

# Monty Kennard

Independent Candidate for Gwynedd Maldwyn

COMMON SENSE. LOCAL VOICE. REAL ACCOUNTABILITY.

## A Different Kind of Politics: Learning & Acting Locally

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I am not standing for the Senedd pretending I have all the answers. What I do know is this: too many decisions about our communities are made by people in Cardiff who rarely see the realities of rural life, small towns, farming communities, and stretched local services. As a family of educators, my partner and I are used to listening, learning, and responding to real people, not just following top-down instructions from distant systems that do not always reflect what is really happening on the ground.

As an independent candidate, my commitment is simple:

- To listen to real people in our communities
- To learn from those on the ground
- To take your experiences seriously
- To take your concerns directly to the Senedd
- To push for change based on reality, not theory

I do not want to be another distant politician. I want to be a local voice who takes what you tell me and turns it into real pressure for change.

*Real accountability starts with listening.*

# The New Mega-Constituency: Protecting Local Representation in Gwynedd Maldwyn

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*(Formerly parts of: Clwyd South, Arfon, Dwyfor Meirionnydd & Montgomeryshire)*

The new Gwynedd Maldwyn constituency is one of the largest and most diverse in Wales. Many people, including senior Welsh figures, have expressed serious concerns about the size, structure, and impact of these new boundaries. I share those concerns. This is a major change. It affects how representation works and risks weakening the connection between elected members and the communities they serve. My position is clear: Bigger constituencies must not mean weaker local representation.

## Keeping Representation Close to Every Community

The sheer size of Gwynedd Maldwyn makes it harder for representatives to stay connected to every town, village, and rural community. Large distances, limited transport, and diverse needs mean there is a real risk that some areas could be overlooked. I will not allow that to happen.

I commit to:

- Regular local surgeries across all parts of the constituency
- Rotating locations so no area is forgotten
- Being visible and accessible
- Making sure smaller and rural communities are not overshadowed
- Representation must be closer to people, not further away

## Respecting Local Communities & Their Differences

Gwynedd Maldwyn brings together communities with very different histories, economies, and cultures. Post-industrial areas, rural farming communities, Welsh-speaking heartlands, and market towns all face different challenges. One-size-fits-all politics does not work.

I will:

- Treat each area on its own terms
- Make sure local voices shape decisions
- Push back against policies that ignore local realities

- Ensure no community is treated as an afterthought

## Clear Accountability in a Larger System

With large constituencies and closed party lists, many people worry about:

- Not knowing who to contact
- Power being concentrated in party leadership
- Reduced accountability

As an independent, I am not on a party list.

That means:

- No party bosses
- No list rankings
- No party whip

Just direct accountability to you. You will know exactly who represents you, and who to hold accountable.

## A Strong Local Voice in a Bigger Constituency

The new constituency is a reality. But how it works in practice depends on how representatives choose to act.

My commitment is clear:

I will not allow the size of this constituency to become an excuse for distant, impersonal politics. Instead, I will work to make sure Gwynedd Maldwyn has:

- A strong local voice
- Visible, accessible representation
- Real accountability
- Fair treatment for every part of the constituency

### Why This Matters

*This issue goes to the heart of my campaign. In a mega-constituency, you need: common sense, a strong local voice, and real accountability. That is exactly what I am offering.*

# What a Senedd Member Can Do

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Many people are unclear about what the Senedd controls. The Welsh Parliament is responsible for areas that directly shape daily life in Wales, including:

- Health and the NHS in Wales
- Education and schools
- Housing and planning
- Transport within Wales
- Agriculture and rural policy
- Economic development
- Many community services

Other areas, such as immigration, policing structures, and national energy markets, are decided mainly by the UK Government. However, Senedd Members still play an important role in challenging how UK decisions affect Welsh communities and how Welsh services respond locally. My focus will always be practical: improving outcomes within the powers Wales has, while standing up for our communities where decisions are made elsewhere.

# Education: Decisions With Schools, Not For Them

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As a qualified teacher, I know first-hand what it is like to work in Welsh schools today. Staff shortages, class sizes, rural transport, and additional learning needs are daily pressures. But too often, government makes decisions for schools, not with schools. Schools are “consulted” through national bodies and so-called experts, while the people who actually run classrooms every day, teachers, support staff, school leaders, and families, are sidelined. This must change. Education policy should be built with schools and communities, not imposed from above by people who are not dealing with the reality of today’s classrooms.

## Funding, Management & The Dysgu Transition

The transition from regional bodies, such as GwE in North Wales, to the new national body, Dysgu, is a clear example of how poor management damages confidence and stability. GwE was ended quickly. The new national body, Dysgu, has been slow, quiet, and unclear. The transition has been rocky, with insufficient pace and limited transparency. A chair was only appointed in 2026, long after the process began.

When children’s education is at stake, there is no place for:

- Quick endings of major bodies
- Long, drawn-out set-ups of replacements
- Quiet transitions with little public explanation

Schools rely on funding and stability to employ staff and support children. Slow, bureaucratic processes risk reducing frontline support, even if that is not openly stated.

I will campaign for:

- Transparent timelines for education reforms
- Published action plans with clear goals
- Clear transition materials showing how Dysgu improves on GwE
- Guarantees that school support will not be reduced
- Meaningful consultation with schools and staff
- Proper scrutiny of education restructuring

Education should be managed for children and schools, not for bureaucratic convenience.

## Additional Learning Needs (ALN): Rights, Resources & Reality

The 2021 the ALN Code of Practice was introduced to improve support, but in practice many families and schools face serious problems, including:

- Inconsistent ALN support between areas
- Delays in converting IEPs to IDPs
- Long waits for reviews and support
- Funding cuts preventing proper provision
- Use of reduced timetables due to lack of resources
- Insufficient staff training
- Confusion over legal definitions and responsibilities
- Lack of clarity over specialist and post-16 pathways

As a family of educators, we are deeply invested in inclusive education. We know how complex, stressful, and exhausting the system can be for families and schools. I will campaign for:

- Clear public information on educational rights
- Practical guidance on how to advocate for support
- Better training so universal provision actually works
- Funding that matches legal duties
- Faster, fairer IDP processes
- Clearer specialist and post-16 pathways
- Proper understanding of “universal provision” and reasonable adjustments

Inclusive strategies benefit all children, but only if staff are trained and resourced to deliver them properly

## Respect, Routes & Real Choice

Education must work for the individual, not force every young person down the same academic route. There are excellent local examples of practical and vocational pathways, including school– college links at GCSE level. These must be expanded and made meaningful, not just for show.

When young people are forced into routes that do not suit them:

- Behaviour suffers
- Classrooms become more disruptive
- Teachers’ time is taken up with excessive behaviour management
- Academic learners are disrupted
- Practical learners disengage

No one benefits.

I support:

- Wider school–college partnerships
- Proper, respected vocational pathways
- Real qualifications linked to real work
- Respect for individual strengths
- Calmer, more focused classrooms

## Respectful Schools

One issue raised repeatedly by parents, pupils, and staff is growing concern about behaviour and the school environment.

No child should feel anxious or afraid about going to school.

Too many young people now experience classrooms where learning is disrupted by poor behaviour, while teachers spend increasing amounts of time managing situations instead of teaching. At the same time, many pupils feel schools focus heavily on minor rule enforcement rather than creating positive learning environments.

Respect must work both ways.

Young people should be treated with dignity and fairness, and in return they should show clear respect toward teachers, staff, and fellow pupils.

Schools function best when expectations are clear, consistent, and focused on learning, not fear or confrontation.

Parents increasingly raise concerns that excessive attention is sometimes placed on minor uniform or appearance issues while larger educational challenges remain.

Too much valuable learning time can be lost to disputes over:

- The exact style of shoes
- Hair colour or appearance rules
- Numbers of earrings
- Minor uniform or equipment details

Standards and pride in schools matter. But discipline should support education, not overshadow it.

When students feel constantly threatened with punishment over minor issues, anxiety increases, relationships break down, and engagement with education suffers.

Schools should prioritise:

- Behaviour that protects learning
- Respectful conduct
- Attendance through positive engagement
- Strong teacher authority supported by fairness and consistency

*A culture built on mutual respect encourages attendance far more effectively than one built on fear.*

## Attendance, Wellbeing and Family Life

Schools rightly want strong attendance. Education matters enormously for young people's futures.

But attendance improves when students feel safe, respected, and supported in school environments where learning is the clear priority. If less time is spent escalating minor disciplinary issues, schools can focus more effectively on engagement, wellbeing, and academic progress.

Families also play a vital role in children's development. Quality family time should not automatically be treated as conflict between parents and schools.

*Education succeeds best when schools and families work together, not against one another.*

## Rural Schools & Home Education

Rural schools are central to small communities. They often provide excellent education and are part of the social fabric of rural life.

I will fight for:

- Continued funding for rural schools
- Fair treatment in planning
- Strong rural transport links

I also strongly support parents' right to home educate safely and in their child's best interests. With the erosion of adequate, values-driven provision in some areas, families must retain that right while public education is improved.

## Fair Pay for Trainee Teachers, Student Nurses & Healthcare Trainees

Student teachers, student nurses, and healthcare trainees are often expected to work set hours, complete set tasks, and meet professional standards, yet many receive little or no pay for this work. This makes no sense. In almost every other sector:

- Apprentices are paid
- Junior doctors are paid
- Trainees doing real work are paid

Yet trainee teachers and many healthcare trainees are expected to carry heavy workloads without fair pay. I will campaign for:

- Apprentice-level pay for trainee teachers during placements
- Apprentice-level pay for student nurses and healthcare trainees during placements
- Recognition that placement work is real work
- Fair financial support so people are not priced out of these professions

*If you are working set hours, doing set tasks, and being held to professional standards, you should be paid.*

## Fair Funding for All Trainees

Funding for trainees should be based on:

- Need
- Workforce shortages
- The future of our families

Not on:

- Skin colour
- Ideological targets
- Narrow political priorities

*If we want the best teachers and healthcare workers for our families, we must support all trainees fairly, based on merit and need.*

### Merit, Fairness & Common Sense

*I believe in: merit, fairness, equal treatment, pride in Welsh heritage, and rewarding hard work. Equality means judging people on effort and contribution. Not ideology.*

# Technology: Access & Freedom

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In rural Wales, broadband is not a luxury, it is a lifeline. With the move to digital phone lines, broadband is essential for:

- Emergency contact Older residents
- Vulnerable people Small businesses
- Access to services

Digital access should be treated like water and electricity. I will campaign for:

- Reliable rural broadband and mobile coverage
- Proper accountability for outages
- Recognition of digital access as a basic service
- Holding providers properly responsible

## Digital Freedom, Privacy & Government Overreach

I strongly oppose:

- Mandatory digital ID
- Weakening of end-to-end encryption
- Government snooping on private messages

It is all well and good when the party you agree with is in power. The real test is what happens when a party you don't agree with takes control. If the government can read your messages, that power does not disappear, it just changes hands. We are already seeing:

- People detained for political views
- People arrested for online posts
- Growing state interest in private communication

Excuses about convenience or enforcement are not good enough. Freedom of expression and private communication must be protected, especially when political power changes.

# Policing: Safe Communities, Not Just Higher Bills

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Residents are once again being asked to pay more through an increase in the policing precept, an additional £26.10 per year for a Council Tax Band D household. People understand that policing costs money. The real question people are asking is simple:

*What are communities actually getting in return?*

Across our towns and rural areas, too many people no longer feel safe in places that should feel ordinary: walking home at night, letting children play outside, or simply going about daily life without worry.

Women and girls in particular are changing how they live:

- Holding keys between their fingers when walking home
- Keeping one headphone out to stay alert
- Sharing live locations or hovering over emergency contacts
- Avoiding certain streets altogether after dark

This should not be normal in our communities.

Everyone deserves to feel safe, not just during campaigns, special operations, or seasonal initiatives, but every single day of the year.

## Visibility Must Be the Rule, Not the Exception

Police reports highlight targeted operations, increased patrols during holidays, and short-term initiatives responding to specific periods such as Halloween, Bonfire Night, or winter safety campaigns.

These efforts are welcome, but communities cannot be policed only at peak times.

Safety should not depend on an operation name or a temporary initiative. Residents need consistent, visible policing on streets, in town centres, and in neighbourhoods all year round.

A police presence deters crime, reassures residents, and rebuilds public confidence. When officers are visible and accessible, problems are addressed before they escalate.

## Taking Everyday Crime Seriously

One of the most common frustrations raised by residents is not always major crime, it is the feeling that everyday concerns are dismissed or never followed up.

Reports of:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Harassment or catcalling
- Persistent local disorder
- Community safety concerns

must be treated seriously every time they are reported.

Too many people feel there is little point reporting issues because nothing appears to happen afterwards. That loss of confidence damages the relationship between communities and policing.

If people take the time to report concerns, they deserve responses, updates, and action.

## Frontline Policing First

Communities are clear about their priorities.

They want:

- More officers responding to emergency calls
- Faster response times to 101 calls and online chats
- Mandatory follow ups to call online reports
- Neighbourhood officers who know their areas
- Consistent patrols in problem locations
- Real accountability when services fall short

What they do not want is policing that feels focused on easy enforcement while serious community concerns wait unanswered.

Enforcement has its place, but policing must focus first on protecting people and preventing crime, not creating the perception of revenue-raising or misplaced priorities.

## Common Sense Road Policing: Safety, Not Revenue

Road safety matters. Dangerous driving, speeding through villages, and reckless behaviour put lives at risk and must be taken seriously.

But many residents increasingly feel that policing priorities on our roads have become unbalanced.

Too often, enforcement appears focused on easy targets, seizing e-scooters or placing speed enforcement in predictable locations such as bridges over major routes like the

A483, A5, or in unnecessary 20mph zones, while communities continue to struggle to get responses to their calls and reports.

People want safer roads. What they do not want is policing that feels like a cash-collection exercise rather than community protection.

Common sense policing means focusing resources where they make the greatest difference to public safety.

That means:

- Targeting genuinely dangerous driving and repeat offenders
- Tackling speeding in residential areas, near schools, and village centres
- Addressing reckless and anti-social use of vehicles that intimidates communities
- Prioritising officers available to respond when people call for help

It also means recognising proportionality. Enforcement should improve safety, not undermine public trust.

When residents see officers available in their communities, responding to calls, preventing crime, and engaging locally, confidence in policing grows. When enforcement feels disconnected from real community concerns, that confidence is weakened.

The public funds policing. Communities deserve policing that clearly serves their safety first.

## Accountability to the Public

Policing exists to serve the public. Residents fund the service through taxation and local precepts, and with that must come transparency and accountability.

People deserve to know:

- How additional funding improves frontline policing
- How response times are being improved
- How community concerns influence policing priorities
- What measurable improvements are being delivered locally

Public confidence grows when communities can clearly see results.

## A Clear Priority: Safer Streets

My position is straightforward.

We need:

- More visible neighbourhood policing
- Year-round community protection
- Proper follow-up on reported concerns
- Strong action on persistent anti-social behaviour
- Policing that prioritises public safety above bureaucracy

Safe communities do not happen through announcements alone. They happen when policing returns to its core purpose:

*Protecting the public, maintaining order, and being present where people live their daily lives.*

*People fund policing to keep communities safe; policing must serve the public first.*

Welsh & British Identity: Practical Culture, Real

# Inclusion

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I believe you can be proudly Welsh and proudly British. Welsh language and culture matter, but policy must be practical and deliver real benefits. The Welsh 2050 pledge has seen tens of millions of pounds spent, yet many people have seen little real benefit in daily life. Instead of large, distant strategies, funding should go into practical, proven, local approaches such as:

- Immersive courses like those at Nant Gwrtheyrn
- Practical Welsh training for public sector staff
- Support for families who want to learn
- Welsh Bilingual services that build trust

Equally:

- English-speaking people should never feel threatened
- We must acknowledge not everyone has had the privilege to access good Welsh language education
- Language should never be a barrier to belonging or opportunity

*Cymraeg should be encouraged, not used to exclude Wales should be a community, not divided by language.*

# Immigration & Community Priority: Fairness, Integration and Local Stability

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Immigration policy, detention, and border control are decided by the UK Government, not the Senedd. That is an important reality, and voters deserve honesty about where decisions are actually made.

However, the Welsh Government does make decisions about how national immigration policies affect Wales, including housing use, local services, funding priorities, and Wales' "Nation of Sanctuary" approach.

This is where Welsh representatives must speak up for local communities.

My position is based on balance, fairness, and community stability.

Wales has a long tradition of welcoming people who genuinely need safety and a chance to rebuild their lives. Compassion matters. But compassion must also be practical and sustainable.

Communities must have:

- Sufficient housing
- Access to healthcare
- School places for local children
- Public services able to cope with demand

If existing residents cannot access these essentials, adding further pressure risks creating division rather than support.

We cannot look after others properly if local communities themselves are already struggling.

## Integration Must Come First

Welcoming people successfully depends on integration, not separation.

Those who come to live in Wales should:

- Want to be part of our communities
- Contribute where they are able
- Respect the laws and freedoms of this country
- Engage with local culture and community life

Strong communities are built when newcomers join communities, not when parallel systems develop that fragment them.

Integration means shared responsibility:

- Support for learning English or Welsh
- Participation in community life
- Respect for Welsh and British democratic values
- Encouraging contribution, work, and independence wherever possible

Successful migration strengthens communities. Poorly managed migration strains them.

## Rethinking the “Nation of Sanctuary” Approach

Good intentions alone do not guarantee good outcomes.

The Welsh Government’s “Nation of Sanctuary” approach should be reviewed to ensure it reflects:

- Local housing availability
- Service capacity
- Community consent
- Long-term integration outcomes

Policies should focus on successful settlement and cohesion, not symbolic declarations that local services may struggle to sustain.

Supporting vulnerable people and protecting community stability should go hand in hand, not be treated as opposing goals.

## Local People Must Not Be Overlooked

Too many residents feel that decisions affecting their towns are made without proper consultation or consideration of local pressures.

My priority is simple:

Local working people, families, and communities must not feel pushed aside by policies decided far from where their consequences are felt.

I will push Welsh ministers to ensure:

- Local impact assessments before accommodation decisions
- Greater transparency with communities
- Fair allocation of housing and services

- Policies that maintain community cohesion

A fair system is one that works for both existing residents and those genuinely seeking a new start.

Because strong, confident communities are the foundation of successful integration.

*A compassionate system must also be a sustainable one.  
We cannot promise support we are not properly equipped  
to provide.*

# NHS & Health: Accountability, Access & Local Care

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Healthcare is one of the most important responsibilities of the Senedd. People rightly expect a system that works when they or their loved ones need it most.

Wales spends more per person on healthcare than other parts of the UK, yet patients continue to face some of the longest waiting lists and poorest outcomes.

That gap between spending and results is deeply concerning.

Public trust is being damaged by a system where too often:

- Management structures continue to grow
- Accountability is unclear
- Complaints feel ignored
- Frontline staff are overstretched
- Patients wait too long for treatment

The problem is not the dedication of NHS staff, it is a system that too often prevents them from doing their jobs effectively.

Patients must come first.

## Putting Resources Back on the Frontline

The priority must be clear: more care delivered to patients, not more layers of administration.

I will push for:

- Real accountability within health boards
- Reducing unnecessary middle management
- Ending roles that do not directly improve patient outcomes
- Recruiting and retaining more doctors, nurses and frontline staff
- Transparent reporting on how health funding is actually spent

People do not see improvements despite rising spending. That must change.

## Local Care That Actually Works

If treatment can safely be delivered locally, it should be. Community hospitals and local facilities should play a far greater role in reducing pressure on major hospitals.

Patients should not have to:

- Travel long distances for routine scans or procedures
- Struggle with parking at large hospitals
- Wait longer because smaller local facilities are underused

Local healthcare reduces pressure on hospitals while improving patient experience.

## Pharmacies, GPs and the Reality Patients Face

Government messaging often encourages patients to visit pharmacies instead of GP surgeries, but this only works if pharmacies are properly equipped and staffed.

Across many communities:

- Pharmacies no longer stock basic medical supplies
- Prescribing pharmacists are not always available
- Minor ailments cannot consistently be treated locally
- 'Health Centres' are underutilised as glorified GP practices

Patients are then criticised for booking GP appointments when pharmacy support simply is not available. Policy must reflect reality on the ground.

## Why People End Up in A&E

Patients are frequently told they should not attend Accident & Emergency departments, yet many feel they have no realistic alternative.

When:

- GP appointments take weeks to obtain
- Minor injury units are limited or distant
- Some residents travel into England for accessible services
- The NHS 111 system understandably directs people toward A&E for safety reasons

...it is no surprise that emergency departments become overwhelmed.

This is not patient failure, it is system failure.

Healthcare pathways must work properly before people can be blamed for using them.

## Taking Complaints Seriously

We trust the NHS with our lives and the lives of those we love. When care falls short, people deserve to be heard. Too many patients feel complaints disappear into

complicated processes with little outcome or transparency.

I will campaign for:

- Complaints to be handled seriously and transparently
- Clear public information about patient rights
- Greater awareness of how to access the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
- Independent scrutiny when concerns are not properly addressed

Patients and families deserve accountability as well as care.

## Making NHS Systems Work Together

Another major frustration for patients is poor coordination between services.

Too often:

- Medical information is not shared efficiently
- Departments fail to communicate
- Patients must repeat information multiple times
- Individuals already worried about their health are left chasing appointments, referrals, or results themselves

Patients should not be forced to act as administrators within the healthcare system. Digital systems, administrative support, and communication between services must improve so care feels joined-up rather than fragmented.

## The NHS Belongs to The Public

It exists to care for patients first and foremost.

That means:

- Less bureaucracy
- Better coordination
- Strong accountability
- More frontline care

*When people seek medical help, they are often at their most vulnerable, and they deserve a system that works.*

# Evidence-Based Healthcare and Single-Sex Spaces

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Children deserve care, compassion, and evidence-based support. When young people are struggling with identity, mental health, or neurodiversity, the response must prioritise their long-term wellbeing rather than rushing to medical solutions.

It is also important to be clear about what the Senedd can and cannot do in this area. Healthcare is devolved to Wales, meaning the Welsh Government is responsible for how NHS services are delivered and for clinical guidance within Welsh health services. However, wider legal questions around sex, gender recognition, and equality law are determined by the UK Parliament through legislation such as the Equality Act.

Across the UK, the medical approach has become increasingly cautious regarding medical interventions for children experiencing gender distress, reflecting concerns about the strength of the evidence and long-term outcomes.

My position is guided by protecting children, supporting proper mental health care, and safeguarding legitimate single-sex spaces. My commitments are clear:

- Children should not be given puberty blockers or any medical interventions intended to alter their sex or gender.
- Children should not be encouraged to view medical transition as a pathway open to them. These are serious decisions with lifelong consequences that no child is equipped to make.
- Young people experiencing distress should receive proper mental health support, with greater understanding and support for neurodiversity.
- Healthcare decisions must be grounded in robust, evidence-based medicine and long-term wellbeing.
- Adults are free to make decisions about their own bodies, but those choices should not come at the expense of taxpayers.
- Biological sex matters, and legitimate single-sex spaces must be protected for women's safety, dignity, and opportunity.

Across our own constituency we can see the value of such spaces. The SheUltra female-only ultramarathon on Pen Llŷn is a fantastic example of how women-only events can empower participation and celebrate achievement.

*Policy should protect children, prioritise evidence-based healthcare, and ensure that single-sex spaces remain safeguarded.*

# Housing: Local Working People First

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Housing is one of the biggest concerns raised across our communities. Young people growing up locally increasingly cannot afford to live where they were raised, while working families struggle to access homes despite contributing to their communities for years. Older residents looking to downsize are also finding themselves priced out of the areas they have spent their lives in.

The Senedd has significant control over housing policy in Wales. That means responsibility, and accountability, sits here in Wales.

Too often, policies look good on paper but fail in reality.

So-called “affordable housing” is frequently priced far beyond what local workers can realistically afford. Meanwhile, demand continues to grow faster than supply, placing pressure on communities, services, and family stability.

Housing policy must return to a simple principle: homes should serve communities first.

## Building Homes People Can Actually Afford

Wales does not just need more houses, it needs the right homes in the right places.

I support:

- Increasing the supply of genuinely affordable homes linked to local wages
- Prioritising developments that meet local community need
- Supporting smaller local builders alongside larger developments
- Encouraging housing that allows young people to remain in their communities

Affordable must mean affordable in practice, not just in planning documents.

## Fair Access for Local Residents

Many residents feel locked out of housing in the very communities where they work, pay taxes, and raise families.

Housing allocation policies should recognise:

- Long-term local connection
- Contribution to the community
- Local employment and family ties

Local working people should not feel pushed to the back of the queue in their own towns and villages.

## Second Homes, Short Term Lets, and Fairness

Second homes and short-term lets are part of the local economy, particularly in areas where tourism plays a major role. When managed properly, they bring investment and support jobs.

But when they reduce the availability of homes for local people, action is needed.

I support the use of council tax premiums as part of a wider, balanced approach. However, these must be applied fairly and proportionately.

That means:

- New second homes and short-term lets should be subject to clear, upfront premium rules
- Existing owners should not face sudden, large financial increases
- Any changes should be phased in over time, allowing people to plan, adapt, or sell if they choose

Policy must also avoid unintended consequences. If not designed carefully, premiums risk discouraging local people from investing sensibly in property, while larger commercial operators and the ultra-wealthy are better able to absorb the costs.

The danger is that we end up squeezing the hard-working middle without addressing the real problem.

## Planning That Works for Communities

Planning decisions shape communities for generations. Development must be balanced with infrastructure, services, and local character.

That means:

- Ensuring schools, healthcare, and roads keep pace with new development
- Protecting rural and community identity
- Giving local communities a stronger voice in planning decisions

Growth should strengthen communities, not overwhelm them.

## Supporting First-Time Buyers and Young Families

For many young people, home ownership now feels permanently out of reach.

The Welsh Government should focus on:

- Practical support for first-time buyers
- Schemes that help local working families onto the housing ladder
- Reducing barriers created by complex or ineffective programmes

A generation should not be forced to leave their home area simply to find somewhere affordable to live.

## The Bottom Line

If people who work locally cannot afford to live locally, housing policy is not working.

Homes should be places for families and communities, not statistics that meet targets while residents continue to struggle.

*If working people cannot afford to live in their own communities, the system needs fixing.*

# Cost of Living & Energy: Essentials Must Be Treated as Essentials

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Water, gas, and electricity are not luxuries. They are basic necessities of modern life.

No household should face losing:

- Heating
- Power
- Water

Yet across Wales, many families are forced to choose between heating their homes and meeting everyday living costs.

If governments can spend billions on large programmes, consultants, and poorly targeted schemes, then we can afford to make sure ordinary households can keep the lights on and stay warm.

Energy policy must start with people's real lives.

## Fairness in Energy Support

Across Wales, councils and government schemes increasingly fund major energy upgrades, including solar panels, insulation programmes, and heat pumps, primarily for social housing.

Improving housing efficiency is positive. Lower energy bills benefit everyone.

But many hardworking families are asking a reasonable question:

*Why are those who have worked, saved, and bought modest homes often excluded from support they help fund through taxation?*

Homeowners who have done the responsible thing, working, saving, and investing in their own homes, should not be overlooked while assistance is limited mainly to publicly owned housing.

A fair system should support all households struggling with energy costs, not create divisions between renters and homeowners.

## Tackling Rural Fuel Poverty

Rural Wales faces particular challenges:

- Older housing stock
- Limited access to gas networks
- Higher heating costs
- Greater reliance on oil or electricity

Fuel poverty in rural communities must be treated as a priority, not an afterthought in policies designed around cities.

Energy transition policies must reflect rural reality.

## Making Renewable Energy Work for Local People

Renewable energy should lower bills for Welsh residents, not simply generate profits elsewhere.

I will campaign for:

- Local benefit from renewable energy developments
- Fair access to home energy improvement schemes
- Support for homeowners as well as social housing tenants
- Practical, affordable transitions rather than one-size-fits-all mandates

Environmental progress and economic fairness must go together.

## The Priority

No one should be left cold while policy focuses on targets instead of people.

Energy policy should first guarantee that households can afford the essentials of daily life.

*Enabling people to keep homes warm and powered is not a luxury. It is a basic responsibility of modern government.*

# Transport & Roads: Rural Reality

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Transport policy in Wales is too often designed around cities, while rural and small-town communities face very different challenges.

In much of rural Wales:

- Bus services are limited or unreliable
- Car use is not a choice but a necessity
- Rail access is uneven or distant
- Young people struggle to access education and work
- Older residents risk isolation without reliable transport

Transport policy must reflect how people actually live outside major urban areas.

Transport should support work, education, healthcare, and community life, not penalise people for living in rural communities.

## Everyday Road Safety Matters

For many residents, transport problems are not only about buses or major roads, they are about basic safety on the streets where they live.

In densely populated residential areas, poor parking arrangements regularly create:

- Blocked pavements
- Reduced visibility at junctions
- Obstructed emergency vehicle access
- Unsafe conditions for children and pedestrians

Residents frequently report these concerns to councils, only to be told that solutions such as installing double yellow lines or traffic controls take too long or cost too much.

Families are effectively being told bureaucracy comes before safety.

That is not acceptable.

When communities raise clear and ongoing safety concerns, councils should respond promptly and proportionately.

## Practical Solutions, Not Red Tape

Many parking pressures exist because older housing developments were never designed

for modern vehicle ownership. Instead of ignoring the problem, councils should work with residents to fix it.

I will campaign for:

- Faster action where road markings or parking restrictions are clearly needed
- Local safety concerns treated as priorities, not administrative burdens
- Sensible upgrades to council housing, including provision for off-street parking where possible
- Making it easier and more affordable for residents to install dropped kerbs or driveways
- Removing unnecessary red tape when homeowners want to improve safety around their property

When residents are willing to invest in improving their homes and solving local problems, councils should support them, not stand in their way.

*When councils cannot even paint double yellow lines where safety demands them, they should not be putting obstacles in the way of residents trying to fix problems themselves.*

## Common Sense Local Transport Policy

Good transport policy is not only about large infrastructure projects. It is also about solving everyday issues that affect quality of life.

I will push for:

- Rural-designed transport policy
- Reliable and coordinated bus services
- Community transport schemes for isolated areas
- Proper maintenance of rural roads
- Fair rural transport funding
- Faster local responses to road safety concerns raised by residents

Because safe streets and accessible transport are essential parts of strong communities.

*Local problems deserve practical, tailored solutions; not endless delays.*

# Farming & Rural Economy: Standing Up for Rural Wales

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Farming is not just an industry in rural Wales, it is the backbone of our communities, culture, landscape, and local economy.

Family farms support local businesses, maintain the countryside, produce food, and sustain generations of rural life. When farming struggles, entire communities feel the impact.

Too often, decisions affecting farmers are made far from rural communities by people who do not live with the realities of farming life.

Rural Wales must not be treated as an afterthought.

## Fair Treatment for Farmers

Farmers today face growing uncertainty from changing subsidy systems, rising costs, complex regulation, and market pressures.

Environmental protection matters, but policy must be realistic and workable.

I will stand up for:

- Fair and stable agricultural support
- Sensible, practical regulation developed with farmers
- Policies that recognise food production as a national priority
- Reducing unnecessary bureaucracy placed on working farms

Farmers should be treated as partners in managing the countryside, not obstacles to policy goals.

## Protecting Family Farms and Future Generations

Many farming families are deeply concerned about whether the next generation will be able to continue.

Succession planning has become increasingly difficult due to financial pressure, regulation, and uncertainty about the future of Welsh agriculture.

I support:

- Policies that allow family farms to pass safely to the next generation

- Encouraging young people into agriculture
- Support for new entrants and farm diversification
- Long-term stability so families can plan for the future

Without generational renewal, rural communities risk long-term decline.

## Farming and Food Security

Recent global events have reminded us of something that should never have been forgotten:

**Food security is national security.**

Wales should value its ability to produce high-quality food locally rather than becoming increasingly dependent on imports produced to lower standards elsewhere.

Supporting Welsh farming means:

- Stronger local economies
- Shorter supply chains
- Greater resilience during global disruption
- High animal welfare and environmental standards

Producing food at home matters.

## Supporting Farmers' Wellbeing

Farming can be rewarding, but it is also demanding, isolating, and financially stressful.

Mental health challenges within farming communities are real and often overlooked.

I will support:

- Improved rural mental health services
- Practical support networks for farmers
- Recognition of the pressures faced by farming families

Supporting farmers means supporting the people behind the farms.

## Strengthening the Rural Economy

A strong rural economy depends on more than agriculture alone.

I also support:

- Local food production and processing
- Farm diversification where appropriate
- Small rural businesses and enterprises
- Shorter supply chains that keep money in local communities
- Policies that allow rural businesses to grow without excessive red tape

Thriving farms help create thriving rural towns and villages.

## Respect, Responsibility & Modern Standards

Our countryside is not just a place of tradition, it is where people live, work, raise families, and go about their daily lives. Rural communities deserve to feel safe, respected, and protected in their own environment.

Across parts of Wales, there are growing concerns about activities such as fox hunting with dogs and large-scale gamebird shooting. These are often defended as traditions, but tradition alone is not enough to justify practices that cause disruption, distress, or harm.

Residents report:

- Disruption to roads and daily life
- Hounds straying onto private land
- Livestock being disturbed
- Intimidating situations when simply trying to travel or go about normal routines

This is not acceptable in a modern society.

The law already bans hunting wild mammals with dogs, yet concerns remain about how that law is enforced in practice. Communities should not feel powerless when faced with activities that impact their homes, safety, and livelihoods.

More broadly, we need to ask an honest question:

*What kind of countryside do we want to live in today?*

For me, the answer is clear.

We live in a modern, civilised society. Practices that involve the organised pursuit and killing of animals for sport, particularly where they cause wider disruption to communities and the environment, are increasingly out of step with those values.

That does not mean ignoring rural economies or dismissing differing views. It means applying common sense standards:

- Respect for local residents
- Proper enforcement of existing laws
- Stronger regulation where needed
- Protection of animal welfare
- Clear accountability when activities cause harm or disruption

The countryside should be a place where:

- Communities feel safe in their own homes
- Wildlife is treated responsiblyPublic spaces are respected
- No one feels intimidated going about their daily life

Rural Wales deserves a future that reflects modern standards, not one held back by practices that no longer fit the society we live in today.

## The Bottom Line

Farmers do not want special treatment, they want fair treatment, stability, and policies grounded in reality.

*Rural Wales feeds the nation, cares for the land, and sustains our communities. Government policy should recognise that value.*

# Tourism: Supporting the Economy While Protecting Communities

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Tourism is one of the most important parts of the local economy in Gwynedd. In 2023 it supported around 17,538 jobs and generated approximately £1.72 billion, with 8.02 million visitors and 24.2 million visitor days across the county.

(Source: Gwynedd STEAM Tourism Economic Impact Summary 2023)

Across Wales, the visitor economy supports around 159,000 jobs, representing around 11.8% of total employment.

(Source: Wales Visitor Economy Profile 2024)

Tourism clearly brings economic benefits. It supports local businesses, provides employment, and brings investment into rural communities that might otherwise struggle.

But residents also experience the pressures that come with large visitor numbers, particularly during busy seasons.

## The Pressures Communities Experience

Local people regularly raise concerns about the practical impact of peak tourism, including:

- Traffic congestion in rural areas
- Limited parking in small towns and villages
- Increased litter and waste
- Pressure on public toilets and local facilities
- Greater demand on roads and emergency services

A 2024 Gwynedd residents survey found that 74.3% of residents believe tourism brings more positives than negatives overall, but many also reported significant pressures, particularly:

- Traffic congestion (64.5%)
- Parking problems (61.2%)
- Waste and litter near visitor sites

(Source: Gwynedd Council Residents Survey 2024)

Tourism is therefore not simply a question of being “for” or “against” visitors. The real challenge is managing tourism in a way that benefits communities as well as visitors.

## Visitor Levies & Local Infrastructure

One proposal currently under discussion is the introduction of a visitor levy.

Legislation passed by the Senedd allows councils to introduce a small overnight charge on visitor accommodation. Importantly, this money must be used specifically to improve tourism infrastructure such as:

- Maintaining footpaths and trails
- Public toilets
- Visitor facilities
- Environmental protection and cleaning
- Local infrastructure in busy areas

(Source: Visitor Accommodation Register and Levy Wales 2025)

The suggested amounts are relatively small:

- 75p per person per night for campsites and hostels
- £1.30 per person per night for most other accommodation

Gwynedd's draft economic assessment estimates this would represent around 1.5–2% of the average trip cost, roughly £3.45–£9.61 per visit depending on the type of trip.

(Source: Gwynedd Visitor Levy Economic Impact Assessment 2026 draft)

## Tourism Taxes are Common Internationally

Visitor levies are already widely used around the world.

For example:

- Amsterdam: around 12.5% of the hotel room price
- Berlin: about 7.5% city tax
- Paris: €0.65–€15.60 per person per night depending on accommodation
- Edinburgh: introducing a 5% accommodation levy from 2026

Compared with many international destinations, the proposed Welsh levy would be relatively modest.

## Who Pays for Tourism Infrastructure?

Tourism places real demands on public services and infrastructure. Maintaining popular visitor destinations requires ongoing investment in:

- Roads and transport access

- Waste collection and cleaning
- Footpaths and outdoor access routes
- Parking enforcement
- Public toilets
- Emergency and safety services

The practical question is how those costs are shared.

The options are broadly:

- Local taxpayers paying more
- Local businesses paying higher taxes
- Doing nothing and allowing pressures to grow
- Visitors making a small contribution toward the services they use

A modest visitor contribution can be reasonable if it is transparent and properly ring-fenced for improving local areas.

## Evidence on Tourism Levies

Research suggests that small tourism taxes usually have limited impact on visitor numbers, particularly in destinations people already strongly want to visit.

For example:

- When the Balearic Islands introduced a sustainable tourism tax in 2016, tourist stays fell by only around 0.4–0.8%, while the levy raised around €30 million in its first year for environmental and infrastructure projects.
- Destinations with significantly higher tourism taxes, such as Amsterdam and Barcelona, continue to see strong visitor numbers. Catalonia reported around 10% growth in tourist arrivals in early 2025 despite its tourism levy.

(Source: Heffer-Flaata, H, Voltes-Dorta, A & Suau-Sanchez, P 2020, *Journal of Travel Research*)

## The Priority: Tourism That Works for Communities

Tourism is vital to our economy, but it must also work for the people who live here year-round.

That means:

- Managing visitor pressures sensibly
- Protecting the natural environment people come to enjoy
- Supporting local businesses and jobs

- Ensuring communities see real benefits from tourism

Tourism should strengthen our communities, not overwhelm them.

*Tourism has to work for local communities too. If it's managed properly, it can support jobs, businesses and the local economy while protecting the places people come here to enjoy.*

# Who am I?

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I do not claim to know everything.

## What I do promise is this:

- I will listen
- I will learn
- I will be visible
- I will take your concerns seriously
- I will take local voices to Cardiff
- I will challenge systems that do not work

## What I Will Stand For

- Safer communities with visible policing
- Fair housing for local working people
- Strong support for farmers and rural economies
- Schools built on respect and learning
- An NHS focused on patients, not bureaucracy
- Transport and infrastructure that work for rural Wales
- Practical cost-of-living solutions for ordinary households

*Not party politics. Not distant theory. But real people, real experience, real common sense.*

**Contact me:** [croeso@montykennard.com](mailto:croeso@montykennard.com)

**Find out more:** [www.montykennard.com](http://www.montykennard.com)

*Common Sense. Local Voice. Real Accountability.*

# Voting

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## **Vote for Monty Kennard — Independent Candidate for Gwynedd Maldwyn in the Senedd Election on Thursday 7 May 2026**

### Who Can Vote

You can vote in Senedd elections if you are:

- Aged 16 or over, and
- Registered to vote in Wales.

Unlike some UK elections, you do NOT need photo ID to vote in a Senedd election.

### Register to Vote

If you are not yet registered, you can register online:

Register here: <https://senedd.wales/how-we-work/elections-and-voting/register-to-vote/>

Your polling station address will be printed on your polling card, which is sent to you by post before the election. You do not need to bring your polling card with you to vote.

Polling stations are open:

7:00am – 10:00pm on Thursday 7th May 2026

### Your Vote Matters

Local representation depends on local people taking part.

*A strong local voice starts with your vote.*

# A Final Message

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This election is not about parties in Cardiff.

It is about whether Gwynedd Maldwyn has a representative who understands local communities and is prepared to speak up for them.

If you want a strong local voice, independent thinking, and real accountability,

**I ask for your vote.**

**Monty Kennard**

Independent Candidate for Gwynedd Maldwyn

[www.montykennard.com](http://www.montykennard.com)

Produced & Promoted by Monty Kennard. Monty Kennard - Independent Candidate for Gwynedd Maldwyn. Both at: c/o Dalton House, 35 Chester Street, Wrecsam, LL13 3AH