

THE RURAL POWERHOUSE IN WALES



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CONTACTS

For more information on *The Rural Powerhouse in Wales*, published in November 2021, contact:

Nigel Hollett, Director CLA Cymru
Tel: 01547 317085
Email: nigel.hollett@cla.org.uk

Fraser McAuley, CLA Senior Policy Adviser
Tel: 07702 926069
Email: fraser.mcauley@cla.org.uk

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CONTENTS

	Page
1. Introduction	5
1.1 The CLA	5
1.2 The challenge	7
2. A fully connected countryside	9
2.1 Background	9
2.2 Benefit to the rural economy	9
2.3 Policy recommendations	11
3. A planning system designed for rural communities	12
3.1 Background	12
3.2 Policy recommendations	12
4. A profitable and sustainable farming and forestry sector	17
4.1 Background	17
4.2 Agriculture (Wales) Bill	17
4.3 Wales-wide agricultural pollution regulations	18
4.4 Woodland and forestry	20
4.5 Policy recommendations	21
5. Investment in skills and innovation	23
5.1 Background	23
5.2 Policy recommendations	24

6.	A simpler and more supportive tax regime	25
6.1	Background	25
6.2	VAT cut to support tourism in Wales	25
6.3	Other tax reliefs for rural business	25
6.4	Rural Business Units	27
6.5	Policy recommendations	29
7.	Summary of recommendations	31

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The CLA

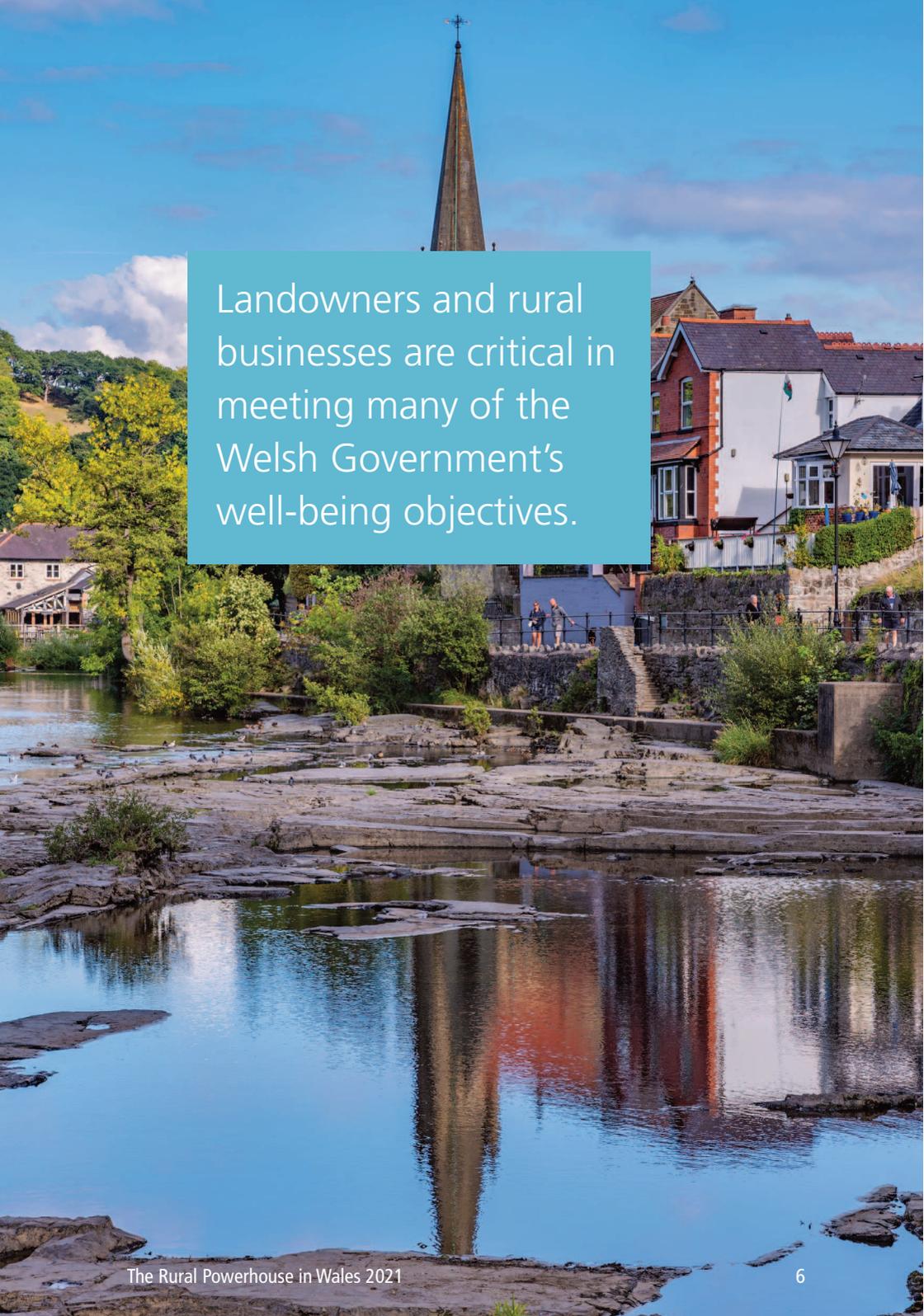
Founded in 1907, the CLA is the membership organisation for owners of land, property and businesses in rural England and Wales. We exist to champion, protect and enhance our rural economy, environment and way of life.

Our aim is to unlock the potential of the rural economy by promoting innovative ideas to a national audience and providing practical support to members. We do this so our members can feed the country, create jobs and prosperity, invest in communities and protect the environment for future generations.

Together, CLA members own and manage around half the rural land in England and Wales and more than 250 different types of businesses. The CLA in Wales represents a very broad range of rural economic players, businesses and service-providers, manufacturers and the supply chain for primary producers and those who provide land for amenity purposes. In Wales, rural business totals nearly 105,000 enterprises. One third of the Welsh population lives within a rural area: our rural economy supports some 459,000 people.

A new Welsh Government was elected in May 2021, and faces the multiple challenges of Covid-19 recovery, biodiversity and climate emergencies and Brexit impacts. In June 2021, the Welsh Government published an ambitious Programme for Government¹ outlining the key commitments it intends to deliver over the sixth Senedd term. In this publication – *The Rural Powerhouse in Wales* – we argue that landowners and rural businesses are critical in meeting many of these commitments and we urge the Welsh Government to continue to work with us in addressing the many challenges and opportunities Wales faces.

1. <https://gov.wales/programme-for-government-2021-to-2026>



Landowners and rural businesses are critical in meeting many of the Welsh Government's well-being objectives.

Using the themes of the CLA's Rural Powerhouse campaign, our strategy includes policy recommendations for both devolved matters and for those reserved by the UK Government as they apply to Wales. The CLA's Rural Powerhouse themes are:

- A fully connected countryside
- A planning system designed for rural communities
- Profitable and sustainable farming
- Investment in skills and innovation
- A simpler tax regime

1.2 The challenge

Even before coronavirus, the rural economy was an estimated 18% less productive than the UK national average. Closing that gap would add an estimated £43bn to the economy, creating hundreds of thousands of skilled jobs in communities everywhere. This would be on top of the £310bn the rural economy already contributes to national Gross Value Added (GVA)². There are multiple reasons for the countryside's lower productivity: poor digital connectivity, an outdated planning system, unnecessary bureaucracy, and persistent underinvestment in skills and infrastructure have resulted in fewer opportunities for those living in rural areas. While this is true for the rural economy across the UK, Wales is behind England in terms of productivity per worker. We argue that by addressing these issues in Wales rural businesses can make a greater contribution to the delivery of many of the Welsh Government's 10 well-being objectives³.

2. These figures are an estimate for the whole of the UK with Wales specific figures not available, we have no evidence they would be any different.

3. <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-06/programme-for-government-2021-to-2026-well-being-statement.pdf>



The rural sector, now more than ever, requires excellent connectivity.

2. A FULLY CONNECTED COUNTRYSIDE

2.1 Background

The rural sector, now more than ever, requires excellent connectivity. Due to the population distribution and topography of the country, the cost of building connectivity networks is significantly higher than the UK average, resulting in lower availability of mobile services and superfast broadband: 12% of rural residential premises in Wales are unable to get decent broadband coverage against 0% of urban premises⁴.

2.2 Benefit to the rural economy

Widespread improvements in connectivity would support rural businesses in a number of ways. It would:

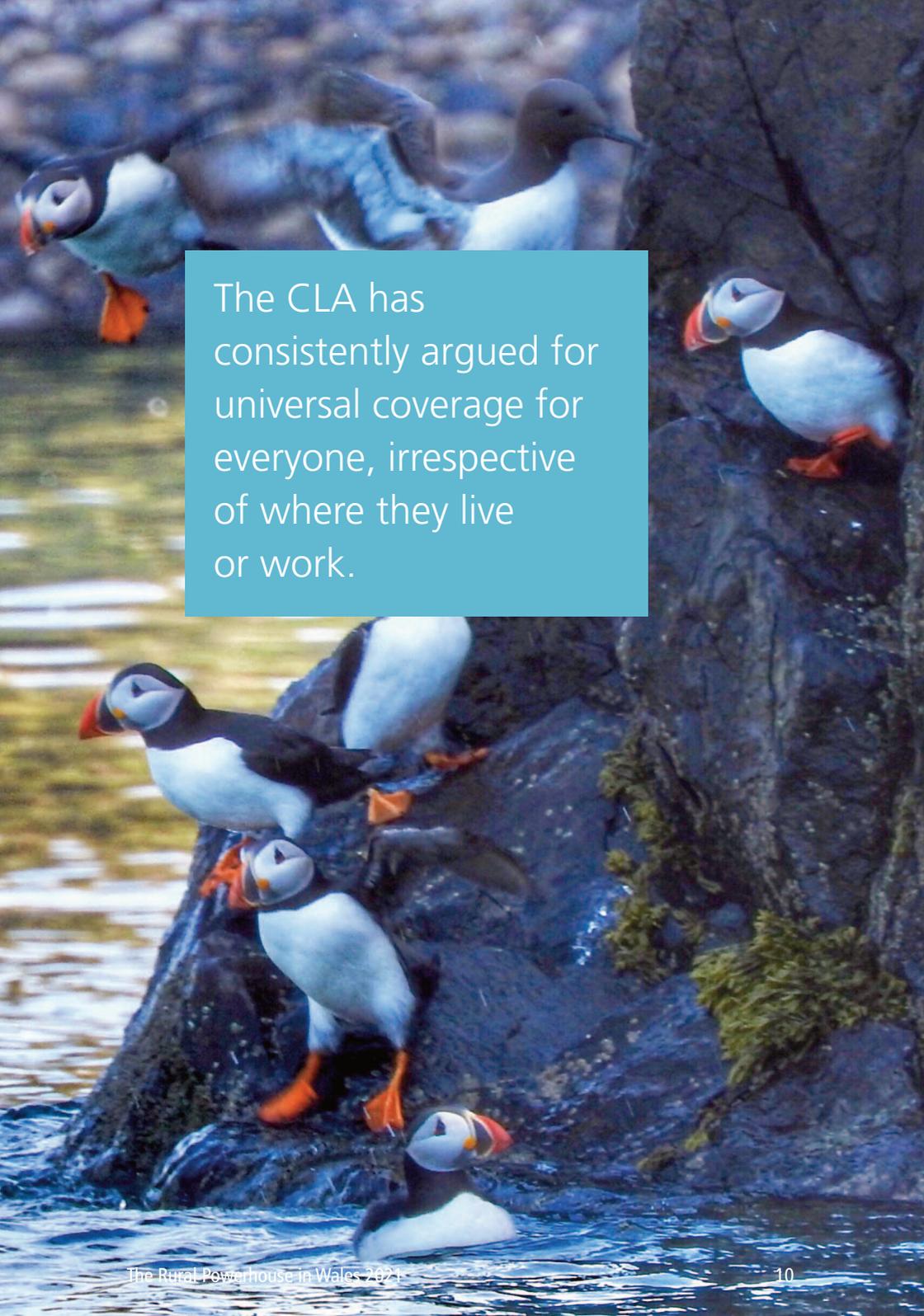
- support tourism businesses to attract holidaymakers who see high quality broadband and phone coverage as essential;
- allow a greater number of people to work remotely; and
- support farmers to transition from the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and Glastir to a new land use policy based on the principle of Sustainable Land Management⁵ (infield innovation, recording of farm data and online applications all require good connectivity).

We welcomed the Welsh Government's Digital Strategy⁶ published in March 2021 but it is now about delivery. We acknowledge the reserved nature of digital connectivity to the UK Government but urge the Welsh Government to work with Westminster to deliver the digital services rural Wales needs.

4. https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/209441/connected-nations-2020-wales.pdf

5. <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-09/agriculture-wales-bill-our-response-forward-plan.pdf>

6. <https://gov.wales/digital-strategy-wales-html#section-66665>



The CLA has consistently argued for universal coverage for everyone, irrespective of where they live or work.

2.3 Policy recommendations

To realise the opportunities from broadband and mobile connectivity, the CLA has consistently argued for universal coverage where everyone, irrespective of where they live or work, has access to an affordable and effective connection.

Whilst the UK Government may have accepted the principle of this strategy through Project Gigabit, the decision in the 2020 Spending Review to use only £1.2bn of the available £5bn fund means that it is paying lip service to ensuring that rural and urban areas are connected at the same time. After this funding has been converted using the Barnett Formula, less money will be available for Wales. It is fundamental that all available resources are allocated by 2025. The introduction of a Shared Rural Network for mobile connectivity, if effectively implemented, will significantly improve 4G access over the next five years and set up the right framework for the wider deployment of 5G in rural areas. The Welsh Government has funded the Access Broadband Cymru scheme and we urge this to continue for the duration of the next Senedd term.

What rural businesses now need, and what the CLA will keep campaigning for, is a clear policy framework for delivery.

CLA Cymru calls on the Senedd and the Welsh Government to support the CLA's campaign calling for the UK Government to:

- use all the funds available to ensure that delivery targets can be met, with interim targets placed on broadband and mobile phone operators, to avoid improvements being back-ended;
- secure the civil engineering capacity needed;
- implement the increased permitted development rights which would encourage accelerated rollout;
- introduce a legal obligation on network operators to deliver 'Rural Roaming' (i.e. allowing a signal to pass from one operator's network to another) if they fail to implement the Shared Rural Network swiftly and meet their interim milestones.

3. A PLANNING SYSTEM DESIGNED FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

3.1 Background

Without a planning regime that works for the countryside, the potential of the rural economy will never be realised. It is right to ensure elements of the rural environment are protected by the planning system, but the countryside is not a museum; rural poverty will only be eased and opportunity only created if we allow landowners to invest in their communities. Time and again we hear of farmers wanting to convert old barns into new office spaces or for other diversified uses, only to be held back by an outdated planning system. Indeed, it is so hard to navigate that, at great cost, many businesses simply give up trying to find a way to work within its restrictions and abandon development projects altogether. It is an increasingly common view that the criteria for businesses to follow in their applications are excessive, creating the need for endless discussions between applicant and the local authority. The upfront cost associated with making a planning application, and the significant risk of an unsuccessful outcome, are hindering potential rural economic development.

In March 2021 CLA Cymru published a policy report on how planning in Wales can be improved to serve better the needs of the rural economy. With the recent election of a new Government in Wales there is a fresh opportunity to consider the key recommendations outlined below. The full policy report can be accessed using the link provided where greater detail on the recommendations is given.

<https://www.cla.org.uk/policy/planning-system-designed-rural-economy-wales/>

3.2 Policy recommendations

The recommendations set out below must be made available across the whole of rural Wales if they are to provide for the needs of all businesses and communities. In addition, they will assist the

delivery of the seven well-being goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and contribute to the delivery of the Well-being objectives the Welsh Government published as part of their Programme for Government.

- **Planning Policy Wales (PPW) to recognise the broader rural economy**

CLA Cymru calls on the Welsh Government to amend Planning Policy Wales (PPW) so that it properly reflects the broader economy that exists in rural areas.

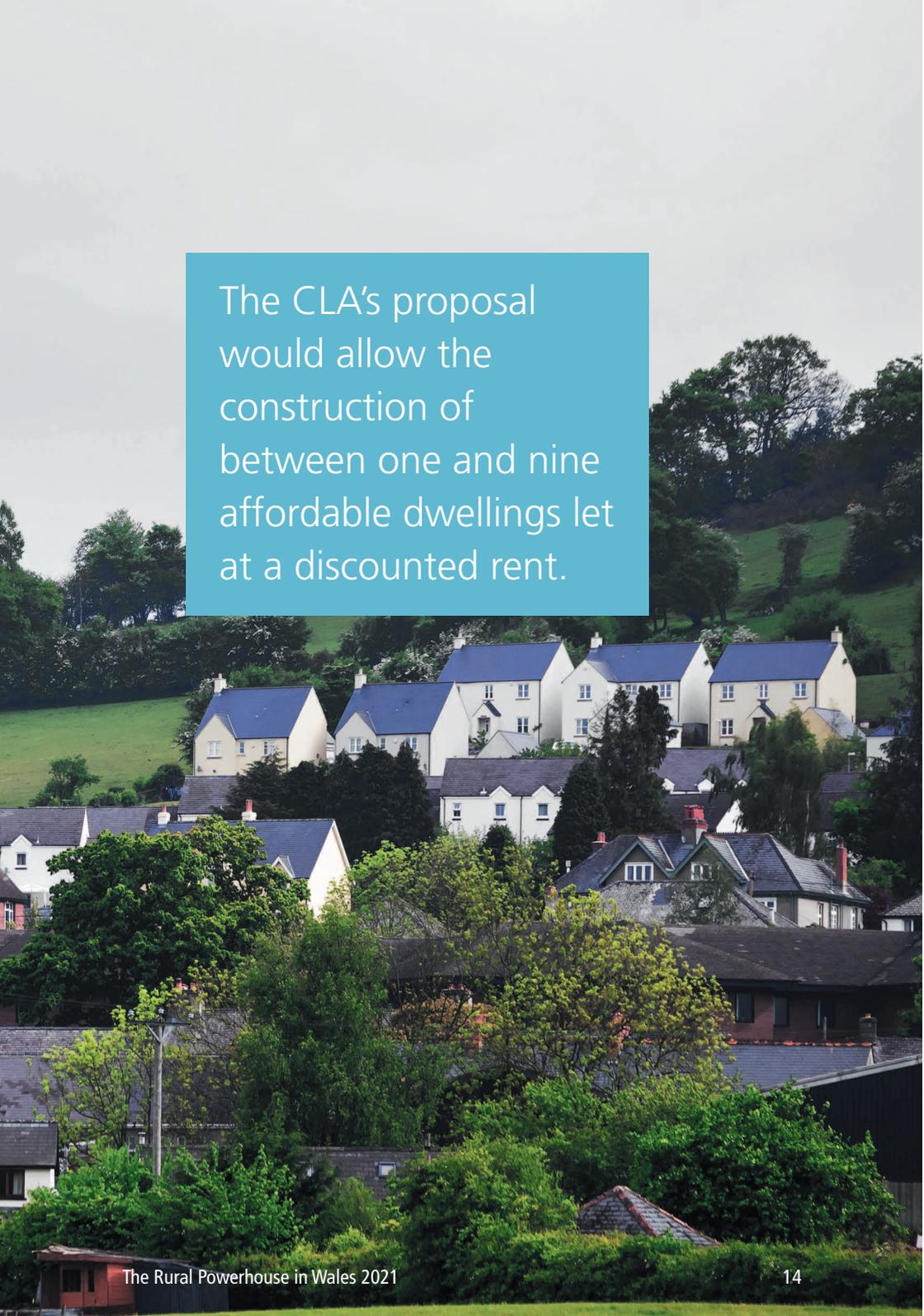
- **Permission in Principle (PiP) for rural economic development**

CLA Cymru calls on the Welsh Government, as part of the changes introduced by a consolidated Planning Act, to introduce the permission in principle (PiP) process for rural economic development. A two-stage process would encourage investment and deliver an innovative and broader economy in rural areas by granting PiP for a development proposal (first stage) and thus incentivise the applicant to pull together all the necessary reports and surveys required to get the final planning permission for the development proposal at the technical details consent stage (second stage). Pushing these up-front costs back to the second stage of the PiP process would help to de-risk the process and could unlock much needed new investment in rural areas.

- **Permitted development rights for the change of use of farm buildings**

CLA Cymru calls on the Welsh Government to introduce permitted development rights for the change of use and conversion of farm buildings to: (i) a range of flexible commercial uses; and (ii) residential use.

These rights would help Welsh farming businesses provide a boost to rural economic growth through the creation of new work space, increased numbers of, and better-quality jobs, and create new housing in rural communities.



The CLA's proposal would allow the construction of between one and nine affordable dwellings let at a discounted rent.

- **Permitted development rights for new-build, affordable housing for rent on rural exception sites**

CLA Cymru calls for the introduction of permitted development rights to assist the delivery of new-build, affordable housing for rent on rural exception sites. These permitted development rights are aimed at rural landowners who are willing to erect new-build, affordable housing for rent on an area of their land to provide critically-needed housing aimed at the local community. The CLA's proposal would allow the construction of between one and nine affordable dwellings let at a discounted rent. Prior approval would clearly be required and would need to be the subject of carefully thought-through criteria that may include: location, transport/highways, siting, design, external appearance, flood risk, noise, contamination, housing need in the settlement and/or parish, housing size, public consultation, short construction period condition, and a clause concerning discounted rent.

There would also need to be a condition/legal agreement that the housing must be built, retained and managed by the landowner for the benefit of the local community, without the landowner having to be a registered provider. In our opinion, the Welsh Government should demonstrate an element of trust in rural landowners by introducing this recommendation which could lead to the delivery of small quantities of dwelling houses at affordable rents.

- **Permitted development rights for rural-based pubs and other rural community buildings**

CLA Cymru calls for permitted development rights for the change of use of rural-located pubs and other community buildings to a range of flexible commercial uses. The rights should be made available to those premises that have closed owing to a lack of viability, to enable them to be used as rural business hubs.



Many farmers consider diversifying their businesses to be a commercial necessity.

4. A PROFITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE FARMING AND FORESTRY SECTOR

4.1 Background

Farming remains at the core of many of our members rural businesses, delivering high quality primary produce for the food sector, providing a range of environmental benefits and providing significant employment opportunities that support communities across the countryside. This chapter outlines the challenges and opportunities for the farming and forestry sector and provides key policy recommendations for the Welsh Government as new farming and land use policies are developed through to 2025.

4.2 Agriculture (Wales) Bill

The CLA has long advocated for a new land use policy that maintains the competitiveness of Welsh farming, rewards the high levels of environmental delivery which rural businesses provide, and demonstrates to the taxpayer and wider community what these benefits are. A blueprint for such a policy was set out in the CLA's report *The Land Management Contract*⁷. There have been a number of consultations on what a new Welsh policy should look like following the UK's decision to leave the EU in 2016. These included *Brexit and Our Land, Sustainable Farming and Our Land* and most recently the *Agriculture (Wales) Bill White Paper*. The CLA responded to all of these consultations following significant input from members and we are pleased to see some of the principles we outlined included in the Welsh Government's proposals for the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS).

The recent policy response by the Welsh Government to the *Agriculture (Wales) Bill White Paper* consultation was also welcomed in addition to the timeframes provided for the transition from BPS to SFS. The commitment to extend Glastir

7. https://www.cla.org.uk/documents/302/CLA_Land_Management_Contract.pdf

contracts to December 2023 was a key ask of the CLA so it is encouraging that the Welsh Government has committed to this.

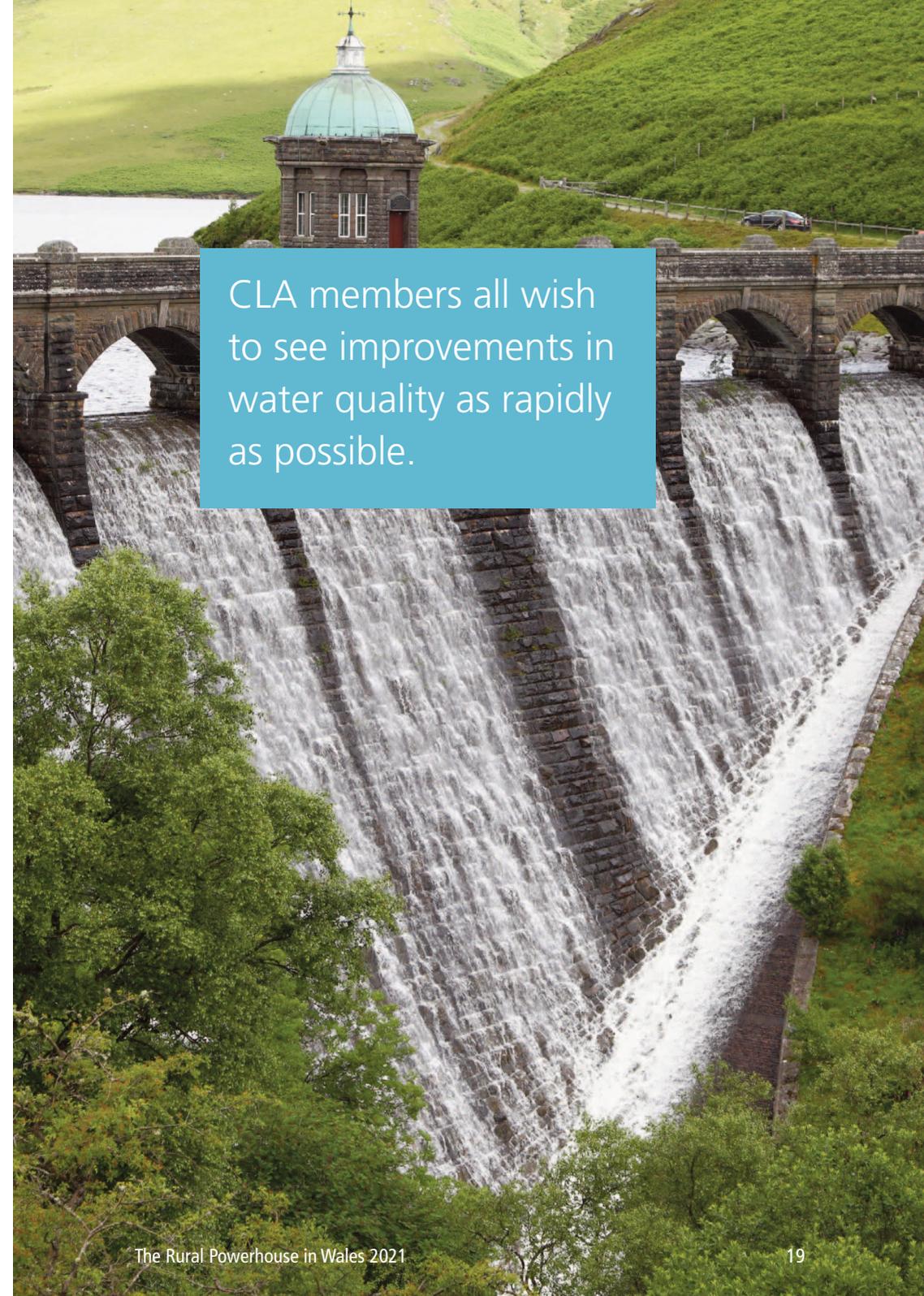
However, it is now time for the Welsh Government and the farming sector to develop the detail of what a new scheme should look like. The commitments to BPS and Glastir provide some certainty for rural businesses for the next two years but it is essential that the Welsh Government and the agricultural sector use this time to develop a policy that can sustain Welsh rural businesses and the environment and one that dovetails with the rest of the UK.

4.3 Wales-wide agricultural pollution regulations

In March 2021, the Welsh Government announced it would be introducing Wales-wide agricultural pollution regulations. The first tranche of changes was introduced on the 1 April and further tranches are to be introduced on the 1 January 2023 and 1 August 2024. Most importantly, CLA members all wish to see improvements in water quality as rapidly as possible; however, we did not agree that a Wales-wide approach would be the best way to address agricultural pollution. We argued that a more targeted approach focussing on catchments with the most significant pollution issues would be more appropriate. We set out in detail how farmers and landowners can help deliver improved water quality in the CLA's report – *A CLA Water Strategy: a vision for the water environment to 2030* – which can be found at the link provided below.

<https://www.cla.org.uk/library/cla-vision-water-2030/>

Despite our opposition to the blanket approach that is being introduced, we are continuing to work with the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to ensure the regulations work without compromising the viability of farms across Wales. We welcomed the inclusion in the legislation of a requirement for the Welsh Government to consider alternative measures that can deliver similar improvements in water quality.



CLA members all wish to see improvements in water quality as rapidly as possible.

At the time of writing, CLA staff members are participating in the ‘task and finish’ group alongside NRW and other key stakeholders to look into possible alternative measures before the Welsh Government’s deadline of 1 October 2022. We urge the Welsh Government to consider the findings of the report.

4.4 Woodland and forestry

Wales is missing its current tree planting targets by a wide margin (80 hectares of new woodland created in 2019/20 compared to an annual target of 2000 hectares) and we argue the regulatory background and level of funding available in Wales is not conducive to reaching these targets any time soon. For the Welsh Government to meet its commitment to a National Forest in addition to meeting planting targets set out in its Woodland Strategy – there needs to be increased levels of funding for woodland creation and management. While farmland woodland creation can be supported through the Sustainable Farming Scheme, large-scale creation needs significant investment from the Welsh Government as well as the private and voluntary sectors.

The recently closed Woodland Investment Grant caused concern from a number of our members due to the short application window as well as the requirement to allow access to the new areas of woodland planting. Rural businesses need time to plan for any new planting schemes, and are unlikely to participate if these require mandatory access to the general public. While such access may work in some situations, it has to be down to the landowner to make this decision; open access can have a strongly negative affect on biodiversity.

We welcomed the announcement by the Welsh Government that a new woodland creation scheme would be introduced in 2022 that builds on the positive aspects of Glastir. Any new scheme needs to provide sufficient funding for establishment and management costs. CLA Cymru contributed to the Forest

Research policy paper *Woodland Creation in Wales*⁸ as part of the Wales Land Management Forum sub-group on woodland creation. This paper sets out key policy recommendations for meeting the Welsh Government’s planting targets and we urge it to use this as a basis for any new scheme. Meeting planting targets of 2000 hectares per year to 2030 through Glastir funding at current rates would cost up to £120 million according to an estimate provided by CONFOR. If the Government wishes to meet its commitments to a National Forest, this funding must be provided.

4.5 Policy recommendations

CLA Cymru calls on the Welsh Government to:

- engage extensively with the farming sector to ensure the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) is practical, implementable and sustains a competitive agricultural sector;
- work constructively with the UK Government to ensure the Conservative manifesto promise of a £337 million budget for agriculture for Wales is delivered;
- ensure consideration is given to any alternative measures to the Wales-wide agricultural pollution regulations;
- increase advice and guidance alongside capital investment to ensure complying with the agricultural pollution regulations does not compromise viable farm businesses;
- ensure the industry agreed policy recommendations in the Woodland Creation in Wales report are used as the basis for any new woodland creation scheme;
- deliver funding for woodland creation that meets the scale of ambition set out in the Wales Woodland Strategy.

8. https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-07/woodland-creation-wales-report_0.pdf



The way land in the countryside is managed offers a unique opportunity to boost the economy.

5. INVESTMENT IN SKILLS AND INNOVATION

5.1 Background

Investing in a green economic transition will lead to more jobs being created, as we strive to green our electricity supply, electrify our transportation system and clean up our manufacturing sector. Some of these jobs will be located in rural areas, but that is not all. An often-overlooked element of greening the economy will be rural. The way land in the countryside is managed offers a unique opportunity to boost the economy and deliver on the Welsh Government's environmental ambitions.

There is scope to manage land specifically for environmental outcomes. Increasingly land managers understand that they are responsible for much of the nation's natural capital assets – the soil, grasslands, woods and water courses that provide us with clean water, and thriving wildlife – and can sequester and store carbon to help reach net zero. Properly valuing and investing in the management of these environmental assets could transform our countryside – creating a thriving and green countryside and boosting the rural economy at the same time.

Developing environmental markets to encourage private investment in natural capital would help create these jobs, meet the Welsh Government's environmental targets and put Wales at the forefront of innovative new ways of delivering sustainable land management.

Rural business owners are able to offer a lot when it comes to skills and innovation, and can contribute to education and training in support of the Welsh rural economy. An example might be through job placements or apprentices in certain sectors – agriculture, forestry, construction – and with Welsh Government support, these opportunities for young people in Wales can be increased.

5.2 Policy recommendations

CLA Cymru calls on the Welsh Government to:

- support baseline data collection and standardised environmental and carbon accounting metrics so that we understand our starting point and can measure progress towards our goals;
- ensure that public policy, such as the new Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS), allows for combined public and private investment to the environment and the countryside;
- incentivise rural business owners to offer apprenticeships and work placements in priority areas such as agriculture, forestry and construction.

6. A SIMPLER AND MORE SUPPORTIVE TAX REGIME

6.1 Background

In 2019, spending on tourism in Wales totalled £5.97 billion and the industry employed 149,600 people, totalling 11.8% of the workforce, of which 122,400 people, 9.6% of total employment, worked in hospitality⁹. These figures demonstrate the importance of tourism to the Welsh rural economy. The rise of cheap package holidays abroad has meant that pre-Covid many of us had fallen out of the habit of holidaying in the UK. While Covid has led to a rise in 'staycations', there is every chance that post-Covid lower prices abroad will lure people again. This is despite the beauty, convenience and lower carbon footprint of taking a holiday closer to home.

6.2 VAT cut to support tourism in Wales

The Chancellor's decision to temporarily cut VAT for tourism businesses was welcome, but successive lockdowns have crippled the industry's ability to capitalise on the change. The UK Government should keep VAT at 12.5% for tourism enterprises permanent. This would allow tourism businesses in all nations of the UK to compete with popular European destinations, including Greece (13% VAT), France (10% VAT) and Spain (10% VAT). With the VAT cut being passed on to the customer, the current increase in demand can be maintained and more jobs created.

6.3 Other tax reliefs for rural business

Throughout repeated lockdowns, many rural businesses – particularly in tourism, hospitality and retail – had to shut down overnight with restricted opportunities for income on

9. https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-03/lets-shape-the-future_0.pdf



In 2019, spending on tourism in Wales totalled £5.97 billion.

re-opening due to capacity constraints. Whilst businesses are now allowed to trade, they are still often operating significantly beneath capacity. In the short term, businesses, the banks and other investors need clarity over what support will be available to protect the productive capacity in these sectors. This will also encourage commercial tenants to keep premises, and commercial landlords to go ahead with investment and maintenance. To bring this about, the CLA is calling for the Welsh Government to implement the following proposals to help rural businesses.

- The extension of Small Business Rate Relief so that it can apply to more than one property (hereditament) providing the total rateable value is below the ceilings. The ceiling for 100% relief should be increased to £12,000 and the taper needs to be increased from £12,000 to £20,000. Small Business Rate Relief remains an important and much-needed relief that assists small businesses to get established.
- An increase in the time taken to levy Empty Property Relief to 12 months. Empty Property Relief still hits too many property providers hard, particularly in rural areas where often it can take longer to fill vacant premises. The current relief is limited to three or six months depending on the use, but such a short period of relief acts as a disincentive for further investment in employment space so it should be increased to twelve months unless where major repairs are required.

6.4 Rural Business Units

Farmers in Wales take great pride in producing food for the nation and beyond. But with continued uncertainty in the agricultural sector, many consider diversifying their businesses to be a commercial necessity.

CLA members run over 250 different types of businesses in rural areas – these include rental accommodation, renewable energy, tourism, added-value food production and commercial lettings. Further opportunities lie ahead, including investing in delivering

government objectives such as climate change mitigation and increasing biodiversity. This is to be welcomed. With many rural areas suffering from underemployment, encouraging diversification will encourage job opportunities for a wider group of people, helping to support local economies and strengthen communities.

Currently, the different elements of a diversified business must be reported separately in the business tax returns, despite being part of a single business. This creates additional burdens for farmers; a lack of clarity around how to apportion business costs between different aspects of the business means many will have to incur the cost of an accountant to do this for them. Under future quarterly Making Tax Digital for Income Tax obligations, a quarterly analysis of overhead costs would become necessary as would multiple updates for each business activity. For example, through CLA research one accountant advised that the additional accountancy cost to a diversified business of Making Tax Digital for Income Tax would be an average of £2,570 per year. This figure would be in addition to the cost of new Making Tax Digital software, any new computer hardware required to run compliant software, and the cost to the business of time spent on tax administration.

To avoid this additional business burden and help deliver national goals, we recommend that the UK Government should adjust tax rules to allow diversified rural businesses to choose to be treated for tax purposes as a single Rural Business Unit – recognising it may not suit everyone’s business model. For those who elect to be treated this way, it would allow greater freedom of investment within rural businesses, leading to better productivity and more tax paid to the Exchequer, more income available for environmental activities, and more jobs. The administration of this system would also be much less complex and time-consuming, and should result in appreciable cost savings, both for HM Revenue and Customs and for rural businesses. Over the long term, we would expect this proposal to be at least cost-neutral.

6.5 Policy recommendations

CLA Cymru calls on the Welsh Government to:

- extend the Small Business Rate Relief so that it can apply to more than one property (hereditament) providing the total rateable value is below the ceilings;
- increase the time taken to levy Empty Property Relief to 12 months;
- support the CLA’s campaign to make the UK Government adjust tax rules to allow diversified rural businesses to choose to be treated as a single Rural Business Unit for tax purposes.



CLA's policy recommendations will enable the Welsh Government to deliver its ambitious objectives within the Wales Programme for Government.

7. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Wales Programme for Government covers a range of ambitious objectives. The policy recommendations under the key themes of the CLA's Rural Powerhouse campaign will directly enable many of the 100 or more specific commitments set out in the Programme.

In order to ensure the rural economy is sustainable for the long term, CLA Cymru sets out recommendations described in detail in the main report and below. We look forward to engaging with specific departments over the coming weeks and months.

Chapter 2: A fully connected countryside

CLA Cymru calls on the Senedd and the Welsh Government to support the CLA's campaign calling for the UK Government to:

- use all the funds available to ensure that delivery targets can be met, with interim targets placed on broadband and mobile phone operators, to avoid improvements being back-ended;
- secure the civil engineering capacity needed;
- implement the increased permitted development rights which would encourage accelerated rollout;
- introduce a legal obligation on network operators to deliver 'Rural Roaming' (i.e. allowing a signal to pass from one operator's network to another) if they fail to implement the Shared Rural Network swiftly and meet their interim milestones.

Chapter 3: A planning system designed for rural communities

CLA Cymru calls on the Welsh Government to:

- amend Planning Policy Wales (PPW) so that it properly reflects the broader economy that exists in rural areas;
- establish, as part of the changes introduced by a consolidated Planning Act, the permission in principle (PiP) process for rural economic development;
- introduce permitted development rights for the change of use and conversion of farm buildings to: (i) a range of flexible commercial uses; and (ii) residential use;
- introduce permitted development rights to assist the delivery of new-build, affordable housing for rent on rural exception sites;
- bring in permitted development rights for the change of use of rural-located pubs and other community buildings to a range of flexible commercial uses.

Chapter 4: A profitable and sustainable farming and forestry sector

CLA Cymru calls on the Welsh Government to:

- engage extensively with the farming sector to ensure the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) is practical, implementable and sustains a competitive agricultural sector;
- work constructively with the UK Government to ensure the Conservative manifesto promise of a £337 million budget for agriculture for Wales is delivered;
- ensure consideration is given to any alternative measures to the Wales-wide agricultural pollution regulations;
- increase advice and guidance alongside capital investment to ensure complying with the agricultural pollution regulations does not compromise viable farm businesses;

- ensure the industry agreed policy recommendations in the Woodland Creation in Wales report are used as the basis for any new woodland creation scheme;
- deliver funding for woodland creation that meets the scale of ambition set out in the Wales Woodland Strategy.

Chapter 5: Investment in skills and innovation

CLA Cymru calls on the Welsh Government to:

- support baseline data collection and standardised environmental and carbon accounting metrics so that we understand our starting point and can measure progress towards our goals;
- ensure that public policy, such as the new Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS), allows for combined public and private investment to the environment and the countryside;
- incentivise rural business owners to offer apprenticeships and work placements in priority areas such as agriculture, forestry and construction.

Chapter 6: A simpler and more supportive tax regime

CLA Cymru calls on the Welsh Government to:

- extend the Small Business Rate Relief so that it can apply to more than one property (hereditament) providing the total rateable value is below the ceilings;
- increase the time taken to levy Empty Property Relief to 12 months;
- support the CLA's campaign to make the UK Government adjust tax rules to allow diversified rural businesses to choose to be treated as a single Rural Business Unit for tax purposes.

CONTACTS

For more information on *The Rural Powerhouse in Wales*, published in November 2021, contact:

Nigel Hollett, Director CLA Cymru
Tel: 01547 317085
Email: nigel.hollett@cla.org.uk

Fraser McAuley, CLA Senior Policy Adviser
Tel: 07702 926069
Email: fraser.mcauley@cla.org.uk

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THE RURAL POWERHOUSE IN WALES

