

# General Election 2017



Children in Wales  
Plant yng Nghymru

The Prime Minister, Theresa May, has called a general election for the UK. The election will be held on 8 June 2017. A general election is when every part of the UK votes for who they want to be their MP. There are 650 MPs across the UK.

In Wales, registered voters will elect 40 MPs to Parliament. Currently there are 25 Welsh Labour Party MPs, 11 Welsh Conservative Party MPs, 3 Plaid Cymru MPs and 1 Welsh Liberal Democrat MP. This briefing paper describes below the main policies that have been announced in the manifestos of the parties standing for election in Wales.

## Labour Party

*The Labour Party published its manifesto on 17 May, called For the Many, Not the Few. The key message was to build a fairer Britain which works for everyone.*

*The key policies affecting Wales are:*

### Renationalisation

- Bring the railways back into public ownership
- Reverse the privatisation of Royal Mail
- Create publically owned energy companies in every area of the UK
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### Economy

- Extra tax take from income tax on the top 5% of earners and re-introduce the 50p rate of tax on £80,00 or above
- Boost wages of 5.7 million earning less than minimum wage to £10 an hour by 2020
- Create a National Transformation Fund to upgrade the economy
- Creating a National Investment Bank

### Worker's rights

- End zero hour contracts
- Raise minimum wage to at least £10 an hour
- Ban unpaid internships
- Guarantee trade unions a right to access workplaces
- Abolish employment tribunal fees
- Give all workers equal rights, whether part-time, full time, temporary or permanent

### Education

- Reintroduce maintenance grants for university students and abolish university tuition fees

### Health and social care

- Scrap NHS pay cap
- £30 billion extra funding for NHS over the next Parliament
- Ring-fence mental health budgets
- Social Security and Pensions
- Scrap the 'bedroom tax'
- Reinstate housing benefit for under-21s

### Energy

- Introduce an immediate energy price cap
- Maintain access to the EU's internal energy market

### Transport

- Deliver rail electrification including Wales

### Families and communities

- An end to the so-called "rape clause" - part of the policy of restricting child tax credits to the first two children in a family

### Democracy

- Build on the Development Bank of Wales using more than £10bn from Labour's new National Investment Bank

### Migration

- Will not set a cap on immigration
- International students will not be included in immigration numbers

### Brexit

- Accept Brexit referendum result and build a close new relationship with EU
- Guarantee rights of EU nationals in the UK
- Ensure a meaningful role for Parliament throughout Brexit negotiations
- Scrap the current Brexit White Paper and replace with a fresh priorities including retaining the benefits of the single market and customs union

You can access the full manifesto online at [www.labour.org.uk/manifesto2017](http://www.labour.org.uk/manifesto2017) and a summary of the main points can be found on the BBC website at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2017-39933116>.





### *Liberal Democrats*

*The Liberal Democrats published their manifesto on 17 May 2017, with the key message being that the party aims to influence the future of Britain becoming the main opposition party.*

*Some of the main promises in the manifesto include:*

#### Brexit

- A second referendum on Brexit deal
- Guarantee the rights of EU nationals in the UK
- Membership of the single market and customs union
- Protect freedom of movement and EU schemes which increase opportunities for young people
- Defend social rights such as maternity leave

#### Health and social care

- 1p in the pound increase on income tax to raise £6bn for NHS and social care services
- Tackle stigma against mental ill-health
- Raise the amount people earn before losing Carer's Allowance from £110 to £150 a week
- Tackle childhood obesity

#### Education

- Invest nearly £7bn extra in education
- Reinstatement of university maintenance grants for the poorest students
- Double the number of businesses that hire apprentices
- Challenge gender stereotyping and early sexualisation

#### Economy

- Install hyperfast, fibre-optic broadband across the UK
- Raise employee national insurance threshold to the income tax threshold
- Ensure those with the highest incomes and wealth

- are making a fair contribution
- Stamp out abuse of zero-hours contracts
- Encourage employers to promote employee ownership

#### Housing

- Ensure at least four million homes are made highly energy efficient by 2022, with priority given to fuel-poor households
- Investment in road and rail infrastructure

#### Families and communities

- An additional month's paid paternity leave
- Take 13,000 children out of poverty by letting both parents earn before their Universal Credit is cut
- Reverse cuts to work allowances in universal credit and housing benefit for 18-21 year olds - increase jobseeker's allowance and universal credit for 18-24
- Uprate working-age benefits at least in line with inflation
- Abandon the two-child policy on family benefits and abolish the 'rape clause'
- Scrap the 'bedroom tax' and the work capability assessment

#### Drugs and policing

- Bring in a legal, regulated market for cannabis
- £300m for community policing in England and Wales
- Replace Police and Crime Commissioners with police boards made up of local councillors

#### Migration

- Vote against attempts to scrap the Human Rights Act or withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights
- Offer safe and legal routes to the UK for refugees - offering sanctuary to 50,000 Syrian refugees over five years
- Reopen the Dubs scheme to take 3,000 unaccompanied refugee children from Europe

#### Democracy

- Votes for 16-year-olds
- Introduce the single transferable vote for electing MPs across the UK
- Devolve more powers to Wales

You can view the manifesto at <http://www.libdems.org.uk/manifesto> and a summary at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2017-39946809>.

## Conservative Party

*The Conservatives published their manifesto for the election on 18 May 2017. The key message from the document was to provide “strong and stable” leadership throughout the Brexit process.*

*The manifesto raises “Five giant challenges” which include the need for a strong economy; Brexit and a changing world; enduring social division; an ageing society; and fast-changing technology.*

*The key policies in the manifesto affecting Wales include:*

### Economy and business

- Increase personal tax allowance to £12,500 and the higher rate to £50,000 by 2020
- Deliver road, rail, airports and broadband that businesses need
- Increase levy on firms employing migrant workers
- Cut corporation tax to 17% by 2020
- Reform business rates
- Simplify tax system
- Regulate more efficiently, cutting ‘red tape’

### Workers’ rights

- Increase the national living wage to 60% of median earnings by 2020
- Ensure people working in the ‘gig’ economy are protected
- Change the law to ensure listed companies nominate a director from the workforce
- Introduce a right for employees to request information relating to future direction of the company

### Education

- Pump £4bn extra into schools by 2020
- If universities want to charge maximum tuition fees, they will be required to “become involved” in academy sponsorship or the founding of free schools
- Work to build up the investment funds of universities across the UK

### Health

- Increase NHS spending by a minimum of £8bn in real terms over the next five years
- Require foreign workers and overseas students to pay more to cover the cost of NHS care

### Migration

- Commitment to “bear down on immigration from outside the EU” across all visa routes
- Immigration cut to under 100,000
- Students expected to leave the country at the end of their course unless they meet new “higher” requirements allowing them to stay
- Overseas students to remain in the immigration statistic

## Brexit

- Exit the European single market and customs union
- Vote in both Houses of Parliament on “final agreement” for Brexit
- Agree terms of future partnership with EU alongside withdrawal, both within the two years allowed under Article 50
- Remain signatories to the European Convention on Human Rights for the next parliament
- Reduce and control immigration from Europe after Brexit
- Seek to replicate all existing EU free trade agreements
- Introduce a Trade Bill in the next parliament
- Reconvene the Board of Trade to increase exports from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as England

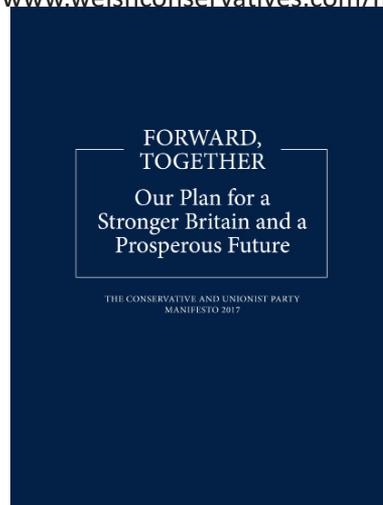
You can download a copy of the Conservative manifesto from their website at [www.conservatives.com/manifesto](http://www.conservatives.com/manifesto). A summary of the key points is available on the BBC website at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2017-39960311>.

The Welsh Conservatives have also released a Wales-specific version of the manifesto. The manifesto says that the Conservatives want to be a force for good across the whole of the UK.

The pledges include:

- Boost North Wales economy with a growth deal
- Scrap Severn bridges tolls for all traffic
- New prosperity fund to replace EU aid post-Brexit
- Further devolution of powers to the National Assembly post-Brexit
- Modernise rail infrastructure with new trains and stations
- More powers for Police and Crime Commissioners

The Welsh manifesto can be viewed online at <https://www.welshconservatives.com/manifesto>.



## Plaid Cymru

*Plaid Cymru published their Action Plan for the 2017 elections on 16 May, promising to defend Wales from a 'tidal wave of attacks.' The Party says that Wales' identity, economy and democracy need protection. The manifesto makes the following commitments:*

### Brexit:

- Ensure that Wales can continue to buy and sell to Europe without costly barriers
- Guarantee the rights of Europeans living in Wales
- Fight to get the best possible Brexit deal for Welsh industry and agriculture

### Democracy

- Bring forward a new law to protect Welsh sovereignty and democracy
- Push for a new commission to oversee the distribution of funds across the UK
- Grant 16 and 17 year olds the right to vote and reform the voting system to be more representative
- Give Wales an equal say when decisions are made with implications for devolved functions

### Economy:

- Ensure that £4.3 billion public sector contracts and spent in Wales and introduce a Living Wage
- Introduce a £7.5 billion investment programme to fund infrastructure projects
- Introduce a publically owned bank and a Welsh Development Bank to invest in Welsh businesses

### Health and social care:

- Train and recruit an additional 1000 doctors and 5000 nurses
- Ensure health and social care services are seamlessly provided. Introduce a carers' contract to support those who care for others.
- Reduce avoidable mortality by public health actions and promoting lifestyle changes
- Push for Wales' share of the £350 million promised to the NHS by the Leave EU campaign
- Call for improved access to trained counsellors and therapists in the community

### Social Security:

- Powers over social security devolved to Wales
- Scrap the 'bedroom tax' and fight the 'rape clause' and changes to bereavement support
- Help disabled people into work without sanctions

### Childcare and education:

- Free full-time nursery places for all three year olds
- Raise education standards by improving teachers' salaries and training
- Create an incentive for students who remain or return to Wales to live and work after graduation
- Guarantee employment, education or training

opportunities for anyone under 25. Create a new network for specialist National Colleges of Vocational Education for 14 year olds and older

- Increase availability of Welsh language education

### Connecting Wales

- A Wales-wide transport system, including improved rail and bus services and integrated walking and cycling routes
- Ultra-fast broadband internet for all of Wales and 5G mobile signal nationwide

### Police, justice and rights

- Reverse cuts to legal aid and bring forward laws on protecting victims of crimes such as rape and domestic abuse
- Create a Welsh legal jurisdiction to reflect the needs of Wales
- Publish a human rights charter for Wales to defend against the intent of scrapping the Human Rights Act

### Energy and environment

- Increase energy from renewables. Devolve responsibility over Welsh energy generation
- Create a Welsh energy company to use profit from Welsh resources to cut the cost of energy
- Nationwide scheme to make housing stock more energy efficient
- Introduce a new Climate Change Act and build upon EU environmental legislation.

### Rural life

- Seek the endorsement of each UK country before any trade deal is signed
- Introduce a fuel duty regulator to stop rising fuel costs

The Plaid Cymru Action Plan can be found online at <http://www2.partyof.wales/actionplan17>. A summary is available on the BBC website at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-39934132>





## Green Party

The Green Party launched its manifesto on 22 May, calling for a “confident and caring Britain that we can all be proud of.” The main pledges announced are:

### Economy

- Create a network of local people’s banks
- Crackdown on tax avoidance
- Reform tax to include a wealth tax on top 1% earners
- A Robin Hood tax on high value financial transactions
- Phased-in abolition of cap on employees national insurance
- Support and promote small businesses, co-operatives and mutual and roll out high speed broadband
- Support start-ups and creative enterprises

### Environment

- Introduce an Environmental Protection Act
- Investment in insulation to make homes warmer, flood defences and natural flood management
- Equal access to nature and green spaces
- Limit global temperature increase to 2 degrees
- Replace fracking, coal power stations and nuclear power with clean, efficient energy
- Invest in community owned energy
- Strong protection for the Green Belt, National Parks, SSSIs and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Action to reduce plastic and other waste

### Brexit

- A referendum on deal is for Britain’s exit from the EU
- Remain within the European single market, and safeguard rights for people and environment
- Guarantee the rights of EU citizens to remain in the UK and seek arrangements for UK citizens in the EU

### Workers’ rights

- Take steps towards the introduction of a universal basic income
- Phase in 4 day working week
- Reduce gap between highest and lowest paid and increase minimum wage to £10 an hour by 2020

- End the gender pay gap
- Trade rules that respect rights, labour and environmental standards and climate commitments
- Scrap age-related pay bands

### Public services

- Increase funding for local authorities
- Review effectiveness of how public services are structured

### Education

- Increase funding for schools so real-term spending increases
- Scrap university tuition fees and restore maintenance grants
- Reject the Prevent strategy and pursue community led approaches to tackling extremism
- Introduce non-biased political education and active citizenship

### Social security and pensions

- Reinstate housing benefit for under-21s
- Create a benefits system that gives people confidence they will get support when they need it
- Abolish the ‘Bedroom Tax’

### Transport

- Renationalise the railways
- Invest in rail links and electrification of rail lines

### Families and communities

- Tackle racism and discrimination based on faith or disability
- Real equality for LGBTIQ+ people, equal rights for mixed gender couples to have a Civil Partnership

### Democracy

- Lower the voting age to 16
- Introduce Proportional Representation for parliamentary and local elections
- Increase diversity in politics
- Replace House of Lords with an elected second chamber
- Defend the Human Rights Act and ECHR
- Reinstate funding for the Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Give Parliament a vote of new trade deals
- Revive the role of democratic trade unions

### Migration

- A humane immigration and asylum system
- Tackle gender-based violence, rape and sexual abuse, FGM and trafficking

The full manifesto is available at <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/green-guarantee/>. A summary of the document is available on the BBC website at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2017-40003019>.

## UK Independence Party

*The UK Independence Party launched its manifesto on 25 May 2017, called Britain Together. The manifesto pledges to be the “guard dogs of Brexit.”*

*The main pledges announced focus on immigration issues and leaving the EU, and are set out below.*

### Brexit

- Quit the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice, the EU single market, and customs union
- Restore “full maritime sovereignty”
- Pay no “divorce” money to the EU, nor contribute to EU budget
- Finish Brexit process by the end of 2019
- Re-instate the classic blue British passport that was replaced in 1988

### Economy:

- Remove VAT from domestic energy bills
- Increase income tax personal allowance to £13,500 and raise 40% threshold to £55,000
- Raise inheritance tax thresholds
- Bring in measures to stop big corporations using “aggressive tax avoidance schemes”

### Housing

- Provide 100,000 homes for younger people
- Introduce locally-made, factory-built modular homes
- Acquire brownfield sites through compulsory purchase to build affordable housing
- Launch a review into operation of Housing Associations

### Transport and environment

- Oppose Heathrow Airport expansion in favour of expansion of regional airports
- Scrap HS2
- Remove road tolls on public roads
- Repeal the Climate Change Act

### Health

- Increase nurse training placements and reinstate funding for bursaries
- Crack down on ineligible foreign nationals using the NHS

### Immigration

- End freedom of movement between UK and EU
- Aim to reduce net migration to zero over a five-year period, with a “one in, one out” policy
- Moratorium on unskilled and low-skilled immigration for five years after Brexit
- Require new migrants to pay tax for five years before they are eligible for benefits and non-urgent NHS services

### Education

- Restore university maintenance grants
- Stop offering student loans to EU nationals after Brexit

### Social security

- Reverse cuts to care budgets and put £2bn every year into social care
- Increase Carer’s Allowance to match higher level of Job Seeker’s Allowance (£73.10)
- Scrap the bedroom tax
- Reverse cuts to care budgets and put £2bn every year into social care
- Increase Carer’s Allowance to match higher level of Job Seeker’s Allowance (£73.10)

### Foreign policy

- Slash the foreign aid budget and spend it on domestic priorities like the NHS

### Justice

- Ban Sharia courts and the wearing of face coverings in public places

### Future of the UK

- Publicly chosen referendum to take place every two years with outcome legally binding and included in Queen’s Speech
- Introduce a system of proportional representation
- Abolish the House of Lords
- Introduce an English Parliament

