

Welsh Liberal Democrats Delivering for Wales...

Delivering on Health

Help for Medicine costs

Another key pledge from the Liberal Democrat partnership has been achieved.



Free prescriptions are now provided for those aged under 25. The amount of disposable income for this age group is less than for the 25 to 59 age group, particularly for young couples with children.

This move will also benefit students under 25 in higher education, particularly those whose student loan takes them just above the threshold of the NHS Low Income Scheme.

Prescription charges in Wales have already been frozen.

More free eye and dental checks

All people in Wales under the age of 25 and those aged 60 or over are now entitled to free dental examinations.



This key commitment was set out in the Partnership Agreement between Liberal Democrats and Labour. This is good news for Wales and will assist in our drive to improve oral health in the country.

People aged 60 or over will now be entitled to free dental and optical examinations as well as free prescriptions, and people aged under 25, who are often likely to have a limited income, will be encouraged to maintain sound dental health at a time when irreparable damage might otherwise be caused.

NHS arrangements for continuing dental care are designed to encourage patients to regard their oral health as something that needs regular attention and not just when they have toothache. The maintenance of good oral health is important and this key change ensures that, for these age groups, the cost of examination will not be a barrier to regular attendance.

Liberal Democrat influence in the Assembly is making a real difference to the health of the people of Wales.

European Money for Jobs and Communities



The share of Objective 1 cash invested in Wales has smashed through the £400m mark – and total investment is expected to reach half a billion pounds by the end of this year.

More than £200m worth of European grants and £200m of match-funding were given the green light during the past 12 months, giving the go-ahead to 289 projects which are now creating jobs, building up skills and strengthening communities right across the West Wales and the Valleys area.

Wales is now top of the UK league on Objective 1 with millions of pounds helping hundreds of projects getting off the ground and starting to build up our economy.



More than half of the Objective 1 projects approved so far are designed to build up small and medium-sized businesses as it is recognised that the private sector will play a crucial role in creating wealth and economic success. But Objective 1 funds are also being targeted towards the heart of our

communities to empower people with the confidence and skills they need if they are going to contribute to our economy.

Michael German said: "We are charging ahead with Objective 1 in Wales, and the funds are being invested wisely into quality schemes which will have real results.

"Objective 1 is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for us to transform our economy and breathe new life into some of our poorest communities. It is important that the people in these communities are given a clear message that Objective 1 is delivering change for them."

More information on the Objective 1 scheme More Objective is available on the Welsh European Funding Office's website at

<http://www.wefo.wales.gov.uk> (For a full list of approved projects - see under [approved projects/ 2000-06 projects/Objective 1](#)).



Delivering for Schools

Lib Dems deliver radical shake-up of post-16 learning



A further 'key pledge' for the Welsh Liberal Democrats has been delivered with the announcement that the Assembly's Partnership Government would pilot a 'Welsh Baccalaureate' exam.

What a Welsh Baccalaureate offers us, is the opportunity to start bridging the gap between the academic and vocational strands of

post-16 education; radically expanding and enriching students' educational experience along the way.

The introduction of a 'WelshBac' pilot was a key commitment in the Assembly's Partnership Agreement, Putting Wales First - agreed between the Welsh Liberal Democrats and Welsh Labour in October 2000.

The pilot will be designed to ensure that all students are accredited according to existing recognised post-16 qualifications, so as to protect their position in the developing qualifications market.

Delivering for Students

Better deal for Students - Good start made

The scrapping of the student grant is the root cause of the financial trouble faced by Welsh students. The introduction of tuition fees simply inflicted more misery, acting as a deterrent for those wishing to enter further or higher education.



Now the Welsh Lib Dem-inspired student hardship report recommends the reintroduction of a maintenance grant, or Learning Maintenance Bursary to students from families with a residual

income of between £10,000 - £15,000 per annum. The Welsh Liberal Democrats naturally welcome the Rees Report into student hardship as a key plank of the Liberal Democrat's side of the Partnership Agreement.

However Michael German and the Welsh Liberal Democrats, whilst welcoming the findings of the Report, want to see a more radical figure to help finance students than that proposed in the Rees Report.

Good Jobs News for South East Wales

News of 500 high-tech, well paid jobs coming to Blackwood is a tremendous boost to local employment. Recruitment has already started. Former Solectron workers have been the first



to pick up jobs on the new Oakdale Business Park with the incoming company, CDC (Computing Devices Canada).

The jobs come as part of a multi billion pound contract to produce new radio and telecommunications equipment for the Army. The problems in Bosnia with the Army being forced to use mobile phones led to this new contract.

In welcoming the news Michael German said,

"I am delighted at the news of hundreds of long term, high quality jobs for the hardest hit area of Wales. Corus, General Electric and Solectron have all shed workers in the last few months.

"When I visited the company headquarters in Canada as the Minister responsible, I pressed the case hard for Wales. I am pleased that the National Assembly has played a key role in getting these jobs. I also anticipate that there will be more to come."

Success! The White Stuff - Free School Milk

Thanks to the hard work of the Liberal Democrats, pupils in infant schools are now entitled to free school milk again!

Mrs Thatcher took it away - Lib Dems brought it back!

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Michael German at the National Assembly for Wales



School Buildings Cash Boost

The partnership government has provided a £300m cash boost to repair our rotting school buildings. Work has already started this summer on some of the worst problems.

Money for more teachers

Lib Dems in government in Wales have promised more teachers so that all children under the age of 11 will be taught in a class of fewer than 30 pupils.

Local Campaigns

Some of the issues for which Michael German has been campaigning during the year.....

- M48 access road at Rogiet
- Better policing at New Inn
- Traffic improvements for Monmouth
- Saving local Post Offices and pubs from closure
- Site investigation for the new Durham Rd Schools in Newport
- More beds for the Royal Gwent hospital
- Housing campaign in Ringland, Newport
- New jobs for Blackwood and Abertillery
- Flooding issues in Rhydney

Michael German

Liberal Democrat Assembly Member for South Wales East

Reporting back to you

Summer 2001

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Dear Resident

This is my second annual report to my constituents - reporting back on the actions I have been taking for you in the National Assembly. I hope you will take a moment or two to read it, and let me know what concerns you.

I continually remind myself that more than half of the people in Wales didn't vote for the Assembly in the elections in 1999.

We need an Assembly that has an impact on people's lives; that delivers policies to improve the quality of life for the people here in Wales. Then they will be enthusiastic about our new government.

Welsh Liberal Democrats have shared power in the government of Wales for nine months now. Partnership politics is not easy, but we have a three year programme for government which is already starting to bear fruit with policies that can benefit you and your family.

We have made a bold start - free prescriptions for the under 25's and freezing charges for those who pay, making more people eligible for free eye and dental checks, free entry into museums - including Big Pit, re-introducing free school milk for the under 7's, ploughing more money into schools and hospitals for teachers, books, nurses and doctors. This report tells you more of what I have been doing in the Assembly.

For the first time in almost 80 years the Welsh people have evidence of the Liberal Democrats in government. You now know what we're capable of, what we stand for and unlike so many others, that when we promise we deliver.

That's why we have just had such a successful General Election campaign. We increased our number of MPs. We increased our share of the vote. We made good progress in seats for next time. People responded well to Charles Kennedy's leadership and to the Party themes of Freedom, Justice and Honesty.

Let me know what you think. I value your views.

Yours

Michael German AM

Welsh Liberal Democrats - delivering for Wales