSSiW authors wish to make it clear that this document is aspirational. We understand that there are for instance many exemptions to the devolved powers. Where we wish for certain policies to be in place, it will be for us to argue that more power be devolved to Wales in order for us to achieve our aims. And our aims are clear and ambitious: we wish for Wales to be a clean, green country with a thriving modern economy, an education and transport system that the people of Wales can be truly proud of, a country that can be loved by its citizens and its many visitors for its unique beauty and heritage.

Green policies are not easily packaged into tidy categories. It is advisable that you read this document in its entirety to understand the way Greens think. Where needed, links have been noted, in yellow highlights to another part within this document, in red highlights to the PfSS of England and Wales. There are a number of hyperlinks so the reader can find out more information on the internet.

We hope you will find this document thought provoking and stimulating.

Wales Green Party Council 2015

Philosophical Basis

PB100 The Philosophical Basis of the Green Party of England & Wales sets down the aims and beliefs of the party, and is the basis on which all its policies are founded. All members should read this remarkable and inspiring document, which can be found at: policy.greenparty.org.uk/philosophical-basis.html.

PB101 It outlines a radical Green agenda to achieve the changes in both values and lifestyles, as well as social, economic and political structures, that are required to create a fair and sustainable society, based on cooperation and democracy rather than inequality and exploitation.

PB102 It advocates:

- diversity in the human and natural environment, where human activities contribute to, rather than destroy, the richness of life;
- social change based on real democracy, equality (zero discrimination whether based on race, colour, sex, religion, national origin, social origin or any other prejudice), human rights and freedom;
- valuing real wealth – natural resources, clean air, rainfall, our abundant sources of renewable energy and the planet's biodiversity. Wealth should be shared so everyone has a guarantee of economic security;
- conservation – recognising limits to growth; promoting land management combining sustainable human development with safeguarding biodiversity; prioritising technologies that promote reuse and recycling; ensuring the built environment maximises resource conservation and energy efficiency;
- empowerment – participatory and democratic politics with accountable leadership that are consensus-driven and moral;
- property – common goods accountably managed by community stakeholders;
- work – access to creative, rewarding work as a fundamental human right;
- strategy – work for change with the wider green movement through a variety of means including non-violent direct action.

PB103 Our policies are interlinked; they are holistic. For example, Green transport policy includes measures to reduce private car use and increase funding for public transport. This impacts on health policy, with a reduction in exhaust pollution that contributes to thousands of deaths a year and less traffic noise that affects stress and sleep quality, as well as a safer road environment leading to more people cycling and walking. This, in turn, means more people getting regular exercise, and so becoming less likely to be overweight and depressed, leading to a reduction in numerous associated healthcare problems, which will mean less stress on the NHS. A reduction in private car use also reduces carbon emissions, tackling the major concern of climate change, and offering further positive spin-offs like helping to wean the world off fossil fuels. It's a typical Green win-win situation where changes to dramatically cut emissions also materially benefit the quality of life for the majority of people.

PB104 Green Politics is fundamentally different from other political ideologies because it is concerned with the relations between people and planet, as well as between people and people. Given the enormity of the planetary crisis, the effect of human activity on the planet should be the central political question today. However, in times of recession (or forced austerity), people's attention is more focused on their immediate problems. Fortunately, we have real, workable solutions. We just need to get out there and convince people that there is a positive way ahead.

Sustainable Development

PB200 Sustainable development means learning how to live within the Earth's finite resources whilst preserving and enriching the fabric of our society. This in turn means sharing these limited resources fairly.

PB201 Our actions should take account of the well-being of others and of future generations. We should not pursue our well-being to the detriment of theirs. Every living creature is not just shaped by the environment, but owes its very existence to it. Humans, and the civilisations we make, are no exception.

PB202 Respect for the environment and the diversity it harbours is therefore essential. Greens do not believe that other species are expendable. As we harm the environment, so we harm ourselves. The Earth's physical resources are finite. We threaten our future if we try to live beyond those means.

PB203 The predicament that the natural world finds itself in has been brought sharply into focus by scientists in North America confirming that the Sixth Extinction, named the Anthropocene or 'age of man', has begun (June 2015).

PB204 It is absolutely vital that we address this issue with extreme urgency. It has taken millions of years to create a delicate interconnected web of life on the planet which mankind itself relies upon for its own survival. By allowing the decimation of our environment we are threatening our own existence as a species.

Ecology and Economy

PB300 All human economic activity and social and cultural wellbeing are dependent upon the integrity of self-sustaining, self-managing natural systems. Continually increasing resource extraction, industrial throughput and waste production is entirely incompatible with ecological sustainability. Green economic policy must therefore promote the emergence of an economic system which recognises the limits of, and is compatible with, both the natural systems of the planet and the aspirations of the whole of humanity.

PB301 We recognise the value that natural systems bring to the human economy, for instance flood prevention through uplands forests. We will take these ecosystem services into account when evaluating the financial validity of projects.

PB302 To achieve global ecological sustainability, with equity and social justice, the industrialised countries must actively reduce the physical burden they place on the planet and must, by example, encourage and support the less industrialised countries in adopting appropriate development strategies.

We believe that new indicators need to be adopted for measuring economic activity. We would replace GDP (grossly distorted picture!) with accurate measures of social and environmental health and quality of life.

PB303 We will facilitate the move towards the redistribution of paid time, resulting in a shorter paid working week and allowing more time for unpaid activities such as being parents, carers, and neighbours.

Social Justice

PB400 We believe in a society characterised by social justice and wellbeing for all. By sustainable social justice we mean the fair and equitable distribution of environmental, social and economic resources between people, places and generations.

PB401 Only when released from immediate poverty can individuals be expected to take responsibility for wider issues.

PB402 A healthy society is founded on co-operation and based on respect for those of a different gender, race, sexuality, age or religion. It is a society without prejudice.

Radical Democracy

PB500 Politics is too often conducted in a polarised, confrontational atmosphere and in a situation remote from those that it affects. It gives too much responsibility to a few, and too little to the many. We must develop decentralised, participative systems that encourage individuals to control the decisions, which affect their own lives and localities.

PB501 We believe that our current First Past The Post electoral system is a major contributor to the lack of engagement with democratic activity. We appreciate that the voting system for the National Assembly for Wales is more representative. We will argue for further changes to make the electoral system more proportionate at each level of government and hence make each vote count as equal.

Democracy and Levels of Administration

Introduction

DEM100 All decision-making and action throughout all levels of government, including international government, shall be governed by the principle of subsidiarity: namely that nothing should be done centrally if it can be done equally well, or better, locally.

DEM101 All the major political decisions which affect our lives should ideally be made with our active participation, which requires open and informed debate rather than simply voting without discussion. This requires that all economic and social activity should be carried out on a human scale; that is, in a way that allows individuals and groups access to, and influence over, such decisions.

DEM102 Given the scale of human activity in the world today, and the indirect impact that much of this activity has on people living in different areas, it is clear that not all decisions can be made locally. The best form of democracy for large-scale activity is voting, in elections and referenda, in such a way that the outcome reflects the pattern of voting and no vote is wasted. Delegated authority and trust must be accompanied by full accountability.

Vision

DEM200: The Wales Green Party believes that independence should be a long term aspiration for Wales.

DEM201: We believe that further devolution should work to complement this aspiration and be should be implemented in order to best serve the people of Wales, not at the convenience of a Westminster Government.

DEM202: The Wales Green Party believes that additional tax-raising powers should be devolved to the National Assembly for Wales, in line with the recommendations of the Silk Commission.

DEM203: The Welsh Government should devolve powers to the Welsh Local Authorities to allow greater local decision-making power.

DEM204: We recognise that there are a number of bodies that make decisions about our lives in Wales that are currently not accountable to the people, such as Health Boards, the Wales Green Party would undertake work to make these bodies more accountable.

DEM 206:

he Additional Member System for the National Assembly for Wales elections should be retained and modified. The Wales Green Party believes that regional list votes should be distributed using the Sainte-Laguë method rather than the D'Hondt method. We believe that The Wales Green Party should not, at this time, campaign for an 80 member National Assembly for Wales nor support any expansion of the existing 60 member Assembly. We support the following democratic improvements:-

a) scrapping the existing regional divisions and taking the Proportional Representation list over the whole of Wales, and

b) creating a minimum 4% threshold for representation"

Welsh Government and Local Authorities

DEM300 We see local authorities as custodians of local democracy, being the primary agents for building strong and resilient communities. For example, we would expect the Welsh Government to set out the principles of education but leave the detail of implementation to local authorities, for example school size.

DEM301 We will act to strengthen the role and responsibilities of Town and Community Councils. They can have greater responsibility in planning decisions. Town and Community Councils can be set up where they do not already exist. Similarly, there is the potential for the establishment of town/community meetings, empowered where appropriate to take decisions.

DEM302 Access to the Councils' records and information should be made more open. Also, the creation of special community forums to oversee the work of particular departments and committees may increase involvement. Where elected, therefore, Green Councillors will try to persuade their local authorities to write such provisions into their own standing orders.

Welsh Government and Westminster

DEM400 We will push for the replacement of the formula that is used to determine the amount of money the UK government allocates to Wales, with one that is based on need rather than population.

DEM401 We will argue for more powers to be given to the Welsh Government where and when we find that our policies in any area are difficult to implement without such extra powers.

Welsh Government and the World

DM402 We would support and continue the important work that Wales does to support International Development, in particular the unique and special relationships that have been built up by Hub Cymru Africa and the Wales Africa links.

Agriculture and Countryside Matters

Background

AGR100 The rural areas of Wales extend to more than 1.6million ha with agricultural land making up 87% of the total land area of Wales. Just under a third of the population (some 903,000 people) live in these rural areas. Many people experience the same social and economic pressures recognised among urban populations. These include poverty, homelessness, unemployment, and inadequate social and medical provision, poor access to services, alienation and prejudice.

AGR101 These rural areas, which we collectively know as the Countryside, also represent the habitats for the greater proportion of wildlife in Wales. Habitats and their plant and animal communities are under great stress from the demands of the total human population and from climate change and other environmental impacts. Some habitats and the biodiversity they support are globally rare or unique to the British Islands and are recognised as being at risk - we have international obligations to conserve them.

AGR102 In developing our policies for the countryside, we recognise the conflicting interests behind the pressures faced by both the human and nonhuman populations. By doing so we seek to protect and enhance quality of life, not only for rural communities, but also for urban populations that rely on the many services provided by the countryside. These include the supply of food, water and natural resources and for a wide range of recreational pursuits ranging from the casual to highly organised events that are enhanced by or depend on their rural setting.

AGR103 Failure to reconcile the many conflicting demands found within the countryside risks drift of population to urban areas, leading to strain on urban facilities and weakening of countryside communities. In addition, these demands may lead to an ecological collapse that would have major consequences for the economy and wellbeing of people in Wales and beyond.

Vision

AGR200 Wales Green Party recognises that meeting the varied needs of rural and urban communities may require different approaches that are nevertheless harmonised so that the interests of one community do not dominate another and that experiences gained are shared for mutual benefit.

AGR201 The countryside is a living ecosystem that is essential for the survival of human communities both rural and urban. It has an innate value that cannot be assessed in solely monetary terms.

AGR202 We believe that we all have an obligation to live within the natural limits of our environment and to adopt lifestyles that will not irrevocably damage the environment for future generations.

Long Term Aims

AGR300 The objective of our countryside policy is to create self-reliant communities that retain the fruits of local investment and activity and preserve the conditions where people can live in ways

which care for habitats and wildlife and allow them to fulfil spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual and physical needs.

Short Term Aims

AGR400 We will seek to integrate environmental, social and economic objectives in all areas of countryside and rural policy, with the overall aims to:

- Revitalise the economy and life of rural communities;
- Legislate to reform land tenure and access to land;
- Legislate to stop further destruction or degradation of wildlife habitats, the soil, the landscape, ancient monuments and our countryside heritage including measures to safeguard bio-security and local provenance;
- Enact policies that will make the whole countryside more hospitable to wildlife, entailing increased protection for wildlife and habitats and delivery of meaningful landscape-scale conservation and restoration;
- Increase the area and quality of woods, orchards, agroforestry, hedges and other tree cover;
- Enact policies to support food security, integrating human health and wellbeing, environmental protection, animal welfare and decent livelihoods for farmers, farm workers and growers;
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and develop appropriate renewable energy especially at local and community level.

Policies

Wildlife, Habitat and Species Protection

AGR500 Maintaining a healthy environment necessitates the maintenance of species diversity and the vigorous protection of wild habitats. Wales Green Party's policies to increase self-reliance and address our consumer-based lifestyle will help to ensure that we do not make environmentally damaging demands on the countryside or the rest of the world. We will work to extend globally our policies to support sustainable rural communities and will support at every level of the international community effective measures to protect the environment.

AGR501 Wales Green Party will strenuously seek to defend the natural bio-diversity of Wales and the integrity of its agricultural sector by maintaining Wales's GM-free status and ensuring that all maize grown or imported into Wales (the last source of GM contamination entering the country) will be free of genetically modified organisms. Bio-security measures will also be strengthened to pro-actively restrict the import and movement of plant and animal materials from regions where emerging diseases pose risk of spreading to indigenous species.

AGR502 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and related legislation will be consolidated and strengthened to remove loopholes and weaknesses that allow further destruction of wildlife and habitats. We will ensure that wildlife-rich sites are adequately protected and extend a basic level of habitat protection to the whole countryside. We will ensure that there are sufficient resources to enforce the legislation.

Wales Green Party will make it a general offence to cause cruelty to wild animals or suffering where it can be practicably avoided. Those committing such acts will be prosecuted in the same

way as for domestic animals. Humane methods of killing, for instance in pest control, will be required. We will bring in an outright ban on snaring.

AGR503 We will ensure that legislation is adequate to prevent wildlife crime and that there are sufficient resources to enforce the legislation and prosecute those who carry out wildlife crime.

AGR504 Wales Green Party will work with appropriate partners to strengthen international wildlife law and to ensure that it is implemented.

AGR505 We will work at the European level to strengthen protection of habitats through the [European Habitats Directive](#) and will ensure that [Pillar 2 of the Common Agricultural Policy](#) continues to provide environmental and habitat protection.

AGR506 We will advocate expansion of the under-funded Glastir Entry, Glastir Advanced and Glastir Woodland Management schemes. We will support a wider range of site-specific conservation measures and contract flexibilities identified by Contract Managers who, with site owners are best-placed to understand and identify the most appropriate responses to local pressures and opportunities for wildlife in particular locations.

AGR507 We support the [LIFE Natura 2000](#) network of Special Areas of Conservation established by the [European Habitats Directive](#) and its associated legislation. Although Wales has a good record of reporting on such sites, biodiversity is still threatened at many types of site. More positive action on biodiversity is needed.

AGR508 Introduction of non-native wild plants and non-native genotypes of British species may have a negative impact on wild plant populations and communities in Wales, as may introduction of native plants or animals from imported stock where this disrupts local provenance or species health. We aim to ensure good quality habitat restoration and avoid the introduction of harmful, diseased or invasive non-native plants including stock of unknown provenance. Relevant policy is in place under the [Convention for Biological Diversity](#), [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora](#) and the [European Habitats Directive](#) but there remain loopholes. We will review legislation and implement new laws where currently there are only codes of practice. We will collaborate at a European level to achieve this, including both live plants and seeds in the review.

AGR509 Collection of wild plant species may have impacts on wild populations. Wales Green Party will support measures to introduce a European Wild Plants directive which would give clear labelling on all living wild plant material traded within Europe, license all traders dealing with wild-collected plant material and tighten up import and export controls on wild plants.

AGR510 The [Ramsar Convention on Wetlands](#) is a global network of wetlands for sustaining people and the environment; Wales has [ten designated sites](#). We will ensure that Ramsar Convention sites remain highly protected and that other designated areas retain a high degree of protection from development.

We recognise the continuing pressures on the countryside. Rather than economic growth being the key driver of planning policies, we believe that ecologically sound strategic planning is needed, protecting and enhancing the environment and integrating the needs of urban and rural communities, as well as future generations. We oppose the relocation of environmentally damaging operations overseas.

The Rural Economy

AGR520 Rural areas support a dynamic and diverse economy which makes a significant contribution to the national economy. Agriculture lies at the heart of this economy and it supports many spin-off enterprises from recreation to retail outlets. We believe that a new policy approach is needed to support and enhance this vital economic sector (see below). However, we also acknowledge the potential of non-agricultural rural enterprise, including recreation and tourism, renewable energy, home working and Internet linked enterprise. We will pursue policies to enhance such diversification of the rural economy, shifting it away from its traditional low pay and seasonal work. In doing so we will ensure that rural enterprise does not adversely impact on the ecology or food production potential of the countryside.

AGR521 Wales Green Party will encourage diversification into energy production, farm forestry and small 'value added' business ventures.

Agriculture

AGR530 Agriculture is facing a major crisis. The control of the industry is passing further out of the hands of farmers and growers into the hands of supermarket buyers and multinational bio-engineering and petro-chemical firms, who are setting the research and development agenda for the decades to come.

AGR531 Alongside these developments, the gap between consumers and producers has never been wider with numerous food scares rocking consumer confidence. Welsh farming faces a future which involves further collapses in agricultural prices, increasing intensification of farming, high risk technical innovations spurred by corporate profits and the continuing depopulation of rural areas due to farm labour reductions. EU support through Rural Development Programmes such as Farming Connect has not succeeded in opening opportunities or skills development for smaller-scale producers focusing on local markets. We will act with our European Partners to ensure the roll-out of future schemes re-focuses support for entry-level farmers and smallholders who need more help than established large-scale agri-businesses.

AGR532 Agriculture forms an important part of the rural economy, producing food and other products, generating income and providing employment. Agricultural land makes up the largest part of the countryside and rural landscape in Wales and supports diverse wildlife habitats. Wales Green Party policies on Food and Agriculture aim to improve farming livelihoods, provide safe and nutritious food, improve long-term food security and increase regional and local self-reliance in food.

AGR533 Greens want to develop and support local food economies across Wales where consumers and local producers are linked directly, keeping wealth circulating in the local area and minimising food miles. We want to improve support for co-operative ventures in farming industries, which will improve efficiency and help to insulate the industry from the effects of market fluctuations. Local food production will be monitored to ensure minimal environmental impact, as producing locally does not guarantee high standards.

AGR534 Welsh agriculture has a reputation for excellence and quality. We must maintain this by supporting standards of excellence. The centrepiece of our agriculture policy is the support of organic farming, which will further enhance high quality farming in Wales. Additionally, we support

the promotion and recognition of the wide range of non-organic Welsh produce which is already produced less intensively and with minimal use of chemicals.

AGR535 We will advocate increased financial support for farms in conversion to organic status and farms already converted to organic status linked as at present to Glastir but with more simplified entry opportunities.

AGR536 We will advocate the creation of a fully funded organic advisory service.

AGR537 We will strengthen farm animal welfare standards, including a ban on all live exports.

AGR538 We will advocate restricting the use of antibiotics in livestock.

AGR539 We will support shorter supply chains and direct links between producers and customers to maximise income generation in rural areas and to supply healthier, fresher food. We will discourage large-scale agribusiness, processors and retailers which take large profit margins, concentrate jobs in urban centres and cause the closure of small, local retailers. However, forms of defensive localism which discourage links with global agricultural solidarity movements should be rejected.

AGR540 We will advocate promoting local markets across Wales, bringing farmers and consumers together.

AGR541 We will discourage the amalgamation of farms, will support family farms, improve access to land for new entrants to farming and horticulture and favour the setting up of sustainable, small-scale and labour-intensive enterprises and their associated dwellings. We support sustainable diversification and multiple use of agricultural land and buildings, for instance for appropriate renewable energy, tourism, recreational pursuits and low-impact enterprises.

AGR542 We will advocate major support and development of co-operative farming ventures.

AGR543 We will support small-scale, environmentally benign farming systems that protect the soil, biodiversity and water resources, minimise greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, support 'joined-up' wildlife habitats and provide secure jobs in rural communities. We support farming and land management which conserve and, where appropriate, increase woods, orchards, agroforestry, hedges and other trees. We will phase out factory farming and discourage farming systems highly dependent on fossil fuels and imported feed that have large-scale environmental impacts and tend to reduce rural income and employment.

AGR544 Soil is the biggest pool of carbon stored in the land, and is an important wildlife habitat in its own right. Soil is also an essential resource without which human civilisation cannot survive; yet farming is too often responsible for depletion and degradation of the soil. Through legislation and support for agri-environment schemes, we will ensure that all farming and land uses protect and enhance the soil.

Agriculture accounts for a large proportion of the pollution of watercourses with nitrates, phosphates and sediments from fertilisers, inappropriate application and disposal of manure and from soil erosion. Release and deposition of nitrogen compounds pose threats to biodiversity. Pesticide spraying can threaten watercourses and the health of farm workers, rural communities and consumers. Wales Green Party will support a strategy to reduce release of nitrogen compounds and other pollutants, will increase monitoring of watercourses and enforce penalties for pollution of watercourses and unsafe or inappropriate use of pesticides.

AGR545 Wales Green Party will work towards replacing the Common Agricultural Policy, and while it still exists, support a radical reorientation of the CAP to support sustainable farming systems that protect and enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity, ensure fair and secure farm incomes, support habitats and thriving rural communities and promote regional and local self-reliance in food.

AGR546 Wales Green Party welcomes the concept of agri-environment schemes and initiatives such as catchment-sensitive farming, where agricultural support may be used for environmentally sympathetic ends. We support extension of the concept to the whole of the countryside. We encourage further investment as having a positive role to play in securing the future of the countryside.

Animal Welfare

AGR550 We will advocate creating a Minister for Animal Rights.

AGR551 We believe that hunting with dogs should remain illegal and that loopholes in the law should be closed.

AGR552 Wales Green Party supports the existing legal protection for badgers as a species, supports [the Welsh Government's badger vaccination programme](#), and opposes proposals for a badger cull.

AGR553 We will advocate banning sale of genetically modified organisms in Wales.

AGR 554 Wales Green Party would seek to end non stun slaughter of farmed animals in abattoirs in Wales.

AGR 555 Wales Green Party would introduce the regulation of all animal sanctuaries under the Animal Welfare Act (2006) to ensure high standards of welfare for the animals in their care.

Countryside Designations

AGR560 We see the whole of the countryside as important for conservation and will treat all farmland and open country as environmentally sensitive. We endorse the extra controls and incentives for areas which are protected but wish to see their successes replicated as widely as possible. In particular we will work to link the current protected areas into a wider network of sites.

AGR561 We will encourage the Natural Resources Wales to carry out a thorough review of the complicated system of designated areas. In the long term, we will seek the continued expansion of conservation principles to the whole of the countryside.

AGR562 The three [National Parks](#) and six [Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty](#) provide a popular expression of the nation's love of the countryside and demonstrate a special combination of access, recreation and tourism. In the long term the lessons learnt from National Parks and successes in arresting unbridled agricultural, forestry, industrial and mining developments will be applied to the whole countryside. However, in some cases pre-existing agricultural systems and large land-holdings within National Parks continue to expand large-scale farming systems that are unsustainable and damaging to biodiversity and wildlife. The preservation of the status quo within

National Parks and AONB's must not inhibit improvements to wildlife conservation and sustainability and support must be given to emerging farms transitioning into smaller scale, organic and locally sustainable models.

We will strengthen and widen the role of National Parks and the Park Authorities by encouraging better democracy in their governance and greater collaboration and support of Community Councils who understand the individual character of local communities, by addressing the lack of control and investment in species and habitat protection and by encouraging better take-up of renewable energy opportunities.

AGR563 We consider that the use of National Parks for artillery ranges and other forms of destructive military training are incompatible with the designation of a National Park and its continuance cannot be tolerated. We will press for the earliest withdrawal of inappropriate military training within National Parks.

AGR564 We will ensure that the National Planning Policy Framework continues to provide strong policy protection against mineral extraction in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Local authorities will be encouraged to make a concerted effort to remove the remaining old dormant permissions in these sensitive areas. We oppose all mineral developments in National Parks, other than small-scale operations that produce materials for local traditional building and repair.

AGR565 We will halt all damaging road construction within National Parks, in favour of the enhancement of public transport and improved access for walkers and cyclists.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

AGR570 We will provide adequate funding for the management of designated sites, including [Sites of Special Scientific Interest](#), [National Nature Reserves](#), [Special Areas of Conservation](#) and [Scheduled Ancient Monuments](#). In addition we will give local authorities the power to make Countryside Conservation Orders to protect vulnerable features which require conservation, consistent with our aim to disseminate good practice more widely.

AGR571 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will receive comparable status to National Parks. As with National Parks, they are exemplars for the whole countryside.

AGR572 We will retain and rigorously strengthen Green Belt legislation as a positive measure to revitalise the countryside, improve quality of life for people in cities and large towns and encourage the extension of 'green wedges' into the cities. We will:

- Make rural communities rewarding places to live and work in, reducing and reversing rural depopulation and out-migration.
- Extend environmental and social impact statements into all areas of decision-making.
- Encourage the development of thriving urban and rural communities.
- Reduce speculation in land in both urban and rural areas.

Woodlands, Forests and Trees

AGR580 Woods and trees play a vital role in the landscape. They protect soil from erosion, protect water supplies and water quality, provide wildlife habitats and protect the climate by storing carbon

both above ground and in the soil. They can provide us with renewable supplies of timber, wood fuel and healthy food. They can make landscapes more beautiful. Woods, plantations, orchards, agroforestry, hedges and trees are especially important to our policies to protect the countryside.

AGR581 We will ensure that woods are considered as an integral part of Local Development Frameworks. Planning authorities will be required to liaise with Natural Resources Wales and other bodies when dealing with the establishment of new woods and the management of existing ones. The public ownership of woods and plantations that are currently in public ownership, such as those managed by Natural Resources Wales, will be rigorously protected. Public rights of access to such woods and plantations will also be rigorously protected whenever this is compatible with wildlife protection and good management.

AGR582 Good management of existing woods, plantations, orchards and hedges will be encouraged, for example through agri-environment schemes and Glastir Woodland Management, Glastir Woodland Creation. Farmers and landowners will be encouraged to allow new woods to grow and where appropriate to create new plantations, orchards, agroforestry and hedges. Timber, thinning and felling of woodland is licensed through Natural Resources Wales, however, un-licensed felling works are commonplace throughout Wales. We will increase powers and resources to identify and prosecute those landowners extracting wood without permission.

AGR583 We will prohibit destruction of ancient woodland.

Access to the Countryside

AGR590 We will extend the [Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000](#) to provide wider public access such as that granted in Scotland by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. Access Authorities will ensure that the law is properly implemented. Public access to woods and plantations will be protected (see above).

AGR591 We will ensure that adequate funding is provided to protect and maintain existing rights of way and to create new ones.

Marine and Coastal Policy

Introduction and Key Principles

MAR100 Oceans cover nearly 71% of the planet's surface, yet are widely treated with disrespect: fish harvested at unsustainable levels; the sea naively regarded as a bottomless and endless waste dump, resulting in floating plastic 'mountains', toxic 'soups' and despoiled ecosystems; we witness a covetous race to 'grab' huge areas of continental shelf for oil, gas and other resource exploitation; and the shoreline is wrecked by and threatened with further, still more ecologically insensitive, expressions of 'development'. Yet, these same beleaguered oceans supply a large proportion of the world's animal protein; support 250 million jobs in fisheries alone; form the basis for climate regulation; and are highly popular recreation destinations.

MAR101 From such anthropocentric perspectives alone - notwithstanding that they also provide a home for around half the planet's living species! - it is high time this inadequately acknowledged abuse was slowed, halted and reversed.

MAR102 In summary, marine ecosystems provide a range of provisioning, cultural, aesthetic, supporting and regulatory services and experiences of supreme value. These must be protected to maintain quality of life and human dignity and the complex biodiversity that underpins the working of the planet, including our economic activity.

MAR103 Therefore, the principle that all marine activities need to function sustainably, within environmental limits, is the overriding objective of all Green Party policies within marine and coastal sectors.

MAR104 A number of further principles also apply. First, marine ecosystems have intrinsic rights and values that exceed monetary valuation. Second, policy affecting the oceans and their use should be guided by best available scientific advice, not by political expediency. Third, the varied activities practised through the seas should respect the rights of other marine users. Fourth, values, rules and management systems employed to best sustain land areas should be similarly deployed in the marine environment, such as conservation designations, environmental impact assessments and planning regulations. Fifth, the livelihoods, cultures and knowledge of longstanding coastal communities who make their living from the sea should be respected. Sixth, the subsidiarity is paramount, namely that the lowest level to deal with an issue is normally the most appropriate scale to manage it.

MAR105 Under these combined principles, a set of broad policies, each preceded by an overarching introductory position statement, are presented below under the following headings:

- Marine Governance;
- Sustainable Fisheries;
- Marine Aquaculture;
- Marine-based Energy;
- Coastal Erosion;
- Shipping;
- Marine Pollution;
- Recreation.

Marine Governance

MAR200 If it is to thrive and be sustainable with respect to diverse competing activities, the ocean must be managed holistically but also differentially, according to specific needs.

MAR201 This requires active coordination between a range of authorities, interested groups and stakeholders, utilising sound science.

MAR202 Wales Green Party will seek to establish jurisdictional marine authority at five levels: International; European Union; National (UK); Sub-national; and Local. Governance at each will function within *Marine Spatial Plans*. Written in consultation with all users of the sea, these plans will embody a requirement for sustainability; adopt an ecosystems approach (marine environment considered as a whole); and recognise the precautionary principle (burden of proof lying with those wishing to utilise the marine environment to show their actions will not be harmful). Different-scale Marine Spatial Plans will be integrated and conform to the subsidiarity principle.

MAR203 Wales Green Party will ensure an even-handed and transparent legal framework, supported by robust and timely data, for sustainable maritime governance. At EU level, we will seek to shift the widely-maligned Common Fisheries Policy from being primarily an instrument regulating economic activity to one ensuring integrity and sound functioning of marine ecosystems.

Sustainable Fisheries

MAR300 We overfish our oceans, increasingly via high-impact industrial fleets little connected to local fishing communities. Most commercial fish stocks worldwide are fully- or over-exploited, with almost all top ocean predators very severely depleted. It is vital this unacceptable situation is urgently addressed. Human impacts on the piscatorial environment should be managed in a fully precautionary manner, involving Marine Protected Areas, sometimes extending to 'no-take reserves' in which all extractive activities are banned.

MAR301 Wales Green Party will retain quotas for fishing, defined at scales appropriate to specific sustainability objectives. Allocation will be based on long-term management goals present within the *Marine Spatial Plans*, with input from local inshore fishers and other stakeholders. Quotas will be allocated with a bias towards low impact operations and will not be tradable, with information on their allocation open and transparent. A vessel decommissioning scheme will continue, to reduce the capacity of the UK fishing fleet to an environmentally sustainable level. It will be necessary to ensure similar reductions are made for all who fish in UK waters.

MAR302 We will promote actions at the European level in pursuit of a Common Fisheries Policy that complies with the EU's Marine Strategy Framework Directive and seeks to return all populations of commercially exploited marine species to within biologically safe limits. First, we will press for an end to all subsidies that increase fishing pressure, including concessionary tax rates for fuel, vessel modification and improving port and fish-processing facilities. Second, we will seek to ensure that the European fleet does not fish outside home waters to standards unacceptable within the EU. Third, we will press the European Commission to ban bottom trawling, gillnetting and long-lining for deep-sea species. Fourth, we will demand an EU-wide ban on discards at sea and support research into the impact of this ban on seabird and marine mammal populations.

MAR303 We will reform fisheries policies in favour of small-scale, low impact fishing methods and the inshore fishing fleet. This will enable smaller fishers to operate competitively and maintain resilient livelihoods within local communities. It will also help reduce negative environmental impacts caused by higher-impact fishing practises, such as use of heavy mobile gear.

MAR304 We, mindful of our policies favouring localism, will strive to make fisheries' processing, packaging and retailing focused on the local or regional scale. Fishers themselves will assume more control of the supply chain.

MAR305 We will fully implement a large-scale, ecologically coherent network of *Marine Protected Areas* within the UK's seas. Around one third of our exclusive economic zone should be selected, using best scientific practice, and established as no-take reserves closed to commercial fishing and other extractive activities.

MAR306 To facilitate enforcement of prevention of fishing within these reserves, all boats granted a commercial licence to fish will be equipped with a GPS-enabled Vessel Monitoring System, operational at all times. The boundaries and existence of no-take reserves will undergo periodic renewal.

MAR307 We will act on the likelihood that fishing communities may face short-term difficulties from *Marine Protected Area* measures. We will work with them to ensure creation of these areas, particularly no-take reserves, does not significantly damage livelihoods.

MAR308 We will promote the establishment of a large-scale, internationally-comprehensive system of *Marine Protected Areas*.

Marine Aquaculture

MAR400 Industrial-scale fish farming is not the answer to dwindling fish stocks in the oceans but causes widespread pollution of inland and coastal waters and spreads disease to wild fish. However, small-scale aquaculture can be sustainable and is an important source of food and income. It is important for the diversification and production of resilient food supplies.

MAR401 We will phase out fish farms that involve: overstocking; heavy use of feed, chemical or fossil fuel inputs; production of substantial pollution; or conditions injurious to fish, environmental and/or human health. Instead, emphasis will be on cultivation of native species in open water systems, with non-native species' cultivation restricted to land-based tanks.

MAR402 We will actively support further research into sustainable aquaculture.

Marine-based Energy

MAR500 Offshore wind, wave and tidal stream projects have a key role to play in meeting carbon emission targets and ensuring energy security. However, such projects must be developed sensitively, with due regard to potential impacts on ecology and the intrinsic values of our seas and shorelines.

MAR501 We will promote and prioritise development of all forms of renewable energy provision, through grants, business rates, planning regulations and other financial incentives.

MAR502 We will insist that prior to the development of any marine energy structure, a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment will be carried out.

MAR503 We will put in place tighter environmental controls - even retrospective conditions - on extant fossil fuel extraction operations. All oil and gas companies will be required to establish an integrated Environmental Management System.

Coastal Erosion

MAR600 Whilst it is unrealistic to think it can be stopped entirely, measures can and should be taken to ameliorate the impacts of coastal erosion. Such erosion is escalating rapidly, in part due to global warming induced sea level rise and particularly where aggregate dredging occurs offshore.

MAR601 We will commission an independent and fair assessment of the coastal erosive impact of offshore dredging, mindful of its impact in damaging the seabed and its flora and fauna, and in promoting hydrological conditions favouring large, erosive waves.

MAR602 We will divert resources from 'hard' sea defences towards 'softer' means of ameliorating coastal erosion. The latter, such as coastal salt marshes, work with rather than against nature. We recognise, nonetheless, that hard defences, including concrete barriers and reinforcements, are justified in some locations.

Shipping

MAR700 Whilst shipping is a potentially low-impact method of conveying goods and people over large distances, it presently has high environmental impact. Not least, it is a major source of marine pollution and carbon emissions. (see TR800)

MAR701 We will support use of shipping over more carbon-intensive methods of long-distance transport for the movement of goods, although we aim to see the quantity of goods shipped to and from the UK decline as we move towards a more localised economy.

MAR702 We will introduce regulations and incentives to make shipping more sustainable. These will be aimed, for example, at reducing use of cheap 'bunker fuel' and offshore transfer of oil from tankers. Improved enforcement will involve the International Maritime Organisation.

Marine Pollution

MAR800 Pollution of UK beaches and seas remains substantial and intolerable. Too often, the sea is treated as a waste dump, filled via numerous sources: direct littering, losses or discards from boats, illegal dumping, sewage discharges, and river-borne pollutants.

MAR801 We will push for implementation and stronger enforcement of existing marine pollution directives. We will demand higher penalties for those who pollute the marine environment, commensurate with damage inflicted. We will formulate *Marine Pollution Action Plans* through a body appointed to oversee this work and the impartial enforcement of current and future marine pollution laws, such as the EU's Waste Framework Directives.

MAR802 We will encourage water companies to shift from short-term 'end of pipe' solutions to long-term sustainable solutions to reduce pollution. Higher priority will be given to improving sewage treatment and returning treated waste to the land where feasible.

MAR803 We will ban the dumping of hazardous substances into the sea.

Recreation

MAR900 Coast and beaches hold a special attraction for recreation and leisure. Many people find spending time by the sea an important way to relax and relieve stress. However, there is work needed to make the impact of associated activities as sustainable as possible.

MAR901 We will work to ensure our beaches and coastal areas conform to the highest standards of water quality and shoreline cleanliness. We aim to achieve and maintain 100% Blue Flag beaches.

MAR902 We will promote use of wind and electricity-powered vessels within coastal recreation over those which are highly energy intensive and use fossil fuels.

MAR903 We will seek to make recreational fishing less inhumane, ending the practice of 'live baiting' (live fish used as bait) and banning barbed, double and triple hooks.

MAR904 We will promote greater awareness of the tenacious problem of litter left on beaches and the coast, combining clean-up schemes with prominent penalties for polluters.

Climate Change

Background

CLC100 Climate Change is one of the worst environmental hazards facing human society and the rest of the biosphere. The detrimental effects of human-induced global warming so far on human societies and ecosystems are already severe. Future effects over the next few decades will be far worse.

CLC101 As climate change is a global issue it is a clear example of the need for global environmental cooperation. This is indeed happening, if far too slowly. The 'Earth Summit' in Rio in 1992 led to the establishment of the UNFCCC (The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change); which is both a good overview statement of the issues and an international organisation to address them. Separately, the UN established the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) to organise work into the details of the science, impacts, and possibilities for remedial and adaptational action.

CLC102 The IPCC issued its fifth major 'Assessment Reports' during 2013 and 2014.

CLC103 IPCC conclusions tend to be conservative, because they have to be approved by consensus between governments. So common prudence, backed up by considerable evidence, suggests regarding them as being at the optimistic end of a range of plausible futures. However, Wales Green Party recognises the authority of the IPCC to provide the scientific consensus.

CLC104 This section of policy relates to impacts on Wales and highlights areas of policy of particular relevance in the Welsh context. A more comprehensive detail on areas of UK wide and international significance are included in the EWGP PfSS.

Vision

CLC200 Wales Green Party's primary objective is the safeguarding of the climate, as far as possible, for future decades and generations; or as the UNFCCC puts it, "prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system".

CLC201 The causes of climate change are documented in the "IPCC Fifth Assessment Report Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis Summary for Policymakers".

CLC202 The impacts of climate change are documented in the "IPCC Fifth Assessment Report Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis Summary for Policymakers."

CLC203 Wales Green Party calls for the establishment of annual targets for global and national greenhouse gas emissions reductions, and for the establishment of effective enforcement mechanisms.

CLC204 The primary aim of such targets is to significantly reduce the likelihood of catastrophic climate change by keeping atmospheric temperature rise below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. The "IPCC Fifth Assessment Report Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis Summary for Policymakers" describes four Representative Concentration Pathways (RCP) for greenhouse gases over the next century. Only one of these, RCP2.6, is likely to achieve the 2°C target. Wales Green Party policies shall be consistent with the UK doing its fair share in achieving RCP2.6

greenhouse gas level targets or similar pathways described in the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) Emissions Gap Reports.”

CLC205 Wales Green Party actively endorses the leading role played by the UN and its subsidiary bodies in striving for the necessary international agreement, global monitoring and implementation of the required policies; and will endeavour to support their ongoing activities.

Policies

CLC300 Wales Green Party calls for the establishment of a number of targets for global and national greenhouse gas emissions reductions, and for the establishment of effective enforcement mechanisms. All targets herein relate to a baseline of emissions in 1990, as in the Kyoto Protocol.

CLC301 We should aim steadily to reduce all Welsh greenhouse gas emissions to 10% of their 1990 levels by 2030. We will also establish effective mechanisms for getting back on track should an annual target be missed. New and persuasive scientific evidence may arise that shows a need for deeper cuts in emissions and Wales Green party public announcements should reflect the current nature of climate change science.

Contraction and Convergence

CLC400 Wales Green Party advocates the adoption by the UNFCCC of a framework of Contraction and Convergence (C&C) as the key ingredient in the global political solution to the problem of Climate Change mitigation, and urges the UK and other governments use it as the basis for negotiations in the international fora.

CLC401 Contraction and Convergence (C&C) is a proposed global framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to combat climate change. The following Green Party policy statement describes C&C in more detail.

CLC402 'Contraction' means adopting a scientifically determined safe target concentration level and setting global annual emissions levels which should take the atmosphere to that target. The UNFCCC should agree specific thresholds for unacceptable climate impacts, from which the IPCC should calculate the appropriate concentration level, to be reviewed at 5-yearly intervals. In line with CC111 this should align with IPCC RCP2.6 or similar pathways.

CLC403 'Convergence' means taking the world in an achievable way, both technically and politically, from the present situation to a common level of per-capita emissions in a target year. Under it nations are allocated annual quotas for emissions, which start from current or Kyoto-based levels in year 1 of the agreement and converge to equal per-capita allocations after a negotiated interval, probably of a few decades.

CLC404 The C&C package is completed with an emissions-trading mechanism, which should include a percentage cap to limit the proportion of a country's reductions that can be bought rather than achieved domestically. Monitoring and enforcement mechanisms are also required and should be set up by the UNFCCC.

Biofuels

CLC500 It is particularly alarming that nations are trying to meet the requirements of the Kyoto Protocol by using bio-energy classed as 'carbon neutral' despite large-scale greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and peat burning. Within Wales we would introduce a moratorium on all bio-energy targets and obligations until clear environmental and human rights standards for bio-fuel production accompany such targets.

CLC501 The moratorium would apply to European and Welsh public sector incentives for agrofuels and agroenergy from large-scale monocultures, including tree plantations, and a moratorium on EU imports of such agrofuels. This includes the immediate suspension of all targets, incentives such as tax breaks and subsidies which benefit agrofuels from large-scale monocultures, including financing through carbon trading mechanisms, international development aid or loans from international finance organisations such as the World Bank. The moratorium called for by the signatories will apply only to agrofuels from large-scale monocultures (and GM biofuels) and their trade. It does not include biofuels from waste, such as waste vegetable oil or biogas from manure or sewage, or biomass grown and harvested sustainably by and for the benefit of local communities, rather than on large-scale monocultures.

CLC502 Wales Green Party would also introduce a moratorium on the use and development of genetically engineered crops and trees, microbes and fungi for the production of any biofuels including agrofuels, due to the high environmental risks involved in GM technology.

Peatlands

CLC600 Wales Green Party would seek an emergency international agreement to stop swamp draining and burning of peatland. Such a convention needs to include measures to extinguish fires, re-flood and restore drained peatlands and needs to be linked to a revision of the Clean Development Mechanism in Europe and the broader climate change framework.

CLC601 To achieve the necessary emissions reductions, a new protocol will have to make ecosystem destruction and degradation a priority focus. Simply reducing the rate of deforestation will not be sufficient. Only a moratorium followed by a ban on industrial logging and land conversion of all old growth forest will allow us to achieve this goal. Such a ban should be binding on all nations, including nations which currently import wood products or agricultural commodities produced at the expense of old growth forests and ecosystems.

CLC602 A new climate change agreement must include clear mechanisms to reverse the trend towards low-biodiversity, high-chemical input monocultures, and to support mixed high biodiversity agricultural systems based on permaculture principles which retain soil carbon. This necessitates regulatory and rights based mechanisms, supporting the land rights of small farmers and local communities and regulating against those agribusinesses which rely on destructive agricultural methods that result in ecosystem destruction and high greenhouse gas emissions.

Livestock Farming

CLC700 The substantial contribution of livestock farming to greenhouse gas emissions makes it evident that, to achieve our climate objectives and emissions targets, such farming will need to be drastically and rapidly reduced.

CLC701 A reduction in livestock farming will have implications for land use, agriculture and human diets. Our policies for sustainable agriculture will achieve a transition away from the production of animal products towards production for predominantly plant-based diets and bring other opportunities for farmers to diversify. Wales Green Party will manage this transition sensitively, so as well as reducing direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions and deforestation, it will bring benefits for farmers, consumers, the environment and animal welfare.

CLC702 In Wales large areas of land are predominantly suited for extensive livestock farming and may in some instances contribute to the storage and management of carbon, e.g. through undisturbed soil ecosystems. Wales Green Party would work to ensure that these extensive livestock farms are not disproportionately affected by changes primarily targeted at intensive farms.

Emissions Reductions in Wales

CLC800 The principles of Contraction and Convergence (C&C) would also provide the basis for reductions in emissions within the UK, through the introduction of a system of tradable quotas. This system should cover all emissions of carbon dioxide produced by burning of fossil fuels in the UK. On introduction of the system the total carbon quota would be equivalent to current emission levels, but would reduce year-on-year to meet the targets. Carbon quota would be needed for all purchases of electricity (if not from a renewable source), air flights and direct purchase of fossil fuels including gas, coal, petrol, diesel and fuel oil. Consideration would be given to also including long distance train travel. A system for buying and selling quotas would be established.

CLC801 A proportion of the total quota would be distributed free of charge to all eligible individuals in Wales, with all adults receiving an equal amount. The remaining quota would be sold to organisations (public, private and voluntary) by a system set up by the government.

CLC802 In addition to the introduction of quotas there would be a major programme of investment in energy conservation, energy efficient appliances, public transport and renewable energy technology, so that people are able to live within their quotas. This investment would be achieved through a programme of public spending and through the revision of technical standards, such as building regulations and standards for energy efficiency of appliances.

CLC803 We would institute a national publicity campaign on the threats from climate change, the need to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other green house gases, and how individuals can play their part in this.

CLC804 We will publicise the various ways in which measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions can provide immediate benefits to our quality of life, our economy and the environment, as well as delivering long-term benefits by tackling climate change.

CLC805 Due to the failure by successive administrations around the world to effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions to date, we would instigate a series of reports which would set out the steps needed to best protect the people of Wales and Wales' resources from the worst impacts of climate change and which will consider what adaptations will be required in both the long and short-term.

Waste Reduction

CLC901 We will support the introduction of plastic free aisles in supermarkets.

CLC902 We will ensure the replacement of single use plastic bags for fresh fruit and vegetables with recyclable alternatives in all retail outlets with no exceptions.

CLC903 We will require supermarkets to send all unsold produce that is still safe for human consumption to local food banks and charities.

CLC904 We will instigate measures ensuring the continual reduction of plastic and non-recyclable packaging used by large scale buyers be a condition of planning consent for any new supermarkets as this can have a direct impact on local recycling rates. The reductions will continue year on year until phased out completely.

CLC905 We will promote joint working between local authorities when negotiating contracts with waste suppliers to ensure that companies that do not offer recycling of soft plastics are effectively squeezed out of the market in Wales. Contract negotiations should be 100% transparent and strictly monitored by an independent body.

CLC906 We will introduce a charge on the use of single use cups at all coffee outlets at a rate of 20p per cup with no exceptions.

CLC907 We will introduce a ban on the use of single use plastic straws in all catering outlets with no exceptions.

CLC908 We will introduce a bottle return deposit scheme which will cover all plastic bottles sold within Wales of 20p a bottle with no exceptions.

Energy

Vision: Getting Wales Working: saving and generating clean energy

EN100 Green Party policy nationally aims for a complete transformation of the energy system to one based on efficient use of energy supplied mainly by electricity from renewable sources. The policy will ensure an affordable and reliable energy supply for householders, commerce and industry in a prosperous and productive economy with excellent employment prospects. It will bring energy bills down; strengthen community control of energy use, supply and costs, and help to eradicate fuel poverty.

EN101 Energy is a key factor in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions accounting for over 80% of Welsh emissions. We need to stop energy waste and improve efficiency of use – do better with less. Limiting climate impacts is a powerful reason for using energy more efficiently and changing to low carbon energy sources.

EN102 We can enjoy comfortable homes and a thriving economy using a third of our current energy demand by improving the energy performance of new and existing buildings and by re-thinking industrial processes to reduce the 'energy intensity' of products. Innovation in energy usage will save costs and enable a rapid change to clean renewable power from sources within Wales. Electricity from renewables will replace existing polluting energy sources, ensuring stable prices and removing dependence on foreign fuel imports.

EN103 The energy system will be reorganised to ensure full democratic control, with local communities generating and supplying their own energy needs. Local councils and communities will have a key role in planning efficiency programmes, and organising local energy supply and distribution.

EN 104 The Wales Green Party would require local authorities to devise strategies for increasing community ownership of small and medium sized renewable generation in their area. Incentives would be included to pilot innovative technologies developed in Welsh academic institutions or businesses.

We would incentivise local authorities to drive these strategies forward by allowing them to keep 100% of business rates from renewable projects which sit within their boundaries.

EN105 Eradication of fuel poverty will be a priority: about a third of households currently suffer fuel poverty in Wales, a projected increase from about a quarter of households in fuel poverty in Wales in 2008, and much higher than in England. We would ensure that accurate data on the scale of fuel poverty in Wales is made available, to ensure that we make progress and target those in need.

EN106 Innovation in energy efficiency, renewable energy and energy storage will require rapid training and upskilling of the workforce needed to design, construct, operate and manage radical change to the current energy system. Restructuring the Welsh energy system will significantly boost employment. Investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy will generate market value in products and innovations worth hundreds of billions of pounds.

EN107 An energy efficiency fund will be supported by an improved system of carbon taxes to help the design, upgrading and construction of better homes and buildings, energy efficient industry and to expand renewables.

EN108 Even so, this policy alone is unlikely to ensure sufficient action on carbon reduction and energy efficiency to avoid dangerous climate change, which require wider changes to production, development, consumption and economics. We must commit to at least zero carbon emissions, and treat all climate targets as minimum thresholds for reduction, reflecting the latest assessment of climate risk. This set of energy targets sit within the wider challenge to put the UK at the forefront of zero carbon, low energy development, enabling Wales to play its part in a robust international response to climate change.

Improve Efficiency of Energy Use

EN200 Wales Green Party would cut energy costs across all sectors through demand reductions and improved efficiency. We will set clear and consistent targets and timetables for improving efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across all sectors of the economy. In Wales, a proportionate reduction would apply, taking into account the relatively high level of ongoing industrial processing along the M4 corridor.

EN201 We will keep the effectiveness of demand reduction and efficiency policies under regular review.

EN202 Wales Green Party will require local councils to develop energy plans for their areas and ensure that they are resourced to do so. These plans will be aligned with national demand reduction, energy efficiency and energy generation targets.

EN203 We will extend the scope of local authorities' planning powers to include energy (through Local Development Plans for example). Specifically they will decide - in consultation with local communities – the extent and scope of demand reduction programmes, the location of heat networks, community scale energy (heat and power) sources, and energy storage capacity.

EN204 Energy related planning matters which are currently devolved to the Secretary of State in the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) would be devolved to the National Assembly for Wales, including planning decisions on projects over 50MW for onshore generation projects, 1MW for offshore projects and 132kV for sub-station and distribution networks.

EN205 Wales Green Party would cut bills and ensure warm homes for all by amending building regulations to ensure that all new dwellings (including conversions) are built to zero carbon standards. We will plan to reduce the energy demand in existing dwellings through intensive retrofit programmes. The programmes will focus first on improving housing conditions and reducing the energy costs of poorer households, particularly those suffering fuel poverty.

EN 206 The Wales Green Party would continue to offer centrally funded energy efficiency programmes for fuel poor households in Wales, on both a demand led and by-area basis. We would improve on previous schemes by widening eligibility beyond purely financial need to include people with health conditions that leave them at risk from the cold, households with children whose education is suffering from living in a cold home, and others who miss out under the current system.

The schemes would be underpinned by a new statutory target rooted in delivery year on year, which would make it clearer to those in the energy efficiency sector what level of funding they can expect from the Welsh Government year on year.

The excess winter deaths figures for Wales are consistently shockingly high. So our energy efficiency scheme would be complemented by an emergency cold weather plan. This would ensure older people, disabled people, and others with health conditions affected by the cold could access funding or temporarily borrow equipment to heat their home during dangerously cold weather. It would also provide support for people who were being prevented from being discharged from hospital because their home was dangerously cold.”

EN207 Energy policy for housing will be focused on area-based programmes linked with housing improvement policies and initiatives for bringing vacant dwellings and commercial properties into use. Domestic demand reduction will be supported by targeted grant regimes to ensure take-up, with special attention to poorer households and those suffering fuel poverty. Subsidised loans will be available to improve 'hard to treat' homes. Special care will be taken with 'traditional buildings' to avoid installation of inappropriate measures.

EN208 In Welsh rural areas we recognise the high percentage of houses not on 'mains gas', which are reliant on coal, oil, and bottled gas for space and water heating. These would be included in the initial targeting of energy efficiency measures.

EN209 Wales Green Party will ensure better energy performance in buildings in the non-domestic sectors. We will support better energy management, design, construction, and innovation in materials, plant and components to achieve improved building performance and operation in the non-domestic sectors. Efficiency measures will be supported through a combination of regulation and incentives. Policies will apply equally to retrofit and new build. Small businesses may require specialized support, in the form of advice services linked to grant and loan schemes, to assist

them to reduce energy costs and improve the energy efficiency of their operations. These arrangements will be part of the local authority energy planning process and integrated with local economic development programmes.

EN210 We will support neighbourhood and area-based upgrading of the energy efficiency of buildings through cooperative or collective action. Tenants in all sectors will be enabled to require building owners to upgrade the energy performance of the buildings they occupy.

EN211 Wales Green Party will work towards lower energy intensity of industrial products. We will encourage better energy management and process efficiency. We will support research and development of more efficient process technologies, alternative fuels, materials recovery and recycling in order to drive down energy demand in industry and reduce the energy intensity of products. We will focus action on major energy users such as the steel, chemical and food and drink industries, while smaller firms may require specialised support as in the commercial sector above.

EN212 We will target energy efficiencies for the Welsh industrial sector of reductions on 2012 levels of 15% by 2020, 33% by 2030 and 60% by 2050 allowing for increases in productivity over the period.

Increase Clean Low Carbon Energy Generation from Renewable Sources

EN300 Wales Green Party will accelerate production of electricity from renewable and low carbon sources. We will rapidly develop new renewable energy capacity to meet reducing final energy demand, primarily through clean electricity generation. Wind will provide the main source of power by 2030, followed later by wave and tidal power. Solar thermal, photovoltaics and hydropower will be important because of their potential for local and small-scale generation.

EN301 We will aim for a largely electricity-based energy system in Wales; the Welsh Government would be empowered to agree the exact contribution Wales would be expected to make to contribute to a total final UK demand of about 900TWh/ year by 2030, which reduces to 600-650TWh /year by 2050. This capacity will be provided by the range of renewables set out below.

EN302 We will accelerate the deployment of both onshore and offshore wind power generation at rates sufficient to ensure the change to a stable electricity-based energy system by 2030. This will require a rapid build of onshore wind and off-shore wind generation capacity will be increased.

EN303 We will recognise that due to the excellent wind resource, Wales has made a strong contribution to existing onshore wind and under a Green Party Government this contribution would be expected to increase. Most wind development in Wales will continue to be fed to the National Grid but will be counted towards Welsh renewable energy targets.

EN304 Wales currently benefits from some jobs and income from the development of onshore and offshore wind power. For new installations and when current installations are transferred to new owners, a substantial contribution will be expected towards a programme which focuses this benefit directly onto Welsh communities. Employment opportunities, sub-contracting, and manufacturing, will be expected from wind developments in Wales greater than 2MW, leading to the growth in Wales as a location of expertise in wind development. Failure to provide and conform to an agreed development programme will be recognised under planning law and could ultimately lead to planning permits not being approved or revoked.

EN305 We will support the rapid commercialisation of tidal stream and wave-powered generators to ensure they are able to contribute at least 5GW each by 2030, and a combined input of at least 20GW by 2050.

EN306 The Severn barrage as was proposed a few years ago would cause unacceptable ecological damage. Alternative, less harmful, developments in the Bristol Channel which make use of the massive energy potential of the tidal range there would be supported.

EN307 The Westminster government has turned down an application to build a Swansea bay tidal lagoon. We believe that it is up to the Welsh government how funding for energy development is spent, and not the UK government

EN308 Rapid deployment of solar photovoltaics will be fully supported, as a key source of decentralised generation, making full use of domestic, commercial and industrial roofspace and limited deployment of 'solar farms'. We will review legislation and planning guidance to facilitate the potential for leasing roof and site space for local energy generation by third parties..

EN309 We will urgently review UK potential for hydropower and will support in particular medium and small-scale installations. We will develop the capacity of pumped storage for demand balancing, subject to stringent environmental and community safeguards.

EN310 We will keep under review the relative contributions of all renewable sources in order to assess the potential for replacement or enhancement of the different technologies, in particular as demand reduces further beyond 2030 due to increasing efficiency.

EN311 Wales Green Party would also accelerate the development of heat production from low carbon renewable sources through the deployment of renewable heat sources including heat pumps (air, water and ground source) and solar thermal as well as heat from decentralised biomass/biogas generation.

EN312 We will ensure energy produced from biomass, including biogas, yields reductions in greenhouse gas emissions using sustainable wastes and domestic feedstocks for which indirect substitution emissions can be shown to be minimal. We will ensure that biomass generation uses sustainably-sourced fuels produced according to stringent sustainability standards and is as far as possible carbon neutral.

EN313 Welsh farmers who wish to diversify into production of sustainable biomass crops (on Grade 3 and 4 land) would be given support and advice through the Welsh Government support programmes.

EN314 We will develop the use of biomass for heat supply through co-generation and for balancing power; new biomass power stations will be built as combined heat and power systems and if needed with carbon capture and storage capability.

EN315 We will ensure the development of heat networks using waste heat and seasonally stored heat for building heating and low temperature heat use.

EN316 We will give local councils responsibility for heat planning as part of their energy planning powers. Local authorities may directly operate heat networks or energy service companies, or assist local co-operative or private organisations to do the same. They will be given powers to introduce incentives and bylaws to phase out the use of natural gas boilers.

EN317 We will support the development of a low-carbon heat market for the heating of homes and other buildings where there is sufficient density of demand to support the creation of a hot water network.

EN318 Wales Green Party will ensure the urgent preparation of sea use planning frameworks, in consultation with relevant agencies, to guide the development of marine renewable energy systems.

EN319 We will urgently review land and marine planning guidance and establish a clear presumption in favour of renewable energy sources - in particular mid-scale and community-owned renewables - but within the context of environmental impact legislation to ensure protected areas are not harmed, biodiversity is safeguarded and the needs of people and wildlife are considered. We will require local councils to integrate their energy plans with national land and sea use planning guidance.

EN320 If Carbon Capture and Storage is proven at a commercial scale, we will support deployment of the technology, on a specifically transitional basis, to existing sustainable biomass and gas power stations and existing incineration plant. We will support deployment on a long term basis for sustainable biogas generating plant.

EN321 Wales Green Party will phase out polluting and unsustainable power sources.

EN322 We will cancel construction of new nuclear stations and nuclear power will not be eligible for government subsidy; the Green Party opposes all nuclear power generation and is particularly opposed to the construction of new nuclear power stations, electricity from which is likely to be significantly more expensive per unit supplied than other low-carbon energy sources, and too slow to deploy to meet our pressing energy needs. Cancellation will avoid the costs and dangers of nuclear energy and waste being passed on to future generations long after any benefits have been exhausted.

EN323 In Wales, Trawsfynydd will continue to be decommissioned and appropriate alternative uses for the site will be sought. The planned expansion at Yr Wylfa would be revoked and the plant would be decommissioned as soon as is feasible. The closure of Yr Wylfa would increase grid capacity for new renewable energy projects; current workers at Yr Wylfa would have their jobs safeguarded either by being retained on site to complete decommissioning work or in supported training into the renewable energy sector. Anglesey residents will be consulted on preferences for the redevelopment and renewal of the area.

EN324 We will halt the development of coal-bed methane, shale gas (fracking) and similar hydrocarbon exploitation since it is not needed to meet UK energy demands, is environmentally destructive, and will lead to increasing GHG emissions.

EN325 Incineration of municipal, commercial and industrial waste is not required for energy generation, therefore all existing waste incineration stations will be phased out as soon as possible.

Ensure Secure, Reliable and Resilient Energy Supply

EN400 Wales Green Party will ensure demand management and load balancing capacity: security of energy supply will be achieved as power generation changes to UK-based renewables. We will ensure that the transmission and distribution of energy keeps pace with the change to renewable

energy production, as well as the restructuring of supply resulting from policies in EN 401 et seq. below, and as the increasing amount of decentralisation due to local and microgeneration impacts on the system. We will ensure the changing requirements for demand management and load balancing are accommodated and reliable energy supply guaranteed.

EN 401 The Wales Green Party would investigate the viability of directly investing in upgrading the grid, in order to support our ambition for more local renewable and distributed generation in Wales.

EN402 Local system operators will be given the responsibility for managing local storage and incentivising provision of local demand management techniques to manage the fluctuations in supply and demand of energy in their areas. We will support the installation of genuinely smart meters in all buildings linked to smart appliances (such as smart fridges and air conditioning) that will automatically respond to fluctuations in supply and demand to minimise energy use and align periods of heavy usage with times of low cost, according to user preference.

EN403 We will ensure the development of energy storage capacity through investment in development and deployment of the energy storage capacity needed to balance daily and seasonal demand fluctuations.

EN404 We will consider electricity and heat storage in a separate subsidy or investment category from generation, transmission, distribution and supply in order to ensure rapid deployment and will adapt market mechanisms to ensure storage at the distribution level is valued both for its role in network reinforcement and in electricity trading.

Empower Energy Democracy

EN500 Wales Green Party will separate energy generation from supply and retail. The Welsh Government would take over from the UK Government the regulation and implementation of democratic control of suppliers and retailers at an agreed point once the major changes in structure had been made. This would enable the Welsh Government to target development through Feed in Tariffs and energy auctions to the technologies and areas in which most support is needed.

EN501 We will diversify the ownership of energy generation and ensure democratic control. We will purchase large-scale renewable plant in order to secure public sector energy provision at best value and increase wider competition in energy supply. However we would expect new large-scale generation plant (off-shore wind, concentrated solar power, sustainable biomass, wave and tidal) and electricity transmission and distribution to continue to be built and owned by private companies.

We will encourage the ownership of decentralised energy production and energy saving by community and municipal companies. This will be enabled through favourable supply and demand feed-in tariffs as well as relief from all transmission charges and disproportionate distribution charges for local generation. Small-scale and community-owned renewables will be provided with fixed price feed-in tariffs for installations of up to 50MW to ensure their output can be sold for a fair price. Community groups, cooperatives and local authorities would be supported by the Green Investment Bank to purchase renewable power plant and contribute to local energy supply at competitive rates.

EN502 The Wales Green Party would seek to promote and support community groups, local authorities, housing associations, and other organisations which want to set up independent energy supply companies as community benefit companies selling to Welsh customers. We offer them financial support, in the form of loans, to aid them in setting up such companies. We would learn from the experiences of similar ventures in other parts of the UK, working in partnership where appropriate.”

Develop Low Carbon Transport

EN600 Energy and transport policy will be linked at national and local level to reduce the demand for travel and will promote full integration of bus, coach and rail services to improve the potential for personal/public transport interchange. We will work with rail operators to increase the transfer of freight to rail and with both bus and rail operators to increase passenger use.

EN601 We will ensure the shift of transport power sources to mainly renewable electricity.

EN602 Full electrification of the rail network and bus fleet by 2030 will be targeted with a focus on cities and predominately urban areas.

EN603 We recognise that due to the large and rural nature of the majority of Wales, it will take longer to develop an appropriate infrastructure for electrification of road vehicles. In these areas other aspects linked to reducing carbon intensive transport will be priorities (see Transport).

Support Research, Development and Demonstration

EN700 Wales Green Party will support RD&D in demand reduction and efficiency techniques and materials.

EN701 We will support research into methods of financing energy efficiency and renewables including the accurate pricing-in of co-benefits such as pollution reduction and other strategic effects.

EN702 We will support RD&D in renewable energy production: funding will be provided to support research, development and cost reduction for renewable and low carbon power generation technologies. The National Assembly for Wales will decide on the priority technologies for research in Wales.

EN703 We will support RD&D in energy storage (both small and large scale) and demand balancing technologies.

EN704 We will accelerate the development of ‘smart grid’ technology, demand management and load shifting technologies, as well as heat and electricity storage technologies to enable de-centralised energy systems.

EN705 We will encourage Welsh Universities, research institutes, and businesses to become leaders in the invention, adoption and uptake of new energy technologies.

Ensure the Skills Needed for the Transformation are in Place

EN710 Wales Green Party will ensure rapid development of skills required for demand reduction and energy efficiency and will expand, in cooperation with the vocational, education and training sector, a major programme to develop the skilled workforce capable of supporting the pace of programmes required to meet demand reduction and energy efficiency targets, and to design, construct and operate buildings and processes which meet stringent efficiency standards. We will also ensure provision of training for expert assessment and monitoring of performance and compliance across the energy spectrum.

EN711 We will support continuing professional development programmes to ensure trainers are adequately qualified and experienced, and will ensure that energy efficiency modules within college and apprenticeship frameworks are mandatory.

EN712 Training programmes will be jointly funded with industry to develop the skill base needed in energy management, assessment and monitoring, as well as in energy-related construction, manufacturing and design professions.

EN713 We will ensure the skilled workforce needed for the change to low carbon energy is provided through the rapid expansion of training, 'upskilling' and skills transfer programmes aimed at creating the substantial work force needed to support the change to renewable energy generation, supply and distribution.

EN714 We will work with the existing energy industries to maximise benefits of transferring skills and expertise, making best use of existing skilled and expert personnel, as the energy landscape changes.

EN715 In Wales, training programmes will be targeted at those areas which will see the greatest impact from the switch to renewable energy (e.g. around existing fossil and nuclear power plants) and in the regions which are likely to have higher deployment of wind and hydro technologies (e.g. mid-Wales and North Wales).

Make Sure Regulation and Monitoring of the Energy System is Fit for Purpose

EN800 In Wales, grid regulation and energy legislation would remain with the UK government to keep a simple regulatory regime. The changing regulations would be required to take into account the specific needs of the grid in Wales, particularly the appropriate development of a stronger grid network in rural areas needed to enable renewable energy deployment and ensuring that communities benefit sufficiently from large scale energy installations.

EN801 Welsh residents would be given the right to access information about the generation of all power plants within Wales.

EN802 All energy providers and regulators would be required to provide access to all of their services and proposals in Welsh.

EN803 We will establish the legislation and regulations necessary for the restructuring of the energy supply industry, to enable the separation of generators from suppliers, and to support and regulate local ownership of energy supply and distribution.

EN804 We will provide the resources for effective monitoring of compliance with regulations at both local and national level.

Provide the Means for Financing the Energy Transformation

EN900 Restructuring of the finance for energy would remain with the UK parliament for the initial period (until 2030) to ensure a smooth transition. Sufficient funds to meet Welsh ambitions would be secured for use by the Welsh Government to distribute according to priorities within Wales.

EN901 This finance will be used:

- for homes, community organisations and small businesses to ensure energy bills are brought under control;
- to ensure homes can be kept warm affordably; (see HO500-501)
- to provide grants to improve the energy efficiency of fuel poor households;
- to subsidise where needed the interest rates paid on energy efficiency loans for owners of buildings;
- to support heat network development;
- to help industry change to a low carbon economy.

EN902 Money saved from eliminating regressive fossil fuel subsidies will be used to support energy efficiency measures as well as the diversification and restructuring of the energy generation and supply networks and the elimination of fuel poverty.

Strengthen International Energy Policy

EN910 A Green government will work with relevant international agencies to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. Green members of the National Assembly for Wales, UK Parliament and European Parliament will work with EU partners to improve and tighten EU regulations on energy efficiency and carbon reduction; this will include seeking to improve the current EU Emissions Trading Scheme and development of measures to reduce the embodied carbon of goods traded within the EU.

Planning and the Built Environment

Background

PBE100 There will always be a demand for new buildings. Even if we achieve a stable future population, the current trend for smaller households will mean more housing is required for some time to come. Also, as times change, there will continue to be a demand for new facilities for work, leisure and retail purposes.

PBE101 Green policies should seek to ensure that wherever such development takes place it has as little negative impact on the environment as possible. Overall plans should therefore: minimise the encroachment onto undeveloped "greenfield" sites, by re-using previously developed sites which have fallen into disuse wherever possible. (see HO306)

PBE102 Wales has its own planning challenges. Different regions of the country will have different needs and these needs will change over time. Planning policy in Wales will recognise the necessity of adapting to the changing nature of communities and development which encourages thriving, diverse, and equitable communities will be the prioritised.

Vision

PBE200 To construct new buildings only when needed.

PBE201 To construct buildings using materials with a minimal amount energy used in their manufacture, and designed to minimise the use of energy.

PBE202 For each town or village to contain housing that is suitable for and affordable by local people as well as at least the basic facilities for work, social and cultural activities required by the community.

PBE203 Re-introduce conservation practices in the design and construction and use of buildings. This should result in buildings which are durable, energy efficient, and adaptable for more than one specific purpose.

PBE204 To modify town planning to enable a greater degree of self-sufficiency to be achieved within the living areas than at present.

PBE205 To hold back all new development on productive agricultural land or other land not at present within the confines of an urban (including village) area except where there is a clear and demonstrable rural community need.

Policies

Townscapes and Landscapes with Buildings

PBE300 As far as possible any development within present cities should be confined within the city boundaries, the intention being not to encroach on any more agricultural land. For similar reasons development brought about by the needs of population dispersal should be sited on derelict or other poor quality land within the confines of an existing built-up area. However, the

need for urban green spaces, both formal and informal, should be recognised and these spaces should be protected.

PBE301 Housing densities should be increased by high quality design incorporating a reduction in road and parking space, keeping vehicles to the edge of site wherever possible. Car-free developments should also be encouraged, especially in areas close to amenities or with good public transport.

PBE302 Derelict land, particularly from extractive industries, should be improved for re-use, not only for recreational purposes, but for housing and light industry. Such sites should only be developed in a way which does not lead to the loss of wildlife habitats or biodiversity.

PBE303 However, the effects of climate change will mean that it will no longer be practical for the continued use of some sites, including many homes, which are now liable to regular flooding. Such derelict land should be re-landscaped rather than re-developed, and the practice of developing reclaimed marshland should be ended.

PBE304 Central government would help those who are most affected. Government insurance schemes would be supported and extended to offer cover for those refused flooding cover by commercial companies, and there should financial assistance to help with relocation for those whose properties have become uninhabitable

PBE305 Planning regulations should be adjusted so that zoning is discouraged. Strict segregation of residential, industrial and commercial areas kills the natural growth of a community. Provided that there is no excessive nuisance all types of building can mix as they have done in the most vigorous communities in the past.

PBE306 Policy planning guidance, building regulations, and advice to local authorities will be amended so that local plans reflect the needs of the existing local population and are sustainable. Local plans should encourage traditional local designs and innovative energy saving technologies.

PBE307 Close proximity of workplaces, homes and services cuts down commuter movement and saves energy and time.

PBE308 Where segregation by building types is necessary the isolated industrial unit needs humanising with pedestrian access, planted areas and recreational space.

PBE309 Removing an existing building, or part of it, has just as much impact on the nature of the surrounding built environment as a new building or extension. Therefore, planning permission would be required for demolition or partial demolition, to the same extent as it is required to build or extend.

PBE310 Planning decisions should be taken at as decentralised a level as reasonably possible. Although welcoming some regional co-ordination of planning (the 'Regional Planning Guidance' process), Local Authorities should retain democratic accountability for the development and therefore the planning process within their boundaries.

PBE311 Elected representatives from the ward or wards affected by a proposed new development will be given voting rights on the relevant planning committee for that development.

PBE312 The Welsh Government will be given the right to determine large energy and industrial developments which have the potential impact on multiple areas and which are of significance

across Wales, such as incinerators, new ports, tidal barrages, nuclear plants.

Local independent retailing

Background

PBE320 A wide range of local shops and services within walking distance is essential to a sustainable community. Yet local shops are closing or being replaced with chain-store 'clones' and formula retailers every day, and just a few supermarkets dominate the market for groceries. Current government and local government policies are not protecting local shops and markets.

PBE321 Many of the Green Party's policies on localisation and small enterprises will help local, independent retailers, such as the abolition of VAT and combining National Insurance with Income Tax, and some of our policies already seek to control parking in new developments. However, some specific planning policies to preserve the viability of local shops and the services provided by these enterprises are also necessary.

Policy

PBE322 We will introduce national planning policy guidance so that local and regional authorities can protect and encourage local, independent retailers.

PBE323 We will require regional and local authorities to adopt a retail strategy, a retail regeneration plan and local competition policies to prevent high streets from being dominated by formula businesses, and to ensure fair market access for small, independent retailers. We would require these strategies to include policies to support and retain street markets and farmers markets, and encourage the introduction of new markets, where there is community demand.

PBE324 We will empower local authorities to bring in rent controls for small shop premises, to prevent landlords from driving up rents and driving out independent retailers.'

PBE325 We will encourage local authorities to ensure their planning policies promote development opportunities for small independent retailers where these developments (such as central collection hubs, delivery vehicle parking) would enable them to effectively compete with online retailing.

Urban Conservation

PBE330 Urban areas often contain valuable wildlife habitats, which protect and encourage greater biodiversity as well as being important for the wellbeing and recreation of urban communities. Existing sites will be protected and enhanced and further habitats established by, for example, establishing new nature reserves.

PBE331 In the long term policies to limit land speculation will increase the amount of land available for wildlife habitats.

Burial places

PBE340 In some parts of the country there is a shortage of provision for burials. At the same time there is an interest in woodland burial and other environmentally friendly forms of burial. Local councils shall review the future need for burial space, to include provision for woodland and other environmentally friendly forms of burial.

PBE341 There would be a presumption against any new development on existing burial spaces with the exception of the sympathetic conversion of derelict Places of Worship.

Tall Buildings

PBE350 All new buildings should harmonise with the local built and natural environment. They should not disturb the local sense of place. The height of new buildings should not obscure or unduly disrupt popular viewpoints from local amenities such as parks or hills, and should be broadly consistent with the height of existing buildings in the local environment. Specific buildings providing a distinctive feature to the locality can be an exception to this.

Energy and Resource Conservation in Buildings

PBE360 In the long term, so-called autonomous houses and developments are to be recommended, but until they are possible on a wide scale, steps should be taken to encourage resource conservation. VAT on insulation materials and devices which reduce consumption of non-renewable energy and other resources should be abolished.

PBE361 Air conditioning and mechanical ventilation systems are to be discouraged and the heat pump encouraged in place of gas, oil-fired or electric central heating systems. Proper use should be made of solar gains for space heating and the use of solar heating for domestic hot water should be encouraged. Solar panels will be mandatory in all new buildings whenever technically appropriate.

PBE362 Investigate the use of low-grade water for industrial purposes, possibly recycling it within the industrial compound. Water-saving domestic installations should be fitted in all new and renovated buildings.

PBE363 Thermal insulation levels should be increased in all new or existing buildings. Developments and individual houses should be designed to maximise solar gain and minimise energy requirements.

PBE364 All industrial and commercial buildings should be designed for as long a life as possible and not too closely tied to the original purpose, so that a change of ownership and use can readily be accommodated. It should be possible to break down large industrial buildings into a number of small occupancies later if this is necessary.

Historic Buildings

PBE370 Buildings of special historic interest need to be preserved for future generations. The present regulations & guidance for conservation areas & listed buildings should be maintained & improved to provide incentives for the retention of listed structures & to protect or enhance the special historical character of conservation areas.

PBE371 Legal sanctions must be stiffened against those who demolish listed buildings, or who allow them to fall into a state of disrepair. The relevant bodies must make proper use of legislation enabling them to do this and must earmark sufficient resources, financial and staff, to operate it effectively.

PBE372 While protecting heritage assets will be given full consideration, this will not be given undue priority over desirable renewable energy developments in the locality.

Building Industry

PBE380 Encouragement should be given to building workers to maintain craft skills, even if they only use them on a part-time basis. Apprenticeship schemes in Wales would include opportunities for new entrants to the industry to learn craft skills suitable for their locality e.g. dry stone walling in Snowdonia.

PBE381 Building systems must be investigated thoroughly to determine their true cost in comparison with traditional methods. Many of them are uneconomic on grounds not always immediately apparent, for instance, relying on imported components, high levels of maintenance, high running costs, etc. Their extensive use has also led to a lack of standardisation. Traditional building was, contrary to popular belief, highly standardised and dimensionally coordinated. A return to this quality of standardisation would cut down on much of the waste that is taken for granted in present building systems.

Planning in the Countryside

PBE390 Wales Green Party will ensure that planning for sustainable use of the countryside for multiple purposes is a major and integral part of the Local Development Frameworks to be implemented by all Local Planning Authorities working in closer union with Community Councils. Advice will be provided by the government's statutory authorities and agencies on conservation and full democratic consultation undertaken. Ecological criteria will be given full weight in all planning decisions. (see AGR)

PBE391 We will ensure that planning decisions are made at the lowest appropriate level – by elected Community Councils, town, district, county or unitary councils, and ensure that they have the necessary training and access to knowledge to make appropriate decisions. Appeals against refusals will be determined by a strengthened independent planning inspectorate, competent to take all factors into account and deliver Appeal determinations in a faster timescale negating the negative impacts that an 8 week planning process added to a 26 week Appeal process has on rural homeowners and businesses. The support or objections of Community Councils for rural

farm infrastructure or individual rural dwellings will be of greater significance in future planning determinations recognising that those closest to the community in question understand more about the impacts upon the local communities and environment. The Infrastructure Planning Commission, or any similar separate fast-track body for national infrastructure decisions, will be abolished as democratically unsafe. However, steps will be taken to avoid unnecessarily long hearings into major developments. We will review the case for the right to appeal against local planning approvals.

PBE392 We will strengthen planning controls for large-scale or damaging land-use changes in the countryside, in particular, large-scale farm buildings, new and improvement works by drainage bodies and water authorities, clearances of woodland, works affecting woodland and large-scale afforestation. However, small scale agricultural infrastructure is recognised as an essential ingredient to enable entry into farming for smallholders or smaller farms and support will be given where this is low impact, uses locally sourced materials and supports sustainability of other local rural enterprises and traditional skills such as timber frame builders.

PBE393 We will introduce legislation to halt and reverse the spread of light pollution in the countryside in order to protect the dark night sky and to minimise disturbance to wildlife from artificial light. There will be a presumption against new lighting in the countryside - this will be incorporated into all Local Development Frameworks. Improved lighting design and the use of more efficient lighting will be required for new developments or replacement of existing lighting. Energy conservation, including the removal or reduction of unnecessary lighting, will be promoted. National policy that encourages local renewable energy installations will be retained, strengthened and enforced.

Health

Introduction

HE100 For several decades, Wales had a health system largely administered through the United Kingdom Government's Welsh Office. From 1999 responsibilities for healthcare started to be devolved to Wales, so currently legislation and policy for health can be considered a devolved matter.

HE101 Since then, differences between the policy approach and framework in England and that in Wales have widened. The internal market introduced in the United Kingdom NHS in the 1990s created a separation between purchasers and providers. This system has been abandoned in Wales. In 2009, seven Local Health Boards (LHBs) were created, responsible for all aspects of planning and providing health services in their geographical areas. The boards of these bodies, together with those of the three remaining NHS trusts (for ambulance services, specialized cancer care and public health), are appointed by and accountable to the Minister for Health and Social Services. There is no formal competition between providers.

HE102 Patients' views are reflected through the internal mechanisms of LHBs and the seven soon statutory community health councils rather than through choice of provider. LHBs operate within a policy framework determined by the Welsh Government and plan services accordingly. Because of the country's small size and the absence of an organizational level between the local and national, political involvement in local decision-making is sometimes strong.

HE103 Responsibility for social services lies with 22 local authorities, which are required to work in partnership with the NHS and the third (non-profit-making) sector. Separate regulatory bodies for health (Healthcare Inspectorate Wales) and social care (Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales) and the Wales Audit Office report independently on service performance.

Vision and Strategic Objectives

HE200 Wales Green Party believes that Wales should adopt the Health 2020 (WHO 2013), the new European health policy framework which sets out a vision:

...“all people are enabled and supported in achieving their full health potential and well-being and in which countries, individually and jointly, work towards reducing inequities in health within the Region and beyond”

HE201 This is translated into their shared goals:

...“to significantly improve the health and well-being of populations, reduce health inequalities, strengthen public health and ensure sustainable people- centred health systems that are universal, equitable, sustainable and of high quality.”

HE202 The specific values of Health 2020 are based on the human right to health, solidarity, fairness and sustainability. These values incorporate several others including: universality, equity, the right to participate in decision-making, dignity, autonomy, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability.

HE203 Health 2020 identifies two main strategic objectives and four priority areas:

1. Improving health for all and reducing health inequalities
2. Improving leadership and participatory governance for health

Priority areas:

1. Investing in health through a life-course approach and empowering people
2. Tackling Europe's major health challenges of noncommunicable and communicable diseases
3. Strengthening people-centred health systems, public health capacity and emergency preparedness, surveillance and response
4. Creating resilient communities and supportive environments

Challenges

HE300 The NHS in Wales like other developed nations, faces a set of increasingly significant challenges in continuing to deliver high standards of health outcomes. These include:

Health Inequality, Changing Patients' Health Needs and Personal Preferences

HE301 Improvements in health have not been shared equally. Life expectancy for the most deprived fifth of the population has risen more slowly than for any other group. For example, people in Cyncoed and Butetown in Cardiff, just a few miles apart, face a 10-year difference in average length of life (source Together for Health 2011).

HE302 Many of the causes of poor health are deep-rooted and they are often difficult to tackle. Along with other countries, Wales faces an obesity epidemic and rates of smoking, drinking and substance misuse continue to cause concern. The economic crisis has affected Wales badly and is likely to generate greater demands on the NHS.

HE303 Within two decades it is estimated almost one in three people in Wales will be aged 60 or over. By 2031, the number of people aged 75 or over will have increased by 76 per cent. Older people are more likely to have at least one chronic condition – an illness such as diabetes, dementia or arthritis - and have more as their age increases.

HE304 Wales currently has the highest rates of long-term limiting illness in the UK, which is the most expensive aspect of NHS care accounting for 70% of the health budget. Between 2001/02 and 2010/11 the number of people with a chronic or long-term condition in Wales increased from 105,000 to 142,000 (source The 2015 Challenge for NHS Wales 2015).

HE305 Many people now want to be better informed and more involved with their own care breaking down the traditional barrier between patient and health professional.

Technological Advances

HE310 There have been unprecedented changes in treatments, technologies and care delivery. Technology is transforming our ability to predict, diagnose and treat disease. New treatments are coming on stream. And we know, both from examples within the NHS and internationally, that there are better ways of organising care, breaking out of the artificial boundaries between hospitals and primary care, between health and social care, between generalists and specialists—all of which get in the way of care that is genuinely coordinated around what people need and want.

Rising Costs

HE320 The cost of providing care is rising. The NHS now delivers a much more extensive and sophisticated range of treatments and procedures than could ever have been envisaged at its creation and delivers these services to an increasing number of citizens.

HE321 Wales is the poorest region of the whole UK. This poverty often contributes to poor health, and the effects of this are being compounded by welfare reform. Evidence has suggested that economic downturns lead to short and long-term health effects.

HE322 As demand has increased, finances have become more constricted for NHS Wales. Health spending is a significant percentage of the Welsh Government budget, accounting for more than 42% of its total expenditure. The recent £225 million increase in health spending in the Welsh Government's 2015-16 draft budget is welcomed, however it will not relieve all the pressures that the NHS faces, and difficult decisions will still have to be made. The Nuffield Trust estimates there will be a £2.5 billion funding gap for the NHS in Wales by 2025/26.

Rural Areas

HE330 Wales has 5% of the UK population in 8% of the land mass. However the population is concentrated in the post industrial south and northern coastal strip. Much of the rest of Wales is rural. There are many challenges impacting on the delivery of healthcare in rural communities.

HE331 First, populations in rural towns and villages are relatively small compared with the larger cities and towns of Wales and the road and rail links between them are sometimes difficult. This poses challenges both for those delivering services and for patients in respect of the distances from fixed centres or the travel times to patients at home.

HE332 Second, retaining or acquiring the necessary skilled staff from the conurbations where they are trained and with which they and their families have some affinity. Too often the advantages of professional practice in rural communities are overlooked by clinicians and training bodies.

HE333 Third, the scale of operation in rural settings is inevitably geared to the size of the populations concerned and this means that services do not have the resilience in the event that skilled staff leave or are absent for periods of ill health, training or personal development.

HE334 Fourth the trend over the past 20 years has been one of increasing specialisation in medicine. Such specialisation results in each specialist needing to serve a far larger population than the previous generalist. In addition the complexity of some care requires additional adjacent clinical expertise – e.g. in anaesthetic and diagnostic support – if the full benefits of skilled expertise are to be realised. This leads to more and more hospital services being concentrated onto fewer and fewer hospital sites that, in turn, tend to be set within the larger towns and cities of Wales.

HE335 Fifth, as the geographical distances increase between hospital-based staff and community-based health staff, there is less likelihood that health staff from both traditions will mix socially and professionally. This reduces avenues for exchange and the building of trust and understanding between them.

HE336 Sixth, patients with minor injuries or illnesses are accustomed to call into local facilities for out-of-hours treatment, even when those facilities are not designed to deliver such care. Community hospitals in particular are still seen by residents as places where such care is available and responding to these demands in a safe way has proved to be a challenge.

Policies

Public Health

HE400 Wales Green Party will put greater emphasis on promoting public health and reducing health inequalities rather than seeing the NHS as an illness service. We will do this through policies designed to secure a healthy urban and rural environment (for example using green spaces in urban environments), healthy work, healthy sexual behaviour, increase physical activity, reduce consumption of tobacco, alcohol, drug use and gambling, healthy agriculture and food, healthy education, a healthy transport system and healthy local economic development. It is acknowledged that reducing health inequalities requires action across all social determinants of health e.g housing and employment policies. In particular this will be achieved through:

HE401 Ensuring all babies will be given the best start in life through investing in parental support, breastfeeding and early years play and education.

HE402 Ensuring all children and young people will be given the opportunity to develop essential life skills through receiving personal, social, health, economic, sex and relationship education at school.

HE403 Ensuring every child will have at least two hours of physical activity a week at school.

HE404 Looking at the feasibility of further regulations and laws that will save lives. These include further restrictions on the marketing of foods high in sugar, salt and fat to children; Introducing a duty on sweetened beverages; introducing a minimum unit price for alcohol; implementation of standardised packaging for tobacco and mandate a 20 mph speed limit in all built up areas.

HE405 Enabling people to achieve a good quality of life through giving everyone on paid employment and training a living wage.

HE406 Investing in public transport and infrastructure to support active travel, such as walking and cycling. We will strengthen the planning process to make services and amenities more accessible by foot, cycle and public transport to increase levels of physical activity.

HE407 Implementing a trans-national approach to meet climate change targets including a rapid move to 100% renewables and a zero carbon energy system.

HE408 Ensuring that essential dentistry, including check ups is provided free under the NHS.

HE409 Ensuring the NHS will provide free universal eye checks.

HE 410 We would ensure that health boards in Wales adopt the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's (NICE) guidelines on preventing excess winter deaths. Ensuring Wales is not left behind England on this crucial area of protection for vulnerable older people.

HE 411 Wales Green Party supports the provision of an Autism Act for Wales.

Quality

HE420 Wales Green Party will ensure that health care services are delivered with compassion, taking into consideration patients full range of needs, health care will be delivered in an environment that promotes healing and care. This includes single sex wards in hospitals, ensuring that maternity care is of the highest quality and ensuring that care reflects people's needs.

HE421 Mental and emotional health will be given equal status to physical health in the planning, provision and monitoring of services.

HE422 We would review the make up of Local Health Boards and NHS Trusts and ensure there is proper accountability to the local population and they are fit for purpose.

HE423 We support the recent revision of the Health and Care Standards (2015) and wish to see Local Health Boards held to account for meeting these. Local people should decide what and how services are provided and should have complete flexibility to meet local needs as long as services meet minimum standards.

HE424 Health services will be required to publish a dashboard of comprehensive performance data, including patient outcomes, patient and carer feedback and organisational learning.

HE425 Wales Green Party supports the main findings of the Berwick Report on patient safety in so much as it emphasises the primacy of quality of patient care especially patient safety; the engagement, empowerment and listening to the patient/carer voice; the development of staff especially in quality improvement skills; transparency, accountability and the growth of clinical knowledge.

HE426 We would also support a review of the regulatory system in health and social care to ensure it was fit for purpose and consider merging the two inspectorates.

HE427 We would review the function of the Community Health Councils to ensure they act as the public voice and consider adopting a model similar to the Patient and Client Council in Northern Ireland.

Patient Centred Care

HE430 Wales Green Party believes that the NHS in Wales has to become a People-Centred Health System (WHO 2013) that prioritises individuals, their families and communities and serves the population of Wales.

HE431 The traditional divide between primary care, community services, and hospitals - largely unaltered since the birth of the NHS - is increasingly a barrier to the personalised and coordinated health services patients need. And just as GPs and hospitals tend to be rigidly demarcated, so too are social care and mental health services even though people increasingly need all three.

HE432 Over the next few years the NHS will increasingly need to dissolve these traditional boundaries. Long term conditions are now a central task of the NHS; caring for these needs requires a partnership with patients over the long term rather than providing single, unconnected 'episodes' of care. As a result there is now a consensus on the direction we need to take.

- Increasingly we need to manage systems – networks of care – not just organisations.
- Out-of-hospital care needs to become a much larger part of what the NHS does.
- Services need to be integrated around the patient. For example a patient with cancer needs their mental health and social care coordinated around them. Patients with mental illness need their physical health addressed at the same time.
- We should learn much faster from the best examples, not just from within the UK but internationally.
- And as we introduce them, we need to evaluate new care models to establish which produce the best experience for patients and the best value for money

HE433 We will encourage new models to develop locally that put the patient in the centre of service delivery. We will also review the Primary care contract to ensure it is aligned with patient centred care. We support the move of Primary care to population based capitation, outcomes focused and developing networks of practices.

HE434 We will integrate health and social care by ensuring they work together and will consider whether any restructuring or legislation is required to achieve this.

HE435 Patient engagement is a priority in healthcare and Wales Green Party supports the delivery of online access to their records and the development of Personal Health Records (PHR).

HE436 We will support stronger partnerships with third sector organisations who can provide information, advice, advocacy and services particularly to hard to reach underserved groups through simplified and multiyear contracts.

Finance

HE440 Wales Green Party is committed to universal healthcare system free at the point of use funded through general taxation.

HE441 Health spending in Wales needs to reflect the needs of the country and should be maintained at around the average in the European Union.

HE442 We would establish a national transformation fund for new models of care. Additional financial support will keep necessary services going while new models of care are developed. The fund should be available to every health board to drive the move towards models of care that will lead to more efficient, integrated care in the future.

Workforce

HE450 Wales Green Party believes that planning for a workforce to better match changing demand is key to the success of Wales NHS. Developing staff roles and skills to provide complex, multidisciplinary, coordinated care, in partnership with individuals and communities.

HE451 Mental health and learning disability services have already undergone a change from institutional care to community-based care for many people, but more skilled personnel are required in community-based and primary health care settings.

HE452 Changing health needs as the population ages may create a need for more community nursing support, and training and support for carers and volunteers.

HE453 Advances in technology may require different specialist skills, such as tele-medicine, and the provision of more community-based clinics run by a range of appropriately qualified health providers.

HE454 There will be an increased need for support and supervision of professionals in training, pre- registration and post-registration, as well as ongoing continuing education, especially in rural areas.

HE455 Wales Green Party will ensure that the various training bodies are taking the necessary action to ensure that we have the workforce with the right skills and flexibilities to deliver these new models of care.

Technology

HE460 We believe that using technology will help transform care and enable people to access information and treatment in a way that meets their needs. This will help spread innovation to improve the quality of care while responding to the financial challenge facing the NHS In Wales.

HE461 Technology can play a key role in patient care and allow service users to avoid having to go to hospital or to their GP for care. Technologies such as telephones, email, computers, interactive video, digital imaging and healthcare monitoring devices make it possible for clinicians to monitor, diagnose and treat patients without having to be with them physically. These technologies offer a great opportunity to increase dramatically the efficiency of the healthcare industry, keeping patients out of hospital and allowing care to be facilitated from the home.

HE462 Technology also provides opportunities for informing and engaging service users and other individuals, giving them the chance to learn about their healthcare and wellbeing through a number of innovative avenues, including accredited health apps.

HE463 Wales Green Party will encourage the uptake of such technology.

Innovation

HE470 Medicine is becoming more tailored to the individual through decoding genomes and better understanding of disease.

HE471 Wales Green Party will support research aimed at improving patient outcomes and ensure a quicker adoption of effective diagnosis and treatments.

HE472 Around half of all clinical trials have not been published; some trials have not even been registered. If action is not taken urgently, information on what was done and what was found in trials could be lost forever, leading to bad treatment decisions, missed opportunities for good medicine, and trials being repeated unnecessarily. Wales Green Party will ensure all trials past and present will be registered, and the full methods and the results reported.

Social Welfare

Introduction

SW100 Social services in Wales support 150,000 young, old, and disabled people every year to achieve their potential and help make them safe. Many of these services are delivered in partnership with housing, health or education services. There were 44,000 referrals concerning children and young people and 88,000 assessments of need for adults. 12 million hours of home care were delivered. Social services look after over 5,000 children, just over 4,000 of whom are in foster care. (source: Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action 2011)

SW101 The net expenditure on social services and social care is about £1.4 billion, with services being delivered by just under 70,000 people. There are around 1,800 regulated care settings. (figures from Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action 2011). Whilst most social care in Wales is provided by private and independent organisations it is largely funded through taxation and is commissioned via 22 local authorities.

SW102 Wales has the highest dependency on welfare in Britain with nearly 19% of working age population on benefits, compared to the British average of 15%. (source: Key Issues for the Fourth Assembly 2011) The UK Government Welfare Reform Act 2012 has radically changed the benefits system introducing, a single universal credit, tax changes, Disability Living Allowance changes, a review of sickness absence levels, sanctions for those refusing work and an annual benefit cap of £26000.

SW103 The policy changes have been assessed and are estimated to reduce annual benefit and tax credit entitlements in Wales by around £900 million in 2015/16. To put this overall loss into context, benefit and tax credit expenditure and gross disposable household income are estimated to be around £6 billion and £45 billion respectively in 2015/16. (source: Analysing the impact of the UK Government's welfare Reforms in Wales - Stage 3 analysis 2014)

SW104 Although losses will vary widely depending on individual circumstances, the average annual loss per working-age adult in Wales is estimated to be around £500 in 2015/16 and are likely to hit the poorest the most.

SW105 The reforms also affect housing with many claimants losing income. The plan is for housing benefit to be abolished and the housing element of the universal credit will be administered centrally.

Vision and Strategic Objectives

SW200 Wales Green Party will implement policies to promote social welfare for all. We are broadly supportive of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (2014) which:

- Strengthens powers for the safeguarding of children and adults, so that vulnerable people at risk can be protected more effectively;
- Ensure people are assessed on what they need, rather than just on what services are available locally;
- Introduces portable assessments, which means if people move from one part of Wales to another they will not need to worry about whether they will receive services in their new area;

- Facilitates an increased take up of direct payments to meet people's care and support needs, meaning people will have more control over how these needs are met;
- Introduces a National Outcomes Framework to set out very clearly what children and adults can expect from social services, to measure achievements and see where improvements are needed;
- Introduces equivalent rights for carers so that people who care for someone such as an elderly or disabled relative or friend would get similar rights to the people they care for
- Establishes a National Adoption Service to improve the outcomes of children in need of a permanent family.

SW201 Wales Green Party believes that we are all interdependent and that many people need support at some stage in their lives. The basic aim is that all people should be able to lead an empowered and fulfilled life. We believe that every individual in society has an equal right to food, water, warmth and housing. We must ensure that robust safeguards are in place to protect the interests of all people.

SW202 To make life easier for people who need to access several types of service, Wales Green Party would work towards having a single budget covering health and social services and an integrated service (see HE434). The problems with social services can be seen in part as demand failure. We need to create a system that helps citizens articulate what a good life looks like to them, and to co-produce solutions to help them achieve their good life. This removes the power imbalance between citizen and state and In addition saves money. We believe the direction outlined in the Barker Report 2014 is the correct one with Social Care funded through the taxation and free at the point of use.

SW203 The policies below cover those areas currently addressed by social services departments - including children and families, older people, mental health, and disabilities.

SW204 Social Welfare provision has often been inadequate, disempowering, discriminatory and ineffective. People in need, who receive a service, too often receive a minimal service, which may be the cheapest option available rather than the option that best promotes independence. The inadequate provision puts stress on both carers and those receiving the service.

Challenges

SW300 Social Welfare and society are facing a number of challenges these include:

- What we all expect of public services today is very different from a decade ago.
- Families are now more diverse and technology has transformed how we communicate.
- We are more conscious of our rights. We have stronger expectations about our voice being heard and about control over services we use.
- The demography of our society is changing. We are an ageing society and we see many more people in their middle years with significant disabilities who are able to live fulfilled lives. We are seeing many more children with significant disabilities who have high expectations of services.
- Some families and communities have become more fragmented; and issues such as substance misuse are having a major impact.
- Social services and social care are facing real and unsustainable increases in demand and the numbers of looked after children and those on the child protection register are growing. The number of people registered with local authorities in Wales as having a learning

disability is increasing and there is an increasing number of older people with complex care needs who can benefit from support - and whose support needs are extensive.

- The financial outlook is difficult and social service departments will be under pressure to make savings.

Policies

Citizen's Income (CI)

SW400 In so far as it is possible to remedy social problems purely by financial means, Wales Green Party's Citizen's Income (see EC730-733), when implemented will enable people to have a more flexible approach to work, retirement and caring for others.

SW401 CI is designed to cover the basic needs of an able-bodied person. Since 1979 the level of benefits for the able-bodied has fallen well below this level; consequently the supplements necessary to bring payments for those with disabilities or health problems up to an adequate level are considerably larger than they will need to be in conjunction with CI when that is fully implemented.

SW402 Wales Green Party acknowledges the current position of benefits however it would work towards streamlining it in the short and medium term and replacing it with Citizen's Income in the long term.

Children and Families

SW410 Wales Green Party believes that all children should be treated with respect and given full opportunity with whatever support may be required to live in a caring and nurturing environment.

SW411 However, although families are often thought of as the ideal social institution to bring up children, many children do not live in nuclear families and sometimes a child's parents cannot or do not want to look after them.

SW412 Wales Green Party recognises the many challenges and stresses that parenting can bring and will support and encourage a wide range of community and self help services for children and their carers e.g. Homestart, family centres, adopt-a- grandparent schemes.

SW413 We believe that services for children need to be holistic and integrated, recognising both the needs of the child and their families and carers. This may involve increased expenditure over current levels, but effectively meeting the needs of children and their families and carers will produce a healthier, more balanced and secure society, with reduced costs in criminal justice, social services and other areas of spending.

SW414 Childminders will continue to be registered and monitored, with free training, including training in nutrition, given to all. We recognise that childminders often have a low income and are seen as having a low social status. We believe that bringing up children is a very important job, and would seek to improve the standing of childminders whilst making sure that they earn a living wage for what is a demanding job, while maintaining the affordability of care.

SW415 Nurseries and children's centres will be monitored for quality of care and the information made readily available. Special attention will be given to ratios of adult carers to children. Nursery staff will be given adequate training, including training in nutrition.

SW416 Nannies will be registered on a national register, enabling families to check the suitability of their potential employee. The treatment of au pairs will be regulated to stop them from being exploited by their employers.

SW417 Working grandparents will be given the same right to request flexi-work as parents if caring for grandchildren.

SW418 We would extend the hours of nursery/children's centre entitlement for children aged 3 and 4, this and try to give parents and carers as much flexibility as possible in terms of times and locations. The provision of occasional 'ad hoc' care will be encouraged and facilitated.

SW419 Children's centres will engage in active outreach work to make contact with socially excluded families to ensure that their children's development is not endangered and to encourage the parents and carers to access free local activities for children.

SW420 Parents and carers in a community will be encouraged to set up networks of babysitters and playgroups. This would aid both children's development and community cohesion.

SW421 Children with special needs will have the enhanced level of care they need, with all of their carers given up-to-date disability equality training so that they can care for the child in the way that suits him/her best.

SW422 Family courts and mediation should help to find the right solution for each child in the event of family breakdown with children being given a say in their future.

SW423 We would broaden the criteria for fostering and adoption to include all types of relationships- single, married, co-habiting and homosexual couples. A wide range of support services will accompany any fostering arrangement, including financial help, respite care and emergency phone-line.

SW424 We would develop and implement a comprehensive national strategy for the prevention of child sexual abuse.

Older People

SW430 Ageism is rife in our society and many industries and companies are not interested in employing people despite their knowledge, stability and reliability.

SW431 Retirement means that people no longer get paid for the work they do but that does not mean they stop working. Our Citizen Income scheme would enable retirement age to be completely flexible recognising that some want to retire as soon as possible and others want to continue working.

SW432 Many voluntary organisations depend on the work and commitment of people who have retired from paid work. Traditional economics ignores such contributions but Citizen's Income will enable people to work part-time, flexible hours and home working.

Mental Illness and Emotional Vulnerability

SW440 Wales Green Party is strongly committed to valuing and supporting people with illness and disabilities. Wales Green Party policies address: promoting mental health, preventing mental illness, reducing suffering and disability, promoting recovery and rehabilitation, reducing suicide and reducing other premature death related to mental illness. A comprehensive approach to these goals requires close liaison between the health, social services, education, employment, environment and criminal justice systems at national, local and individual levels.

SW441 At government and local level, there is a need to work closely with the other key sectors to ensure adequate choice of employment opportunities, leisure opportunities, creative projects, day care, supported housing and provision of psychological and social therapies. At individual level, there is a need to ensure detailed needs assessment and provision of a carefully tailored package to meet individual needs of people and their carers.

Disabled People

SW450 Wales Green Party has endorsed the social model of disability where there is a recognition that society has put up barriers which prevents disabled people with different impairments from becoming and being full and active citizens. Wales Green Party is strongly committed to valuing, empowering and supporting people with illness and disabilities and will ensure that the UN Convention of the Rights of Disabled People (UNCRPD) is adhered to across government policy and legislation.

SW451 We recognise all disabled people, including people with sensory, learning, physical and mental health impairments, should be able to live in the community with appropriate support if desired.

SW452 Care packages need to provide appropriate support for any activity or task needed to facilitate the disabled person's functioning. This allows the disabled person to access the same political, social, leisure and work opportunities available to non disabled people.

SW453 Care packages should include any additional expenses incurred from having a disability, such as communication aids, interpretation and accommodation adaptations, mental health support, personal mobility aids, learning support, counselling, psychotherapy, art and music therapy or other therapies as appropriate. Funding of individual care packages should be provided through a number of mechanisms such as via direct payments, trusts, or third party schemes, all permitted under the NHS and Community Care Act and Community Care (Direct Payments) Act.

SW454 Wales Green Party is determined to tackle Disability Hate Crime through vigorous action at all levels and organisations.

Carers

SW460 Wales Green Party recognizes that much social welfare work is done by volunteers, charities, helplines and family members, including children. Such individuals would be helped by Citizen's Income and proper stable funding of voluntary organisations.

SW461 We recognise that where social welfare support is provided year-round by family members or friends exclusively, there may arise a need for respite from the duties this involves. Such breaks are vital in that they ensure carers get the time we all need to rest from work.

SW462 We also recognise that breaks from caring work enable carers to go on caring. Many respite and day care centres have been closed in recent years, and the buildings sold to the private sector, in order that financial savings be realized by health and social services departments.

SW463 We will support existing respite centres and will fund the replacement of respite care centres where they are needed. The short-term capital investment will be off-set in the long term by fewer family breakdowns and fewer admissions to permanent institutions.

Transport

Vision

TR100 Wales Green Party policy aims to reduce the need to travel whilst increasing accessibility to public transport. Most of us should be able to walk to work, to local schools and to local shops. The creation of strong local economies is vital in this regard because it will mean people need to travel less. Greatly increased investment in public transport is also required to ensure accessibility to all, irrespective of age, wealth or disability, and to have the minimum impact on the environment.

TR101 A key distinction between our transport policy and others is the emphasis on demand management rather than provision for anticipated demand. We want to provide what is necessary and efficient within ecological constraints. We reject simply providing for anticipated demand as wasteful, damaging and unsustainable.

TR102 Our transport policies would therefore favour the following hierarchy: walking, cycling, public transport (which includes taxis), private motorised transport, air transport.

TR103 We call for the introduction of proportional liability for road users: the duty of care for their actions when using the road should be proportional to the degree of danger that they impose on other road users.

TR104 We will encourage the development of car-free city centres, and aim to make these the norm.

TR105 We recognise that the vast majority of Wales is rural even though most of its citizens live in urban environments. The economy of Wales does depend on the health of its rural lands, its population and therefore its transport system which therefore needs special attention.

TR106 Our policies on freight will favour reduction in movement through a reduction in overall consumption and an increase in consumption of locally produced goods, and sustainable methods of movement.

TR107 We will aim to use the most up to date sustainable technologies for providing transport fuels.

TR108 We seek to have full responsibility for transport in Wales under devolved powers rather than the current part measure. We would co-operate with English local authorities and Westminster on issues that affect both Wales and England.

Walking

TR200 Walking benefits the user through increasing their health and well-being. It has the least environmental impact and is available to use by the greatest number, particularly children. It also benefits the social environment by increasing contact between people.

TR201 It is recognised that there are some people who are not able to walk or cycle, and for this reason disabled access is given equal priority.

TR202 We will introduce a 20 m.p.h. limit throughout built up areas, including villages.

TR203 All speed limits will be rigorously enforced. Greater use will be made of automatic cameras and other speed measurement.

The Highway Code allows for priority to pedestrians crossing at side road junctions and access roads. We will seek to incorporate this in road design, education and enforcement.

TR204 We call for promotion of [Home Zones](#) where traffic calming measures are employed so that people can chat, play, or sit and watch the world go by in the streets where they live.

TR205 In residential streets, priority will be given to residents. We encourage residents' initiatives to increase pedestrian space and restrict vehicle carriageway, with physical features effectively limiting speed of vehicles to 10m.p.h. making the streets more inviting to pedestrian.

TR206 In shopping streets, priority will be given to safe access: widened pavements and, where possible, pedestrianisation. We encourage schemes which allow slow motor transport for shoppers with limited mobility or heavy burdens. In all shopping streets crossings will be provided at frequent intervals. Design for people with disabilities has to be paramount.

TR207 All formal pedestrian crossings will be designed to respond quickly to pedestrian demand. Barriers stopping informal crossing of roads should be progressively removed.

TR208 Street lighting remains necessary to protect the most vulnerable road users. We will encourage better-directed and less energy intensive methods of lighting.

TR209 We call for provision of safe footpaths and cycle routes between neighbouring communities.

TR210 We will ensure that pavements are clean and well maintained. We will fine those allowing dogs to foul footways.

TR211 We will ensure that pedestrian routes are signposted clearly.

Cycling

TR300 Cycling shares many of the benefits of walking.

TR301 The shared use of pedestrian space by cyclists is recognised as a source of nuisance and conflict. We will reduce these conflicts through measures to make roads safe for cyclists by

creating segregated cycle paths; loss of road space for other vehicles to accommodate cyclists will be preferable to loss of footway space for pedestrians.

Cycling has decreased as roads have become dominated by cars and cyclists fear injury from motor vehicles and harm to their health from vehicle pollution. This has led to many cyclists choosing to use pedestrian areas rather than roads.

TR302 Local authorities must monitor all roads regularly to ensure that they meet the standard of safety required for cycling. In targeting funding, local authorities should give higher priority to complete routes.

TR303 Where cycling infrastructure is shared with pedestrians or horse riders, or where the cycling provision on roads is shared with bus priority measures, adequate space must be provided for the two users to share it safely.

TR304 Where cycling routes are provided which segregate bicycles from other road users, the cycling route will be given priority at junctions over motorised traffic.

TR305 We will enforce strictly prohibitions on parking and other violation of cycling facilities by motor vehicles.

TR306 We will provide a national network of longer distance cycling routes, to which local networks will be connected.

TR307 All large employers and organisations that are publicly accessible must provide for cyclists to be able to leave their bicycles and belongings in safe, secure, dry surroundings.

TR308 For clusters of small shops or workshops, council or private housing, and public spaces, the local authority or estate owner must make such provision.

TR309 We will require that all bicycles sold should be fitted with the latest sustainable technology lighting and warning devices.

School Transport

TR400 Safe routes to schools would be given the highest priority so that most children are able to walk or cycle to school.

TR401 We support the provision of good quality subsidised public transport for all pupils who do not live within a safe walking or cycling distance from their local school. The type of public transport subsidised (train, bus or taxi) would depend on local circumstances. Criteria for defining the distance rests with each Local Authority. Safety criteria will form part of the assessment and can be examined on individual circumstances.

TR402 We support the [walking bus](#) method of accompanying smaller children to and from school.

TR403 We support the use of public transport buses for school transport.

Public Transport

TR500 We believe it is the Welsh Government's responsibility to ensure that all areas of Wales are served by a public transport system that could replace a large proportion of the current private motorised journeys.

TR501 Public transport must be reliable, affordable, accessible, integrated with all other sustainable modes where possible (as integration depends on high frequency of services) and environmentally friendly.

TR502 Public service, not private profit, must be the primary function of public transport.

TR503 We call for creation of a National Passenger Transport Authority for Wales (NPTAW) with responsibility for delivering a truly integrated public transport network accessible to all and with responsibility for setting out strategies on public transport including community transport, taxis and fares.

TR504 Fares should be simple and easily understood. There should be schemes which enable young people and the unemployed to travel cheaply or even for nothing. (See YP500)

TR505 We support the All Wales Entitlement Card which will make it easier to pay on all services regardless of operator, will make it safer for bus drivers who won't have to handle so much cash and it will make bus journeys quicker.

TR506 We support the retention of the concessionary bus pass for residents over 60 and people with disabilities. We will extend this to cover those people with disabilities who are on the lower rate of mobility allowance and who are therefore currently barred from the concessionary pass but who frequently are most in need of it, e.g. people with autism, mental health problems or with a visual impairment.

TR507 We would require all Local Authorities to set up public transport panels with a high proportion of passengers. These panels would steer the management of local public transport provision for the benefit of passengers.

TR508 We call for better public transport links where they are inadequate and would do a careful analysis and carry out full consultation with all affected groups to find the most sustainable way to plug the gap with either bus or train.

TR509 We call for increased funding for trains and buses with money coming in part from workplace and shopping centre parking charges.

TR510 Information on all aspects of public transport, such as tickets, fares, timetables and integration of services, must be easily available to all transport users. All information should be available on the internet and by telephone, and at public libraries and transport information centres at all major public transport interchanges. Information on local services should be available at all bus stops and train stations. All information must be in a simple, easy to understand format and follow the same standard throughout Wales.

TR511 The provision of this information will be the responsibility of Local Authorities. The Welsh Government will ensure that these responsibilities are clearly laid down in law and are funded appropriately.

TR512 Local authorities must ensure that all public transport modes are fully integrated with each other where feasible and are easily accessible to all disabled people and those arriving by bicycle and foot.

TR513 We call for increased provision for disabled access and cycle transport on trains and buses. All this provision will be free to the users.

TR514 All publicity for tourist places, cycle and walking trails, etc. should show how they can be reached by public transport.

TR515 We recognise that concern for personal safety is a major barrier to people (particularly women and the elderly) using public transport. We will invest in general structural improvements in and around bus stops, rail stations and other public transport termini: better lighting, enclosed waiting points, provision of local emergency numbers and electronic information on services, and other security measures such as CCTV.

TR516 Public transport is dependent upon the goodwill of its workforce, who have to endure unsocial working hours, including split shifts, frustrating working conditions, and, in certain sectors, relatively poor pay. We will seek to alleviate all these factors.

Buses and Coaches

TR520 We will re-regulate the bus industry, with local authorities in co-operation with the NPTAW having responsibility, including the setting of routes, frequencies and fares.

TR521 All new buses will be designed to be accessible to all, and will thus have low floors and adequate internal space for wheelchair users, pushchairs, luggage, and provision for the carriage of bicycles.

TR522 We will require that all service buses have low emission engines.

TR523 Buses should be given priority over private motorised traffic and parking provision.

TR524 Buses pulling away from bus stops will be given priority over moving traffic.

TR525 We support the development of better infrastructure to support bus services, including bus stops with seating and shelter, interchange facilities, and bus maintenance facilities.

TR526 New bus stations must be built adjacent to existing train stations, where practical.

Rail

TR530 The division of rail and track companies into a competitive rather than a cooperative organisation, and the fragmentation of the rail industry by privatisation, have been disastrous for safety and reliability and the provision of an integrated service.

TR531 We will bring the rail system, including track and operators, back into public ownership.

TR532 We will open additional stations to give all communities reasonable access to the rail service.

TR533 Where rail services are reinstated for disused lines that have been converted to pedestrian or cycle paths, we will maintain safe and convenient paths for pedestrians and cyclists.

TR534 We will make all stations fully accessible to all users. All rail services will have adequate space for those in wheelchairs within areas where passengers are seated.

TR535 All stations will have secure high quality cycle parking provision. This should include the provision of lockers for overnight parking.

Park and Ride

TR540 We do not support the introduction of Park and Ride services generally, as they tend to encourage the culture of driving from rural areas to nearby towns and can be detrimental to rural bus services, although we recognise that in some locations where Park and Ride may offer a short term solution.

TR541 We do not support the building of Park and Ride sites on greenfield land. We will support Park and Tour systems for tourists provided that this is properly integrated into the existing public transport infrastructure.

Taxis and Private Hire

TR550 We view taxis and private hire vehicles as forms of public transport. As such they have a role to play in the transport system, especially in rural areas and at times when trains and buses are not available.

TR551 Effective regulation of these services is required because of their diverse nature and small scale. This will include the regulation of fares and schemes to promote taxi sharing.

TR552 Local authorities will be required to ensure that within their areas there is a sufficient supply of vehicles for all potential users, so that all disabled access and the carriage of bulky items can be catered for at all times. We will ensure all stations have taxi ranks suitable for hackney and private hire taxis in nearby, and/or support free taxi calling telephones.

Transport in Rural Areas

TR560 Transport can be a more significant facet of rural than urban life, as distances travelled are generally longer and therefore usually form a higher proportion of a household's budget. In addition, there can be a huge inequality of access to services between rural and urban areas.

TR561 However, rural areas cannot be excluded from attempts to curb CO₂ emissions and protecting the environment. The challenge of providing access to facilities, and of creating an integrated network of environmentally sustainable transport, will be much greater in the countryside than in urban areas and the solutions may include various forms of trip sharing and community transport provision, including post buses and taxis.

TR562 We will encourage innovative solutions to maintain vital local services such as post offices relocated into village shops, community halls and pubs, internet access in village halls and churches doubling up as meeting rooms and music venues.

TR563 To retain and develop local services in rural areas where the economies of scale inevitably work against this will require targeting of funding to support this. It will be recognised that independent living through being able to access services in larger centres via public transport, does carry with it its own financial benefits in terms of health and wellbeing.

Personal Motorised Transport

Car Culture

TR600 Many people currently see cars as the primary means of transport. We seek to alter this perception, by providing information on the problems and real costs of car use, and by removing the deterrents to more sustainable methods of transport.

TR601 Our other policies will support a move away from people feeling they need to own their own car. With a reduction in car ownership will come a reduction in all other problems associated with car use such as parking problems and noise pollution.

TR602 We will support car sharing organisations. We will support the setting up of a system that works well in conjunction with the rail service such as the very successful Dutch system GreenWheels.

TR603 We oppose new road building or widening schemes except for essential access or safety reasons. We oppose any additions to or extensions of the existing motorway system (such as the proposed alternative M4 across the Gwent Levels).

TR604 We will make the driving test more difficult, we will increase the penalties for damage, injury and death caused by traffic accidents, and we will reduce levels of alcohol currently permitted and make it illegal to be under the influence of drugs (legal or illegal ones).

TR605 We will set safe and sensible speed limits in both urban and rural areas.

Motorcycles

TR610 Motorcycles emit pollution and noise and can endanger road users. We discourage use of high powered motorcycles. We will set and enforcing strict noise limits and, in some cases, require speed limiters.

TR611 We encourage instead use of low powered motorcycles to offer an alternative for those who currently use motorcycles or cars and cannot use more sustainable transport.

TR612 We will not allow motorcyclists to use any priority measures for pedestrians and cyclists.

Freight

TR620 We will reduce the need for freight movement by altering the current culture of overconsumption and by promoting the provision of products from local sources.

TR621 We will use financial incentives to bring large-scale freight back onto water and rail.

TR622 For road freight we will introduce measures to improved scheduling and combine loads, and to collect return loads after delivery, and we will require delivery vehicles to collect delivery packaging and return it to the depot for reuse if possible.

Shipping

TR700 We will strengthen shipping regulations within Welsh waters and would work towards better regulations and improved enforcement for international shipping through the International Maritime Organisation and in conjunction with powers to be invested in port state inspectors.

TR701 We support the complete elimination of intentional pollution of the marine environment by oil and other harmful substances and will support and enforce strict international laws to stop this. (see MAR700)

TR702 We aim to prevent accidents through strict enforcement policies such as a requirement for all large tankers to be fitted with double hulls and to be piloted and tug escorted while entering and leaving ports.

TR703 All vessels entering Welsh waters must be uniquely identifiable and meet European minimum employment standards for their crews.

Air Transport

TR800 Heavier-than-air craft are one of the most energy intensive and polluting forms of transport, burning more fossil fuel per passenger or ton-mile than other modes of transport. This profligacy is heavily subsidised by the international agreement to impose zero taxes on aviation fuel.

TR801 We seek wherever possible to substitute air travel by less damaging modes of transport, such as ferries, trains and buses.

TR802 This does not apply to emergency air services such as mountain rescue or specialist medical services.

Transport Fuels

TR900 The most obviously sustainable fuel is human muscle power, which is used when walking and cycling.

TR901 All other fuels that allow humans to be transported, or their goods, have a cost on the planet, from fossil fuel and its derivatives to liquid hydrogen. Electrically driven transport, whether electric trains, trolleybuses, electric cars or vehicles fuelled by hydrogen or other secondary fuels, is sustainable as long as the electricity generation itself is sustainable. However, even with an aggressive programme of conservation and the adoption of Wales Green Party transport and other policies, it will be difficult to produce enough energy from renewable resources to meet current

demand. A large-scale programme of personal electric vehicle introduction is inappropriate until great progress has been made in energy conservation and renewable energy production generally. We do not advocate it as a solution to transport problems.

Housing

Vision

HO100 Wales Green Party believes that affordable, secure and decent housing is a basic human need.

HO101 We believe that all citizens of Wales should have the right to accommodation that allows them to lead socially inclusive lives. We shall make sure that vulnerable people have the right support available to them.

HO102 We believe that in order to achieve the above, housing policy needs to be largely decided locally under participatory democratic mechanisms.

HO103 We believe that a dwelling ought to be a home and not solely an investment and therefore we aim to create house price stability by regulating to make speculation less attractive and by increasing housing supply.

HO104 We believe that a balanced mix of housing tenures best meets the needs of any community. This mix would include individual and shared home ownership, leasehold, rented from local authorities, co-operatives and housing associations, and private renting.

Wales's Housing Stock

HO200 Most citizens in Wales live in a small number of large urban conurbations. A large area of Wales is rural and agricultural.

HO201 A 2010 report on projected Welsh Housing needs (Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research) detailed that a further 284 000 new homes would have to be built between 2006 and 2026. This report was reviewed in 2014 but any revised figures for projected need have not yet been published.

HO202 There are also a large number of homes across Wales that have been empty for more than six months, a figure of approximately 26 000 in 2009 (CIH Cymru/Shelter Cymru). This is an unacceptable situation against a background of growing unmet housing need.

HO203 The introduction of the so-called 'Bedroom Tax' (The Spare Room Subsidy) has highlighted the problem of stock inadequacy even more. Where residents would like to downsize, there is often nowhere for them to downsize to.

HO204 In many parts of rural Wales, a significant number of dwellings are owned as a second home, often with low rates of occupancy.

HO205 The majority of Wales' housing stock is constructed using traditional building techniques, and a significant proportion dates to pre-1919. There is an urgent need to sustainably retrofit these buildings to make them suitable for 21st century occupants and to educate owners about appropriate maintenance and materials. If inappropriate materials and methods are used, these houses can become damp and undesirable, fuelling demand for new build properties.

Policies

HO300 We would put an obligation on local authorities (LA's) to carry out a full inventory of the housing stock in their area and we would implement policies to bring all housing stock into full use.

HO301 This would be done through a range of measures including the payment of full council tax, grants and Compulsory Purchase Orders.

HO302 We will argue for a change in policy at Westminster in order to allow LA's to use receipts of sales of housing stock to build new stock.

HO303 We will demand that the 5% VAT that is currently charged on renovation materials is scrapped.

HO304 We will encourage better use of inner city and town centre buildings by simplifying change of use in the planning laws to allow for more residential use of empty stock.

HO305 We will examine the potential for extending the 'Houses into Homes' scheme to tackle the problem of existing empty housing stock.

HO306 Development of new sites will take place on brown field sites and not on green field sites. There is one caveat here and that is where a brown field site has become a haven for wildlife and/or has become a special place for city dwellers. Assessments need to be made to check if the brown field site needs to be reclassified under such circumstances, eg as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

HO307 The Green Party supports the Building Research Establishment in developing a comprehensive research and training programme relating to the safe and appropriate renovation of traditionally constructed buildings, listed or otherwise.

Financial Incentives

HO400 The cost of housing has risen hugely in the last few decades. House prices in Wales have followed the inflationary pattern of the South East of England. This is neither sustainable nor desirable.

HO401 Few people benefit from high house prices. Those that do, are in powerful positions and there is little that recent governments, both in Wales and in Westminster, have done to stop the boom.

HO402 Recent governments have in fact aided the boom by for instance raising stamp duty and inheritance tax levels. We argue that both these need to be reverted.

HO403 High house prices lead to high rents, both in the private and public sector. High rents mean high Housing Benefit (HB) bills.

HO404 The Labour Government (at Westminster) attempted to reduce the HB bill by introducing the 'Spare Bedroom Subsidy' in private rented accommodation. This was followed by the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition Government introducing the same reduction in HB for public housing tenants, now known as the discredited 'Bedroom Tax'.

HO405 We will tackle the root causes of the high HB bill by aiming to create house price stability and by ensuring enough units, especially smaller units, are being created for those who have need of them.

HO406 Land prices have risen sharply over recent decades. Land is often held speculatively by companies but also by individuals. Our policy on Land Value Tax would take away this speculative element.

HO407 The actual building of a property can be done at very reasonable rates, especially when people use their own labour and skills. We will encourage self-built both in cities and in rural Wales. We will enable the setting up of local co-operatives to develop larger sites through self-building.

HO408 We will make it possible for home owners to become tenants where they are struggling to pay their mortgage in a 'mortgage to rent' scheme.

Building Standards

HO500 Current building standards for new build take account of safety, disability access and, to a certain extent, of environmental concerns.

HO501 We would implement higher energy efficiency standards for both new build and renovations. All new dwellings would be built to zero carbon standards, such as the passive houses (Passivhaus). They will have solar panels for hot water and photo voltaic cells to generate electricity.

HO502 The built environment is an important habitat for species such as birds and bats. The design of new housing and renovations will take this into consideration. Special bird housing for instance can easily be added under eaves.

HO503 Bats are protected by the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act. Specialist services will need to be consulted where bats are present.

HO504 New dwellings shall have adequate garden spaces. Larger developments shall have play space for children and space for allotments.

Rights and Responsibilities

HO600 Home owners take their rights and responsibilities for granted. They are able to move where and when they choose and are limited only by market availability.

HO601 Tenants endure many restrictions. They are often grateful for being housed but many feel trapped in homes that are frequently in undesirable estates with few opportunities for work, long distances to facilities and a level of care that can be disgraceful.

HO602 Private tenants suffer insecurities of tenure, often poor standards of housing and unscrupulous landlords, who are able to remove tenants who seek to enforce their rights.

HO603 We will provide training and support for tenants to enable more decentralised and participatory forms of housing management. We support tenant managed estates and co-operatives.

HO604 We support the full registration of private sector rents as a precursor to monitoring health and safety conditions.

HO605 We will phase out Assured Shorthold Tenancies in the private sector. We will ensure that this sector offers the same level of security of tenure and the same rights as those afforded in the public sector.

HO606 The overall goal should be to raise the standard of housing and its environments. We cannot accept a situation where estates or neighbourhoods are unloved, unkempt, uncared for, with crumbling pavements, dog faeces and rubbish littering paths, etc. we need to have places where people will be proud to live.

Education

Vision

ED100 A Green education system must help people to become lifelong learners: good at learning from experience, able to work together with others, understanding and valuing different cultures.

ED101 Wales Green Party believes that education should provide everyone with the knowledge and full range of skills they require to participate fully in society and lead a fulfilled life. We reject market driven models of education that see its role only in terms of international economic competitiveness and preparation for work.

ED102 We want to develop an education system that will nurture a desire to learn throughout life. We will do this through a child-centred approach to learning which builds on the skills and interests of each individual child. We will therefore end the current testing regimes and rigid age related benchmarking.

ED103 Education should be at the heart of communities and for communities, and should promote equality, inclusivity, social and emotional well-being and responsibility and be democratically accountable to them.

ED104 As much emphasis should be placed on enabling pupils and students to become original, creative, self-confident people who understand their community and local environment, as is put on conventional academic achievement.

ED105 There will be a need for people to be trained to fix 'the whole object' and to learn how things work together rather than simply learning 'parts replacement'. We call for a change to the way maintenance skills are taught in schools and further/higher education. We also believe that the Government should encourage companies to provide multi skills training for employees, either in house or by releasing them from their employment to study.

ED106 Education is a right and an entitlement and should be free at the point of delivery to people of all ages. Education is social rather than market provision and we oppose any attempt to privatise state-funded schools or to enable them to become profit-making.

ED106 Our underlying vision is that all children and young people are entitled to access a fair, comprehensive and equal education system, regardless of their background.

Structure and Accountability of Primary and Secondary Schools

ED200 Wales Green Party recognises the key role of Local Authorities in the planning and provision of new school places, establishment of fair admissions policies, ensuring of equality of access for Looked After Children and those with disabilities and additional learning needs, and the provision of School Support Services. We will therefore strengthen Local Authorities through adequate funding and seek to enhance their local democratic accountability. We will review and reduce the powers of the Minister.

ED201 We therefore also believe that it is in the interest of children and their learning that Wales should remain free from Academies and Free Schools.

ED202 In order to maximise engagement and good communication between parents, students, teachers and other staff and the wider community, there will be considerable efforts to ensure that all parties are democratically involved in the running of the school through School Councils and Governing Bodies, where the relationships and responsibilities of each is clearly outlined and appropriate training is put in place.

ED203 We would restore the right of Local Authorities to plan and build new schools of an appropriate size for their area, funding and encouraging rural authorities to protect small schools and develop them as community resources, to become partners with nearby schools where possible, to share resources and specialist staff. (See TR400)

ED204 In our more urban areas currently, due to the social and economic characteristics of different areas, placing children in their local schools can be a source of segregation and inequality. Therefore Local Authorities should aim to provide schools (particularly secondary) in their local area with a balanced, comprehensive intake as far as practically possible.

ED205 Well-equipped school buildings represent a key community resource, which should be used to the full throughout the year.

ED206 In the long run we would work towards class sizes of 20 at both secondary and primary level.

ED207 We would also work towards having smaller schools with a maximum size of 700 for secondary schools. There is evidence that smaller schools have a more positive ethos which can reduce behavioural problems. It would also enhance a sense of community and encourage a greater proportion of people to be involved so that they are more democratically run as well as reducing the need for transport to school.

ED208 We will encourage Local Authorities to conduct pilot projects and create all-through schools such as those in Scandinavia, which can alleviate the challenges of transition between schools and strengthen community cohesion and relations between staff, parents and pupils. This may include a change at the age of 14 where social and emotional development suggests this is a good time for a new start in a more adult atmosphere and when aptitudes and likely career paths are easier to diagnose. From this age education may be provided in co-operation with workplace learning/training.

ED209 It will continue to be compulsory for all young people to be educated between the ages of 7 and 16. From the age of 14 this may be provided through a variety of contexts including through skills and practical training, vocational placements and at Youth Schools which is a European initiative for young people to opt to attend from the age of 14. This will provide somewhere safe for young people to socialise in the evenings, and structured learning will take place as it does in adult education, including a wide variety of courses, life skills, practical and vocational training.

Different Types of Schools

ED300 A range of different types of schools exists. All young people have a right to receive a high standard of education at their local school, regardless of their background, where they live and what their financial background or level of ability is.

ED301 The state currently subsidises independent schools, for example through paying for places for children of parents working in jobs such as diplomats, the British Council, and the military

sector. This highlights the need for the state to fully represent the diversity in our education system, for example by increasing the number of state-funded boarding schools.

ED302 We will continue to aim for all community schools to provide everyone with an education which will fit everyone's individual needs through a diverse curriculum which offers choice and is appropriate for everyone's needs and ability. However, we recognise that some people will still want to be educated outside mainstream schools, including home-based education.

ED303 Schools which remain in the private sector would be classed as a business and have all charitable status removed; they would pay all relevant taxes such as VAT and Corporation Tax. All state sponsored scholarships would be directed to Local Authorities and remaining private schools would be asked to contribute to a national initial teacher training levy.

ED304 We support parents' rights to educate their children in settings other than at school such as at home. Local Authorities will provide advice and support for parents who choose to educate their children at home or in partnership with schools. Part-time education in schools will become possible for those children who stand to benefit.

ED305 Education should include a celebration and recognition of religious and cultural diversity and spirituality. Education should encourage critical engagement with, and non-dogmatic exposure to, diverse, sometimes competing, worldviews and beliefs - whether based on culture, religion or spirituality.

ED306 We recognise the importance of human values and the moral dimension in learning, and the role they play in different belief systems.

ED307 We will ensure that children and young people can practice their faith in schools, for example by providing prayer space for those who need or wish to practice their religion regularly.

ED308 However, at the same time we will abolish the requirement for a compulsory daily act of worship and religious instruction, as distinct from religious education in understanding different religions may only take place outside of school curriculum time.

Teachers

ED400 Teachers are the key resource within the education system. They need first class initial preparation, continuing professional development and appropriate salaries. Every child should be taught by a teacher with Qualified Teacher Status and principals and headteachers of state funded schools should have QTS.

Curriculum for School-aged Children

ED500 According to Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children's opinions on what and how they are taught should be taken into account. Children and young people's own interests and enthusiasms are the natural starting-point for productive learning, the roots from which a broad curriculum can grow.

ED501 Currently pupils' progression through our schools is determined primarily by their age. This is ageism and is wrong. Some pupils learn faster than others. The main determining factor should be the needs of the child.

ED502 Therefore the National School Curriculum will be replaced with a set of learning entitlements to include: how to engage with learning, social skills and physical well-being, the development of essential numeracy and literacy skills, citizenship, exploration of the creative arts, outdoor education, in short, a curriculum that caters for and encourages a variety of interests, intelligences, skills and talents, that enables children and young people to become self-directed learners, who will be equipped to take advantage of learning opportunities throughout their lives.

ED503 We will encourage more schools to teach through the medium of Welsh from age 3. We will encourage all schools to teach a third language, beyond English and Welsh, to be added at the earliest opportunity. We recognise that for many pupils this would be a fourth language.

ED504 It will be a minimum requirement that all children are provided free of charge with a balanced nutritious lunch, with dietary requirements catered for. Vending machines will only supply healthy snacks and not crisps, carbonated drinks and sweets. Schools will be encouraged to involve children in growing, preparing and cooking food. Not only will this provide invaluable and essential education in the importance of a good diet, but evidence shows it will greatly improve behaviour, quality of life and learning.

Assessment

ED510 There is currently too much emphasis on national tests and fulfilling marking schemes, which can oppress teaching and learning and create a great deal of unnecessary pressure on young children.

ED511 A healthy education system would include a broad range of cumulative, formative and summative assessment, including self-assessment. We will replace the current system with assessments that are unobtrusive and in the interests of enhancing the learning of the individual child.

ED512 School leaving qualifications will encourage a broad curriculum that gives equal value to academic, vocational, creative and practical subjects.

Foundation Stage

ED520 We believe that the Foundation Stage is a unique educational stage in its own right and not just a preparation for school. We recognise the great variance in children's development in the Foundation Stage and the importance of a developmentally appropriate provision which includes the important role of play in early learning.

ED521 In accordance with the values outlined in our Vision there will be an emphasis on social cohesion, play, relatedness and character building as well as knowledge and skills particularly in the early years.

ED522 We believe that the foundation stage should be from age 3 to age 7 but accept that there are children ready to start more formal education before age 7.

ED523 We would build upon and continue successful schemes such as [Flying Start](#).

ED524 Foundation Stage establishments will be small enough to provide community units with continuity and consistency of staff for all children and small enough to provide a safe and secure environment as a base for children's exploration of the environment and social relationships, be close to the children's home and will be a place where health visitors will make regular visits.

Additional Learning Needs

ED530 There are many positive benefits for everyone in being educated alongside people with a variety of needs and abilities and this will lead to a more integrated society. We support the principle of offering all people the opportunity to be educated in a mainstream school, and meeting everyone's needs, whatever the level of need may be, in accordance with the UK Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

ED531 In exceptional cases it is not appropriate to be fully integrated into mainstream education for all subjects, for example where there are multiple learning difficulties. There are children with behavioural difficulties and emotional difficulties who need to be protected by temporary or permanent separation. We aim to address this through having special resource units in mainstream schools.

ED532 We will make sure that the resources are in place for early diagnosis, partly through greater co-operation between Education, Social Care and Health departments, so that the child's interests are served at the earliest opportunity rather than problems allowed to grow.

Further Education

ED600 Currently Further Education colleges are run independently from Local Authorities. They receive a much lower unit cost per pupil than schools and the teaching salaries are lower. We believe that they should be publicly owned by Local Authorities and funded at the same rate as secondary schools and be subject to the same requirements as schools.

ED601 Further Education will be accessible to people of all ages and offer a wide range of practical, vocational and academic courses and qualifications.

ED602 With devastating cuts to further education over the past 2 years, we will not only ensure no more cuts are made, but we will work to ensure that funding is sustainable for the future of Further Education. We believe in lifelong learning with free education.

ED603 We believe that funding support should be available for all learners, this will also include child-care and use of free cross border public transport.

ED604 Welsh Government Learning Grant (WGLG, formally ALG) and Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is secure for the foreseeable future. We will also work with student organisations with the aim to review how the current system is working, if it is sustainable for the learners. With mental health a major barrier for learners across the education sector in Wales, we will ensure that every institution has fully trained professional staff on site at all times to help support learners who may have concerns around mental health.

ED605 We want to ensure that learners in post 16 educations are being taught by the best possible lecturers. We will ensure that all staff are fully qualified to the highest standard in Wales, this will help towards making us leaders in education.

Higher Education

ED700 Higher education expands the boundaries of knowledge, it is essential to developing a civilised society and sustainable economy based on sustainable living. It is a public good worthy of public investment – it is a good for individuals, a good for communities, good for everyone.

ED701 We want Wales to have a world class higher education system that sustains our society and enables Welsh people to maximise their potential. To achieve this the higher education sector will need to evolve and change in order to provide the knowledge, skills and vision we need.

ED702 We reject the premise of higher education private providers and would not support the emergence of these for-profit companies delivering higher education in Wales.

Access

ED703 Higher education should be available to anyone who wishes and is able to study at that level, regardless of age, disability, having a family, religion, race or class. Education is not a product to be bought, it is a personal process, and it is a right.

ED704 Higher Education is not an automatic extension of school or Further Education. The best results are achieved by people who have an active desire to study at this level when they feel ready. Part time higher education for older and working people needs to have parity with full time higher education for 18–21 year olds. We will rebalance the public policy emphasis which currently prioritises full time higher education for the young to the exclusion of part time higher education for the older and working population.

ED705 We will also rebalance access and success in higher education which disproportionately favours those from advantaged backgrounds, to the exclusion of those from less advantaged backgrounds by extending widening access initiatives. We will ensure that there are access courses for students who have the potential to study at a higher level but who are not yet ready for it.

ED706 Universities must be open to all, and offer free crèche to students, changing and breast-feeding facilities, and religious facilities such as prayer spaces.

ED707 The Welsh Language is a living language and citizens of Wales should be able to live their lives using this language. As such opportunities of studying higher education through Welsh need to be expanded, this should be done through the continued investment and extension of the [Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol](#).

Fees and support

ED708 We believe higher education is a right and should be free to all those that wish to study. We do not believe Welsh students should pay tuition fees.

ED709 We understand that tuition fees are not the only barrier to study. We will ensure that there is an adequate maintenance support grant system for students whilst they study, that they are able to afford to eat, travel and live. We understand this is vitally important for student retention and believe that those who need this support the most, should receive the most support. This applies to both full time and part time students.

ED710 We will ensure that students can access better mental health services, and ensure that all people can access mental health services through the medium of Welsh.

ED711 Physical and virtual access and support for students with disabilities is vitally important. We will protect Disabled Student Allowance and ensure those with disabilities are enabled to continue their studies, fully supported by their institution and relevant education agencies, such as Student Finance Wales.

ED712 Carers are often time-poor and have significant pressures on them daily. This makes accessing education difficult and means that flexible options, such as part-time higher education courses and community courses are vital. We want a whole system approach to funding education that ensures carers are able to access education and training if they wish. Carers need better information, advice and guidance on the availability of flexible learning options.

ED713 Sexual harassment, violence and stalking against all students, but especially against women is a known issue on university campuses, we will ensure that universities are taking their duty of care seriously in this area.

ED714 Higher education institutions should be hate-crime free spaces, and universities need to take their responsibilities in this area very seriously and the needs of the diverse student body are paramount.

Learning, teaching and quality

ED715 Universities are vital to our future economy and therefore the lives of the people of Wales. We will create sustainable and embedded links between universities and industry in order to encourage regrowth and prosperity, this includes in high-tech and manufacturing industries, as well as in creative and arts industries.

ED716 Currently the standard of achievement of students with comparable degrees and results from different institutions is inconsistent. We will promote more rigorous external accreditation systems to ensure consistency.

ED717 Universities often recruit international students on inflated fees as part of their income generation. We think this has reached excessive proportions and the inflated fees should be capped. We will set up schemes to fund places for less wealthy students from developing countries and to develop Higher Education in developing countries through partnership projects, prioritising subject areas where there is a shortage of skills such as Medicine and Engineering.

ED718 We will require higher education institutions to adhere to the same stringent environmental regulations as large businesses and other institutions.

Postgraduate Education and Research

ED800 Introduce a post-graduate loans system for students in Wales.

ED801 We call for devolution of the Research Council so the important strategic decisions made about research are made by Wales for Wales.

ED802 It is essential that Higher Education research is not solely based on commercial principles, and there is sufficient funding to encourage independent and ethical research.

ED803 We will ban research into genetically modified organisms.

ED804 To reverse the "brain drain" and encourage Welsh researchers working abroad to return to Wales (and also to encourage young researchers to come to Wales), we would introduce a scholarship scheme funding postdoctoral researchers in Welsh universities.

ED805 All published material created in the public sector (eg maps, government publications, university research) would be available to all free of financial restrictions and distributed in open standard formats.

ED806 Promote Open Education resources and practice across all education institutions in Wales, it is a way of democratising knowledge and maximising public investment in universities.

ED807 We support the creation of a Peace Academy in Wales.

Lifelong Learning (including learning in the workplace and retraining)

ED900 Learning through life is vital to creating a healthy society and economy. There should be funded opportunities to study at any level at any stage of life. Adult education should embrace and encourage learning for learning's sake, as well as those who wish to use it for career development purposes.

ED901 We will provide adult education in local communities with greater funding. Adult education will be provided where people need it most, that might be in town centres rather than in out-of-town universities, or perhaps via online learning, using models used by The Open University.

ED902 Funding for courses will be decided at a local level, without it having to be target driven and focused only on qualifications.

ED903 We will ensure provision of free education for adults to learn essential literacy, numeracy and life skills including parenting programmes, and to acquire skills and qualifications which will help them directly gain employment.

ED904 We support the development of the Welsh Energy Sector Training project.

ED905 We would support and encourage the provision of continuing professional development courses, delivered by higher education providers for the professions, such as Engineering and Medical professions.

Young People

Votes at 16

YP100 Wales Green Party recognises and respects the abilities of young people from the age of 16 to participate in our democratic society and would seek to include them by giving them the right to vote. We believe this will incentivise 16 and 17 year olds to engage with the ballot system, giving them a societal responsibility and empower them to exercise their democratic right. This will allow young people the opportunity to influence decisions that will define their future and inspires active citizenship.

Young People's Voices

YP200 The Welsh Government has previously demonstrated some ambition in their support of young people and the importance of getting their voices heard by the establishment of Funky Dragon, the Participation Standards and the Children's Measure. Welsh Government has placed the duty to promote and facilitate participation by children and young people in the hands of local authorities.

YP201 Current Welsh Government practice, in supporting young people to have a voice in Wales, is in jeopardy through substantive funding cuts and the inability to perceive the importance of young voices being a priority.

- The Participation Unit ceased in 2011
- Funky Dragon was dissolved in 2014
- Consequently progress of developing the Standards has stopped.
- Wales is the only nation within the UK without a Youth Assembly.
- Funding changes, from Cymorth to Families First, has seen support for local Youth Councils dwindle.

YP202 Wales Green Party is committed to ensuring that Wales has a platform for young people to express themselves. We believe:

- Youth Participation works to ensure better services, to meet genuine needs and avoid superfluous services.
- Directing finite resources ensures better services for all.
- Youth Participation promotes citizenship, social inclusion, education, development and fundamentally works to safeguard young people.
- Wales Green Party deplores the removal of funding from Funky Dragon. We are committed to a Youth Assembly being re-established in Wales on young people's terms; young people being involved in the process throughout.
- That a 'Minister for Children and Young People' role should be created with a full Cabinet position. This position would be elected by the representatives of the Youth Assembly and work closely with them throughout to represent *their* voice.
- Legislation to transfer responsibility for the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Wales from Welsh Government to the National Assembly for Wales

Protect Youth Services

YP300 Wales Green Party wants to ensure that our young people receive a statutory funded universal Youth Service from all local authorities in Wales. Currently there is no statutory

obligation placed on local authorities to provide a Youth Service. Recently, this has meant that councils when faced with Government austerity cuts have chosen to cut vital services to our young people. The young people in disadvantaged communities, in particular, are being harder hit by these measures. For many vulnerable young people their locally provided service is a lifeline and is a much needed supported pathway to a more productive, happy and fulfilled adulthood.

YP301 With this a national coherent model for youth work in Wales must be established and based on the UNCRC

Information Services for Young People

YP400 Wales Green Party wish to ensure that each local authority delivers a universal drop-in Information Service for young people appropriate to the locality. This would offer an easy to access essential voluntary engagement for all young people aged 11 – 25 years of age to seek impartial and confidential advice, information, guidance and support.

Transport

YP500 Free bus passes to all young people up to the age of 21; this would enable them to seek an independent transition into adulthood.

The Welsh Language, Culture, Media and Sport

Linked considerations

Vision

WLC100 The Welsh language is in parts inseparable from Welsh Culture. Wales Green Party recognises the importance of both and supports them. We recognise the importance of the Welsh language in everyday life but also in the culturally important events such as Eisteddfodau and the Urdd.

WLC101 Culture, media and sport are three important elements through which social identity and a sense of community can be fostered in larger social groupings than those which can be sustained by personal relationships.

WLC102 In all areas of culture, media and sport, there are two ways in which people can engage with the activity: through participation or through reception.

WLC103 The rise of new media at the beginning of the 21st century can be seen as a public expression of a need for better access and improved participation.

WLC104 Similarly the continuing existence of grass roots activity in sport and culture, despite the large scale withdrawal of public sector support, shows the continuing need and value of these activities to citizens.

WLC105 Green policies would seek to democratise access to culture, media and sporting activities, ensuring that individuals are not excluded. Greens believe that culture, media and sport all have a role to play in challenging discrimination.

WLC106 We believe, as across all our policy, in localising where possible. Regulatory structures need to be applied and controlled at the most local practicable level.

WLC107 Support would be given to ensure that there are adequate resources available to provide (where the private sector is unable) accessible local media, local sporting activity or local cultural support then it is the role of government to ensure that provision is available to meet the needs of the community.

Welsh Language

Vision

WL200 Our vision is for the Welsh language to thrive, to be the language of homes, workplaces and public spaces across the country.

WL201 At the very minimum we would expect publically funded organisations, and health and social service providers to engage with the public in either English or Welsh, according to the individual's preference. We would encourage all organisations to take this approach.

WI202 We want higher standards and variety from Welsh language public broadcasting and to protect public investment in media channels such as S4C.

WL203 We want greater provision of further and higher-level Welsh language education and proper provision of Welsh-medium courses within colleges and universities. We would support the continuation and extension of the [Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol](#).

WL204 Learning Welsh should be free to do, and full and part-time intensive Welsh courses made available with the right to attend without loss of benefits.

WL205 We would work with public sector organisations, and the Welsh Language Commissioner to ensure that delivery of services through the medium of Welsh, and regulations that underpin their rights are built around the needs and aspirations of Welsh speakers, and designed in close collaboration with them.

WL206 Language learning in schools would start with introduction of a second language (English or Welsh) at age 3 in the Foundation Stage.

WL207 Recognising the impact dementia can have on a Welsh speaker's capacity to use English as a second language, we would work with the health and social care sector and local authorities to increase the level of Welsh language provision in residential care, nursing care, and domiciliary care settings. This would ensure older Welsh speakers receive the same level of support as English speakers, can communicate their needs, and help them remain socially included.

WL208 The Wales Green Party advocates:

- Promotion of Welsh on the computer desktop by engaging with the Open Source software revolution; In the state sector, where employees see a training need for Welsh, that it is funded by the employer;
- Giving the Welsh Language Commissioner a duty to comment on the likely effect of large housing or road developments on the language in affected, and a statutory right to have its comments heard at planning hearings;
- Application of the Welsh Language Act to the private sector. Comparison of resources for Welsh with those other EU threatened minority-language areas.
- Reviewing training provision in colleges for public body employees such as nurses and teachers, where provision of Welsh-language and other minority languages on a community level is critical. We recognise that language is a source of tension between non-Welsh speaking and Welsh speaking people living in the same areas. This concerns us. We support bilingual cultural initiatives and events. We encourage learning Welsh and integration of learners and first-language speakers.

Culture

Vision

CUL100 We value artistic expression. We do not measure artistic value in economic terms. We believe that the state has an important role to play in supporting artistic activity in society. We believe in the importance of cultural diversity and would promote our shared cultural heritage.

CUL101 The body of historical creative work forms the basis of our culture and the preservation of this culture is a responsibility of the state.

Culture is largely a grassroots activity. We value arts for their spontaneity, creativity and ability to make life worth living. We want to see the promotion of grassroots culture through community radio and television, and community art schemes.

CUL102 Artistic activity has an important role to play in the sustenance of a society's culture. We believe that home grown entertainment industries need to be recognised for the value they add to society. To maintain cultural diversity in the 21st century these industries need to be protected and promoted in the face of a dominating global artistic culture.

Policies

CUL200 Arts and creativity play a fundamental role in education. (see Education)

CUL201 Financial support does not entail a right to intervene in other people's self-expression.

CUL202 We would encourage the growth of local arts associations who would be the representatives, rather than local government, on regional arts boards.

CUL203 We would modify the licensing regulations to ensure that small scale live performance in pubs, clubs and similar venues is not stifled. We would also introduce the agent of change principle to protect venues from gentrification.

CUL204 We would shift responsibility for arts funding, where appropriate, from national to local levels.

CUL205 Sponsorship of the Arts: There may be a role for ethical commercial sponsorship of any cultural activity. This should not be used to reduce the total state support for the Arts, but rather to allow state funding to be redeployed elsewhere.

CUL206 We would support Welsh cultural events like eisteddfodau especially on a more local level.

CUL207 We would ensure that The National Assembly give proper support to local museums and libraries. Where national museums are located in the south, attention must be made to ensure that school children from elsewhere in Wales get access to these resources.

CUL208 We would develop more relevant structures of support for the arts, building on the work of the [Arts Council of Wales](#) and ensuring that vibrant regional and local arts cultures can thrive.

CUL 209: We would explore the implementation of a tax on superstar performances with raised income being used to fund arts education services on a local and national level. This would be supplementary funding to existing sources of national and local authority support.

Media

MED100 The media section covers four major areas:

- Broadcast media: primarily television and radio
- Print media: primarily newspapers, magazines and journals.
- New media: primarily internet delivery by landline, wireless and mobile access
- Advertising in the media.

Vision

MED200 Wales Green Party believes that a public service element in mass communications is a vital part of democracy. An informed democracy is a healthy democracy. We believe that market mechanisms alone are an insufficient basis for regulation of the mass media.

MED201 Part of the role of public service broadcasting is to provide a shared space for all citizens.

MED202 A free press and media are fundamental to our society and would not be constrained by spurious definitions of the public interest. Privacy laws, whilst protecting citizens' rights, would not be used to obstruct proper investigative journalism.

MED203 We believe in maintaining public funding, as long as the BBC is pursuing clearly stated commitments to non-ratings led programming and continuing to fulfil a public service remit.

MED204 We wish to see the reintroduction and protection of locally owned and run television and radio channels.

MED205 Ownership and control of national and local print newspapers and journals is a proper matter for regulation by OFCOM.

MED206 At present we do not see the need for a public service print publisher in an analogous position to the BBC, but this shall be kept under review as the newspaper market evolves.

MED207 We would aim to ensure that future generations are not forced to grow up faster than is natural due to influences from social media sites and the resultant pressures placed on users to conform.

MED208 The Green perspective is that advertising is in need of restraint. Whilst we recognise the freedom of individuals to make informed choices for themselves, regulation is needed where the impact is to the detriment of society or the environment. Regulators have a particular responsibility towards children and the vulnerable who must be protected from unscrupulous marketing and aggressive advertising.

Policies

MED300 A key factor in Wales Green Party media policy is recognition of the large influence that the mass media has on our democracy and our citizens. Public information supplied through mass media channels would not be subject to private or ministerial control.

MED301 Data that is collected or generated at public expense would be made available to individual citizens for private use at no extra charge.

MED302 We believe that there is a proper democratic case for limiting cross media ownership by trans-national companies. We would have tighter rules on cross-media ownership. Allowing individuals and companies to have too much influence undermines the operation of healthy informed democracy, not just in Wales, but across the UK, EU and the World.

MED303 We would encourage wider, more localised, participation and discourage concentration of media ownership.

MED304 Public service broadcasting means that information and education are not ghettoised to inconvenient times. A public service would provide higher quality non peak entertainment.

MED305 The operation of public service media would be entirely divorced from interference by the government of the day. Government's role would be confined to defining and reviewing a public service remit for channels with a public service obligation and providing sufficient funds.

MED306 Across all the broadcasting media and press we would seek to ensure that local channels were locally owned and accountable.

MED307 New media ownership and access need to be monitored to ensure that digital divides or ghettoisation of sections of the community does not occur.

MED308 We will establish a principle of appointing regulatory bodies by democratic means. All senior appointments in Wales would be made by regulatory bodies, and where appropriate, scrutinised by the relevant committee in the National Assembly.

MED309 The Office of Communications (OFCOM) will remain as the primary regulatory authority across all media, but the remit will be amended to give social and cultural concerns equal weight to commercial factors.

MED310 Membership of the OFCOM Board and the Board Committees will be reformed to include democratically elected representatives.

MED311 The role of OFCOM will be further expanded to take on statutory responsibility and regulation for matters relating to print media.

MED312 Trade unions in the mass media can help democratisation of access to media by giving employee stakeholders a voice in the output of media channels. We will support the role of unions in the media.

MED313 In television and radio an important component of a public service obligation is the production and promotion of non ratings-led programming. Public service broadcasters will not be expected to maximise ratings where they can demonstrate a cultural value to their work.

MED314 The primary public service broadcasters will remain the BBC and S4C, funded wholly by public money.

MED315 As part of its public service obligation the BBC will be required to continue to develop its centres of excellence in Wales and have a significant local presence in Wales.

MED316 The BBC would be organised primarily as a public service and thus not have to behave as if it operated in a commercial market. Following from this the funding of the BBC cannot be viewed solely through an economic prism, but must include the idea of public utility

MED317 Whilst the BBC remains a public service organisation it is vital to distance it from Government or State interference. The funding available and its distribution would be controlled through a democratically appointed Public Service Media Council. This body will agree with government the total level of funding required.

MED318 Where an existing public service medium is supplanted by a new alternative we would ensure universal access before the old medium is discontinued.

MED319 We would establish Community Media Centres, where residents of the area can be trained and produce programmes. These Community Media Centres would be run democratically.

MED320 We are opposed to contesting funds for Public service programmes. This will undermine BBC's and S4C's public service platform. Only where existing public service broadcasters are unable or unwilling to meet an identified public service need would funding be opened to alternative channels.

MED321 Measures will be introduced to encourage local ownership and editorial control of titles particular to specific communities, cities and regions.

MED322 We will encourage local papers to report on local government issues as a public service.

MED323 We would increase awareness around the issues of security and privacy on social media sites.

MED324 We will introduce a complete ban on promotion of tobacco, alcohol and other products that are harmful to people's health.

MED325 Products which are harmful to the environment will be required to carry a prominent warning in all advertising.

MED326 The costs associated with advertising space create an imbalance between commercial and non-commercial organisations in their ability to influence the public. We will provide access to all advertising media for groups seeking to redress a perceived imbalance.

MED327 Political Parties are not fundamentally commercial organisations, and need continuing access to media channels in order to help maintain a citizenry aware of the political issues and involved in the democratic process. The system of Party Political Broadcasts would be extended to allow registered political parties some free access to media space outside election periods and in print as well as broadcast media.

MED328 The aggregate and cumulative effect of advertising taken altogether is to increase overall demand and foster a materialist and consumption driven culture which is not sustainable. The overall volume of advertising that promotes unsustainable consumption will be controlled and reduced. This control will be exercised by OFCOM, who may also exercise it over forms of advertising not otherwise within their control.

Censorship and Privacy

Vision

MED400 For the purposes of this section *culture* means all forms of artistic expression, including entertainment, such as film, drama, dance, painting, photography, sculpture, crafts, architecture, design, music, and similar activities. It also includes the historical record of such activities.

MED401 In a Green society people of all ages and backgrounds would have access to participate in and enjoy all types of arts and cultural activities.

MED402 Wales Green Party is opposed to all forms of censorship in the media and cultural activities for adults, however we recognise that not all freedoms may be appropriate for children.

Policies

MED500 Arts and culture in Wales are currently structured and funded in a way that gives the bigger players dominance over smaller community organisations and individual artists. A healthy and vibrant society does not see competition between creativity and purely financial business concerns.

MED501 Our aim is to rebalance the relationship between cultural superstars and ordinary people. The present imbalance amounts to a virtual deification of celebrity superstars. We recognise that the creative industries sector is growing significantly in Wales, and we anticipate an increased role for artists and craftspeople.

MED502 We would support teachers, parents and guardians in their efforts to protect children in their care from inappropriate material, through education.

MED503 We would move to ban all advertising of damaging products targeted at children of primary school age and under.

MED504 We would also reduce if not eradicate censorship on social media sites wherever possible.

Sport

Vision

SP100 Any sport that involves the killing or infliction of pain or suffering upon any animal is excluded from this section.

SP101 There has been a growth in sport as a spectator based entertainment and a diminishment of sport as a means to improve physical health and co-operative behaviours. We see a need for government to encourage and provide support for participation in all sports at local level.

SP102 National excellence in sport can best arise as a result of a widespread engagement in sporting activity across age, class, race, gender and geography.

SP103 There are significant wider social benefits through increased participation in sport; for example health and well-being benefits translate into reduced pressure on the NHS and improved green economic performance.

In line with the principles above, we believe that there is no place in sport at any level for racism or any other form of discrimination.

SP104 We further recognise that sport is one of the main remaining areas of gender discrimination. Women face many barriers (social, cultural, official) to full participation in many sports. This is an equally unacceptable discrimination.

SP105 We want to direct attention towards participatory sports and activities.

Whilst professional sport is a business, as noted above, its role in representing a community in a spirit of friendship and mutual respect with other communities would never be overlooked. This is especially the case in international sport.

Policies

SP200 Programmes to combat discrimination would be introduced wherever necessary, with a particular focus on young people.

SP201 The aim of sports education in school would be to encourage as many people as possible to continue participating in sport after they leave school. As the vast majority of this participation will be at an amateur level, it is important to ensure that sufficient facilities exist to allow the participation of all those who want it.

SP202 Where clubs wish to remain as Public Limited Companies (PLC's), we would like to see supporters' trusts set up with the aim of achieving enough of a shareholding to prevent the club being taken over by outside financial interests.

SP203 Because many sports require special facilities, equipment, or the participation of large teams, they can be things which children or parents will be unable to organise for themselves. Schools therefore have an important role in providing children with a wide range of sporting activities. (see Education)

SP204 Local councils would ensure that facilities such as sports centres, swimming pools and sports fields are sufficient to meet demand would. This could include the use of school fields by clubs for matches, where such clubs are unable to maintain their own grounds.

SP205 A strong school and amateur sports culture would normally, in turn, strengthen professional performance. Access to a sporting career would be available without discrimination to anyone with the desire and ability to pursue it.

SP206 In addition to their commercial aspect, professional sporting teams often represent communities and this social function needs to be recognised and supported by structures which allow local stakeholders to participate in the running of the business.

SP207 We prefer professional sporting clubs to be mutually owned by the members rather than by shareholders. For those clubs which are currently PLC's, whose shares are traded internationally, the risk is always that distant shareholders, with no regard for the community the club is supposed to represent, will take over the club and sever all meaningful links with the local community We will introduce legal mechanisms to allow transformation of such PLC's into Mutual Organisations with agreement of stakeholders.

SP208 Local authorities would be permitted to invest in shares in professional sports clubs which operate in their area. Any dividends paid to the authority must be reinvested into public sporting facilities or coaching programmes in the area.

SP209 We believe in safesanding for sports stadia. We would seek to undo this ban where such areas are proven to be safe for spectators and where the police are satisfied that no crowd control issues would arise.

SP210 If a team is representing the nation then the Government would take a role in deciding whether it is appropriate for the team to take part in competition against a country with whom diplomatic relations are not possible.

SP211 In determining whether a particular country is appropriate for international sporting contacts consideration would be given to the freedom of access by supporters and media in the country. If host government actions meant that freedom for Welsh citizens and journalists could not be guaranteed, there would be a presumption against a visit by a representative national team.

SP212 Strategic national planning would seek to ensure that major national sporting arenas are not all sited in one part of the country and that all can be easily accessed by good public transport links. Wherever practical, the venue for international sporting fixtures would be rotated around various suitable stadia.

SP213 When bidding to host or co-host major international sporting competitions, such as World Cups or the Olympics, wherever possible existing facilities would be proposed. No new facilities would be proposed unless their existence will also prove to be useful to the wider local community after the games.

SP214 Wales would use its influence with the world sporting community to encourage the placing of international games across wider geographic areas.

The televising of major national and international sporting events has a significant influence in inspiring young people to take up sports. It is therefore important to ensure that such events remain available on free-to-air nationwide TV. We would attempt to increase the number of events on the list of those protected in such a way.

SP215 Sponsorship of sporting teams or events would not be used as a loophole concerning advertising restrictions.

SP216 Sponsorship arrangements would not be allowed to restrict access to events of importance. In particular where a national team is playing then public service media would always be allowed to offer free access to everyone in Wales.

Tourism

Vision

TOU100 Wales is hugely attractive to tourists. The Welsh economy benefits substantially from the influx of people who wish to visit our amazing cultural heritage and our beautiful landscapes.

TOU101 Wales Green Party wish to encourage tourists as we wish to share the benefits that Wales has to offer with other people. However, we wish to attract visitors in a way that does not damage the environment, either locally or on a larger scale.

TOU102 We wish tourists to be able to travel in a sustainable manner and we wish the attractions they visit to be managed in such a way that they have a long-term future and that the people who work in the tourist industry are properly remunerated for their labour.

TOU103 We believe a certification scheme that rewards true eco-tourism should be developed in Wales, a scheme that contributes to the development of international standards with other countries. We believe that we could become a world leader in setting these standards.

General Policies

TOU200 We will encourage involvement of tourists with the communities they are visiting. We see positive integration of tourists and hosts in a sustainable way as the best way to achieve maximum benefit to both.

TOU201 We think that a shift towards sustainable tourism requires information of tourists and businesses about the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism. This is necessary to ensure that tourist activities and facilities are on a scale which matches the local community, are sympathetic to and do not pollute the environment, and are determined to a large extent by the local community.

TOU202 The benefits of recreation and tourism can include inward investment and development in local communities. We will encourage the development of multi-purpose facilities, usable throughout the year, to meet the needs of local people as well as visitors. Such facilities would offer more regular employment than seasonal facilities.

TOU203 We recognise that developing attractive recreational and holiday facilities closer to centres of population is important in supporting our policy to reduce long-distance and air travel. However, we will ensure that facilities are designed and managed to minimise social and environmental impact.

TOU204 We will encourage awareness of the impact of travel and awareness of sustainability issues. We will promote a Green tourism certification system, building on existing schemes but with more comprehensive criteria. Such certification schemes would be constructed so as to both incentivise the providers of travel and tourism facilities to achieve a higher rating and also to encourage consumers to choose higher rated options.

TOU205 Certification for tour operators would take into account factors such as:

- the tour operator's membership of and status in independent environmental certification schemes such as [Green Globe](#);
- the extent to which tour documents inform tourists about the local culture and about the environmental/social issues which they might encounter, and advise them on how they could help to reduce their adverse environmental impact and to support the local economy of the places they are visiting;
- the information provided in brochures and tour handouts about more sustainable modes of transportation such as trains, buses and passenger ferries, particularly for distances of up to 500 miles;
- the information provided in tour documents about where and how to buy locally produced food and support smaller independent accommodation and food establishments;

TOU206 Certification would also take into account the extent to which the tour operator:

- is aware of and actively respects local, regional, national and international rules established by treaties protecting fauna and flora;
- has procedures for undertaking a full Environmental Impact Assessment before any new tourist development is created, to ensure that the chosen venue is environmentally, sociologically and anthropologically sufficiently robust to support the operation proposed without undue damage in these areas;
- has a policy of minimising use of the most environmentally unsustainable forms of long-distance transport (e.g. by travelling where feasible over land and sea rather than by air);
- adopts environmental management systems to reduce any negative impact on the environment;
- seeks the active involvement of host communities in the decision-making process with regard to new and existing tourist developments, both in Wales and abroad;
- supports smaller independent local accommodation providers; recruits personnel locally for all levels of responsibility, and gives these personnel full work benefits applicable to other workers in the same country;
- protects and enhances the rights of workers employed in the tourist industry, including in other countries by insisting that business partners in those countries adhere to acceptable standards in these areas.

Tourism and Planning

TOU300 Local, unitary and structure plans, where they do not already do so, should include tourism. The periodic reviews should include a full Environmental Impact Assessment of tourism in the area, which would include recommendations and targets to ensure the achievement and maintenance of environmental sustainability. This would be supplemented by wider strategic environmental assessments. [\(see AGR and PBE\)](#)

TOU301 Regional planning should encourage the provision of sustainable leisure facilities, so that more people do not feel a need to travel abroad for their holidays.

Tourism and the Economy

TOU400 Much employment in the tourist industry is low paid, casual and seasonal work, and in bad conditions. We will encourage more stable employment, not least by promoting dual use of tourism facilities on a year-round basis. Employers should not be able to deprive casual or

seasonal workers of statutory employment rights. We would strengthen enforcement to ensure that employers meet their statutory obligations.

TOU401 We favour a general review of legislation related to the conduct of restaurant and fast food enterprises. The key objective would be to reduce the negative environmental impacts of such enterprises and improve employment in them. Local authorities should be empowered to encourage certain types of outlet, for example small cafes or restaurants owned and operated by local people, and to encourage all food outlets to source a significant proportion of their food supplies from local producers, to strengthen the local economy.

TOU402 We seek to introduce policies that discourage the ownership of second homes/holiday flats, which are only occupied for a few weeks a year. This produces very limited benefit to the local economy. It is detrimental to the local communities, pushing house prices higher and pricing local people out of the market.

Tourism and Transport

TOU500 We will provide additional public transport for tourists visiting Wales. Some areas attract large numbers of tourists, and much of this tourism will be seasonal.

TOU501 Local authorities should help co-ordinate the provision of public transport to existing tourist facilities. Local restaurants, hotels, facilities and tourist attractions should be encouraged to give special offers to those visitors who use public transport, in exchange for promotion of their facilities through the transport operators and local authority. Such a scheme would be self-financing.

TOU502 Facilities for walking, cycling and riding help tourism to benefit both tourists and residents. We would empower local authorities to give grants to small and medium sized tourism enterprises to improve significantly their facilities for walkers, cyclists and riders.

TOU503 We will encourage local authorities to make available environmentally sustainable transport (examples: bicycles, electric bicycles, electric carts, electric cars) for hire by tourists. This could be an attraction in itself as well as enhancing the existing tourist experience, and would in addition be a year-round facility for locals.

TOU504 Canals and other waterways offer sustainable opportunities for tourism with limited consumption of resources. We encourage the use of renewable energy and sustainable fuels for waterborne transport. Canals, rivers and waterways used for tourism need to be managed to ensure minimum disruption to the local ecology by tourist activities there. Speed restrictions on motorised craft must be enforced.

Tourism, our Natural and Cultural Heritage, and the Environment

TOU600 Certain leisure pursuits which are resource intensive, such as motor boating, helicopter and small aircraft pleasure flights, have greater impact on the environment. We will empower local authorities to ban these activities from specific locations in which they are inappropriate. The costs of such activities to participants should reflect their impact upon the environment.

TOU601 Certain types of leisure facilities such as golf courses and large caravan parks may have significant environmental costs and impacts. We will develop regulations to ensure all facilities

implement management practices consistent with environmental sustainability and minimum impact on the natural and human surroundings.

TOU602 Physical deterioration of historic buildings and artefacts can also be a major problem, whether due to pollution or excessive contact with tourism. We support the restoration and maintenance of historic buildings. We recognise the important role tourists can play in this preservation. We will encourage local authorities to preserve, promote and maintain local cultural treasures of all kinds in co-operation with locally based non-governmental organisations.

TOU603 Those local authorities covering areas attracting significant numbers of tourists should maintain a Tourism Consultative Committee, to involve local businesses, people and community organisations as a specialised advisory body to recommend policy improvements, based on principles of sustainability.

LGBTIQ+

Equality

LGB100 Wales Green Party will change laws to ensure equal rights and acceptance for LGBTIQ+ people.

LGB101 We will commission a review of the legislation which stops men who have sex with men and women with bisexual male partners from donating blood, with the aim to scrap the 3 month ban .

Education for all

LGB200 Wales Green Party will work in partnership with education organisations to ensure that all teachers and support staff are adequately trained to deliver sex education safely and confidently to students and also to support students.

LGB201 We will ensure that every school, college and university in Wales implements a specific LGBTIQ+ anti-bullying policy to ensure that students can feel safe and relaxed during an important and formative time of their lives.

LGB202 We will locate sexual health workers in all schools, colleges and universities. We will ensure that they are trained to give confidential, supportive and impartial sexual health advice that is suitable for all regardless of sexual orientation.

LGB203 We will ensure that young people are given the correct education around consensual sex and relationships.

Transgender Community

LGB300 We will work to ensure that non-binary people are protected in Wales. We will support expanding the definitions in the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that all non-binary people are protected.

LGB301 We would ensure the introduction and retention of a transition clinic in Wales.

LGB302 We would ensure front line services acknowledge people's gender identity, and their pronouns.

Mental Health

LGB400 We will work with mental health organisations to ensure that we have up to date information to make mental health a high priority.

LGB401 We will ensure that public services are available to offer guidance and support for the LGBTIQ+ community at the point that they are needed. We will introduce a 24/7 confidential service in Wales, like Broken Rainbows.