

# FINAL POLICY DOCUMENTS





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## Policy commission final documents

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*“Our overriding priority in this NPF process has been the British people, and developing a policy programme that serves them.”*



## ● Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the final report of the National Policy Forum.

This report is the culmination of a huge amount of work undertaken by NPF representatives past and present over the last three and a half years. In that time, the NPF and its constituent policy commissions have conducted 28 formal policy consultations and received over 5,000 written responses from local Labour parties, affiliated trade unions, socialist societies, businesses, think tanks, academics, civil society and many others.

The NPF has also held wide-ranging evidence sessions looking in-depth at policy issues and hearing from expert witnesses with a wealth of knowledge and experience. It has conducted policy seminars with hundreds of party members to discuss a range of issues with members of the Shadow Cabinet and Labour's frontbench. And in each of the last three years, the NPF has sent annual reports to Conference, highlighting the work that has been done and developing our policy platform.

All of that engagement and policy development contributed to the production of the final year policy documents that were circulated to NPF representatives in May this year. Representatives were then given the opportunity to propose amendments to those documents. Hundreds of amendments were received, covering a broad range of policy matters. I am delighted to say that all were resolved at the full meeting of the NPF in Nottingham in July, with new text being agreed where amendments were not withdrawn.

The final product is the report that follows – the final one of this NPF cycle. This is the first time since 2014 that the NPF has been able to complete a full cycle, a fact that demonstrates the level of political upheaval our country has faced under the Conservatives for the last decade.

After thirteen years of Conservative chaos, we have to break the cycle of recent Labour defeats in general elections. That is why our overriding priority in this NPF process has been the British people, and developing a policy programme that serves them. A programme that is credible, ambitious and that will deliver the real change that people are crying out for. One that is rooted in people's lives and that can put us on the road to power so that we can start to change them.

That was the ambition we set for ourselves in 2020. This report shows that we have delivered upon it, with a united Labour Party that is ready to get to work for the British people. Every spending commitment within it is fully funded – a critical achievement as we lay the groundwork for the next manifesto, which will set the foundations of strong public finances and then build a better future on top of them.

Labour is proud to be a democratic party and to ensure we hear from our members, our elected representatives from across the country, our affiliated trade unions and others as we develop our manifesto. In particular, getting to this stage took years of hard work from every NPF representative. That is why I want to thank all those who contributed over the last three and a half years. I also want to put on the record my thanks to all the Labour Party staff who were involved in making this NPF cycle such a success.

Four years ago, the dream of a Labour government felt further away than ever. Today, it is within our grasp again. With Keir Starmer's leadership, I know we can give our country its future back, with a mission-led government that will deliver a better Britain for everyone.

I can't wait to get started.



**Anneliese Dodds MP**  
**Chair of the National Policy Forum**



*“With Keir Starmer’s leadership, I know we can give our country its future back, with a mission-led government that will deliver a better Britain for everyone.”*



## ● Introduction

**As Labour prepares for the next general election, the National Policy Forum is laying the groundwork for a bold, practical and winning manifesto.**

This is a critical moment for the Labour Party to show the Britain that Labour can build: a country run in the interests of everyone based on a set of national missions, where politics is once again a force for good. The National Policy Forum (NPF) plays a crucial role helping to set out Labour's bold, reforming policy platform.

These six policy documents draw on the vast experience from across the labour movement and beyond – from local parties and trade unions to the many businesses, charities and civil society groups who lent us their expertise.

The result of the hard work of our party members, elected representatives and affiliated trade unions and socialist societies over the last three years, these documents will inform Labour's policy proposals ahead of the next general election.

The work of the NPF will support the delivery of Keir Starmer's five national missions. Established on the strong foundations of economic stability, national security and secure borders, his missions will:

- 1. Secure the highest sustained growth in the G7**
- 2. Make Britain's streets safe**
- 3. Build an NHS fit for the future**
- 4. Break down the barriers to opportunity at every stage**
- 5. Make Britain a clean energy superpower**

Labour will end the Conservatives' short term, sticking plaster politics which has left the UK lurching from crisis to crisis. Keir's five missions will form long-term plans for government with clear, measurable objectives, so that everyone in every part of the country feels they are moving forward, and life is getting better.

To support this ambition, the NPF has considered a wide range of policy issues as set out in each of the six policy documents that follow: a green and digital future, better jobs and better work, safe and secure communities, public services that work from the start, a future where families come first and Britain in the world.

Unlike the Conservatives, Labour knows the importance of stable public finances and prudent government spending. While working people are still paying the price of the Conservatives' unfunded, disastrous autumn 2022 mini-budget, Labour will tax fairly and spend wisely.

Labour's fiscal rules, as set out by Shadow Chancellor Rachel Reeves, are non-negotiable. They will apply to every decision taken by a Labour government, with no exceptions. That means that Labour will not borrow to fund day-to-day spending, and we will reduce national debt as a share of the economy.

The Conservatives forced our economy into a doom loop, and introduced austerity into our public services, alongside a series of disastrous reforms. As a result we have ended up with low growth, which has led to higher taxes, lower investment and squeezed wages. Labour will break free from this vicious cycle of stagnation, with a proper plan for fair economic growth in all parts of the country.

Labour is offering change for the whole United Kingdom, and we will deliver a new status and louder, prouder voices for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and ensure that the regions of England have the right powers and resources to drive growth and champion their areas, in a reformed and modern United Kingdom.

That is why the NPF has produced a series of important policies for the whole country, alongside proposals in devolved areas that apply only in England, or in England and Wales. Any Barnett consequential arising from these policies would generate funds for the devolved governments to allocate.

We are clear that the best route to improving people's lives in every nation of the UK is a Labour government in Westminster, working with and delivering for communities right across the country. Where we can, a UK Labour government will always seek to work in partnership with devolved governments and the leaders of devolved regions and localities because we know that working in cooperation is always better than conflict. While the specific policy solutions may vary across the regions and nations of our country, Labour's underlying vision of building a better Britain remains the same.

Labour is the party of equality. We are proud of our record of championing equality in government, including Labour's Equality Act and the protections it contains against discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The last Labour government did more to advance equality than any other in British history. The next will match this record and break new ground across these six documents and in our manifesto by confronting today's challenges, tackling structural inequality and working every day to build a fairer, more equal Britain for all.

These policy documents are now subject to approval at Annual Conference 2023, in the next stage of our democratic policymaking process. As detailed in the Labour Party Rulebook, Annual Conference will decide which specific proposals of legislative, financial or administrative reform shall be included in the Party programme, based on the rolling programme of work of the National Policy Forum, culminating in these six Final policy documents.

Ahead of a general election, representatives from across our movement will then attend the Clause V meeting to decide which items from the Party programme shall be included in the manifesto.

Following the vital work of the NPF, that manifesto will set out our offer to the country and show how, together, Labour will build a better Britain.



# A GREEN AND DIGITAL FUTURE





## Introduction

The next Labour government will build a fairer, greener, more dynamic economy that delivers better jobs and living standards for working people. Labour believes that the best way to grow our economy is using the power of active government to win the global race for the industries and jobs of tomorrow, many of which will be in the green and digital economies.

Our ambitions are primarily encapsulated in two of our five national missions. First, to secure the highest sustained growth in the G7 with good jobs and productivity growth in every part of the country, making everyone, not just a few, better off. Second, to make Britain a clean energy superpower, creating jobs, cutting bills and boosting energy security with clean electricity by 2030.

Key to delivering these ambitions is Labour's Green Prosperity Plan, which will seize the opportunities of accelerating the just transition to net zero through an active industrial strategy and investment in British industry. In doing so, we will lower bills, provide energy security, deliver good jobs and economic growth, and tackle climate change. In government, Labour's energy policy will be aligned with our aim to meet our international climate targets.

We know that clean British energy is up to nine times cheaper than imported fossil fuels, meaning a just transition to home-grown renewables and nuclear power benefits British consumers and workers while allowing us to secure energy independence from tyrants like Vladimir Putin. That is why the Green Prosperity Plan includes the establishment of GB Energy, a publicly-owned national champion in clean energy generation, and a National Wealth Fund to invest in the green technologies of the future and ensure they benefit all communities and parts of our country.

We will tackle the damage done by the Conservatives' failure to respond to the Biden administration's Inflation Reduction Act and the EU's Green Deal Industrial Plan, while learning from the success of those industrial policies that are delivering investment in manufacturing.

Our ambition for a green future means ensuring that we invest in and decarbonise our public transport network and put in place the infrastructure we need to roll out electric vehicles across the country. It means making our homes energy efficient through a nationwide retrofit and insulation programme. And it means protecting our beautiful natural environment – from cleaning up the water industry to backing British farmers.

Just as the green transition provides opportunities for our country and economy if we are well-positioned to seize them, so too does digital and technological innovation. The UK has the potential to be a global player in developing technologies and their uses – from advances in AI and quantum computing to building on our existing global reputation in fields such as video games and semiconductor design – but only if we have a government that can lead the way in setting a policy framework that encourages innovation while providing vital safeguards. In a fast-moving technological landscape, government has a crucial role in enabling the rollout of – and opening up access to – the telecoms, data and computing infrastructure of the digital revolution.

To harness Britain's potential in the green and digital future, Labour will pioneer a different way of working. We will deliver this through partnership between government, businesses, unions and communities across the country.

## Green Prosperity Plan

Labour's Green Prosperity Plan will ensure the UK wins the global race for the green industries of the future. We will support the creation of over a million jobs across our cities, towns and villages. We will cut energy bills for good, saving each UK household hundreds of pounds a year.

The Green Prosperity Plan will transform our economy. A Labour government would ramp up public capital investment into the green economy to £28 billion a year in the second half of the Parliament at the latest, alongside an active industrial strategy, with strategic public investment attracting private sector investment, bringing high-quality, unionised, sustainable jobs to all parts of the country and protecting existing jobs as industries evolve and decarbonise.

It means investing in both mitigating the climate crisis but also adapting to the effects of a warming world, for example by rapidly improving flood defences, the resilience of our national infrastructure to extreme weather, and other measures. Labour recognises the essential role of the fire and rescue service in achieving resilience.

The Green Prosperity Plan will have at its heart a just transition for workers. Through our Energy Transition Working Group with relevant trade unions, we will develop policies to ensure those most affected play a central role in shaping, implementing and benefitting from the transition.

### *A clean energy superpower*

As part of this plan, the next Labour government will launch an urgent mission to deliver clean electricity by 2030. This ambitious

and achievable target would make the UK the world's first major economy to do so, slashing energy bills for good, creating well-paid jobs, and making the UK energy independent. This will help unlock growth by driving down energy costs for all businesses, including energy-intensive manufacturing firms, the hospitality and leisure sector and high-tech computing services. Achieving this will rely on partnership between an active state, businesses and workers. It will mean new jobs in clean energy industries across all four nations of the UK and spillover benefits for those working in the supply chain and related high-value services.

As part of a just transition, Labour will grow apprenticeship opportunities in green industries and across our economy, ensuring these are available for young people.

A Labour government will more than double onshore wind capacity, triple solar capacity and quadruple offshore wind capacity. Labour will also have ambitious targets on delivering hydrogen and nuclear power. Labour will expand renewable energy capacity through creating a new generation of community energy owners.

The rapid rollout of energy infrastructure and transition to net zero offers a once in a generation opportunity to create good British jobs. Over the last 13 years, the Tories have squandered this opportunity. Even when infrastructure has been installed here, jobs in the supply chain have gone abroad and on occasion the green jobs that have arrived have been marked by insecurity, low pay and bad conditions.

Labour is clear that its ambitions for rapid renewable energy deployment must be accompanied by a rapid growth in high quality, secure jobs. We will not accept



a continuation of the situation under the Conservatives, in which renewables receive public investment but fail to secure domestic jobs. We are clear that our British Jobs Bonus will ensure that investment in low carbon power generation delivers more good jobs in the UK, particularly in our communities with an energy production legacy.

Labour will end a decade of drift and ducking difficult decisions on nuclear. We will ensure the long-term security of nuclear power, extending the lifetime of existing plants and backing new nuclear plants and Small Modular Reactors. We will ensure a comprehensive and safe process for the disposal of radioactive waste as plants are decommissioned. Labour will also support the development of new energy technologies such as floating offshore wind, carbon capture and storage, marine power and hydrogen. Under Labour, public investment will support future technologies in a way that the Tories have repeatedly refused to do, which has loaded a disproportionate burden of future energy development on billpayers. To help deliver this, Labour will tackle planning barriers to renewable energy projects, getting planning decision timelines down from years to just months, and remove the obstacles that are currently preventing businesses from investing in the UK. We will unlock the energy potential of our spaces, including appropriate priority to the role of brownfield sites and rooftops for solar energy.

Under Labour's plans oil and gas production in the North Sea will continue for decades to come. We will act to ensure continued investment in our offshore infrastructure and workforce as the North Sea becomes home to new forms of energy production, taking advantage of existing assets. We will not revoke licences and we will partner with business and

workers to manage our existing fields for the entirety of their lifespan. This is consistent with our commitment to not handout new licences to explore new oil and gas fields, which we believe would not offer the right answer for the economy or the environment. We will ensure a Labour government will focus on a sprint to clean power by 2030 and competing for secure, well-paid jobs in the growth industries of the future.

Through our Energy Transition Working Group, Labour will work with trade unions relevant to the future of the industry. Labour will also work with offshore communities and sector trade unions to build opportunities for workers, in renewables like offshore wind, carbon capture and storage, hydrogen, and decommissioning. Labour will ensure effective safeguards to protect working people on the path to net zero in respect of pay, quality and conditions.

The energy transition and the North Sea will be managed in a way that does not jeopardise workers and communities. Labour is committed to securing a future of well-paid, skilled jobs for those impacted by any energy transition.

Labour will also make sure that there are clean energy alternatives to coal, which is not the right long-term solution to our energy needs. The NPF endorses and supports calls for the reform of the Mineworkers Pensions. We believe that government should not be in the business of profiting from miners' pensions. We commit to a review of the fifty-fifty surplus sharing arrangement and the reserve fund.

Labour opposes fracking, which Labour believes would do nothing to cut energy bills, costs far more than renewables and is proven to be unsafe. The Labour government in Wales has already banned fracking, and Labour has committed to do the same in England.

## Energy market

Our fragmented energy supply system has been appallingly regulated and does not serve the public or deliver the good jobs and skills the just transition needs. Labour will fundamentally reform our system of supply, generation and transmission and distribution so that it delivers cheaper bills for consumers and businesses, creates decent jobs, clean energy, and energy security. Building a resilient, green energy system is a national mission, which needs to be properly co-ordinated with a clear plan, and to provide a dividend to the British people.

For too long, Conservative governments have been ideologically committed to privatisation regardless of the consequences for consumers, workers and taxpayers. In Scotland the SNP have seen energy profits and jobs offshored with their U-turns over a public energy company and their selling off of the rights to develop wind farms on Scotland's seabeds without a proper strategy to deliver long-term community benefit. Labour rejects the ideological arguments of the past and is focused on the future. Every penny of taxpayers' money we spend will focus on lowering bills, delivering energy security and tackling climate change. These are our priorities, not compensating shareholders.

At the same time, we will guarantee that there can never be a return to the scandal of vulnerable households being forced on to pre-payment energy meters and effectively cut-off from supply. We will deliver and enforce a ban on energy companies forcibly installing pre-payment meters in vulnerable homes and end the pre-payment penalty, fundamentally reforming this rotten and discredited system so that those on prepayment meters are not financially disadvantaged.

We will examine the circumstances facing energy customers without online access to ensure they do not face a financial penalty compared to online customers.

Labour will create GB Energy: a new home-grown, publicly-owned national champion in clean power generation, for the benefit of the British public. Of the ten countries in the world leading the clean energy transition, only the UK does not have a public generation company. GB Energy will harness the power of Britain's sun, wind, and waves – to cut energy bills and deliver energy independence for our country. By investing in cheap offshore wind, onshore wind, nuclear, solar, hydrogen, wave and tidal power, we can cut energy bills for British families and allow the British people to profit from making the UK a clean energy superpower.

A publicly-owned company is the best way to ensure that the British people can derive the benefits from the power that we create on our own shores – delivering cheaper bills, good local jobs, and bringing money back into the public purse.

As part of our mission to make Britain a clean energy superpower, the public and private sector will need to work in partnership to build the significant amount of new clean energy infrastructure we need. GB Energy will be able to invest in its own projects, but will also be able to partner with leading businesses to crowd in private investment on projects that require long-term, patient public finance. Through this strategic partnership with the private sector, GB Energy will accelerate the deployment of existing production technologies and de-risk private investment in developing production markets as we deliver the plan for clean power. GB Energy will also work with unions to deliver good, secure, high quality jobs and resilient UK supply chains in the energy sector.



GB Energy will be established under a corporate charter that sets out its roles and responsibilities to support the transition to cheap, clean energy by 2030, including through partnership with public and private sector organisations, and deliver public policy aims and value. It will be operationally independent in delivering these objectives, with an independent board. GB Energy will be capitalised by investment over the course of the next Parliament.

### *An accelerated transition to net zero*

With our plan for clean power by 2030, and our wider Green Prosperity Plan, a Labour government will accelerate the just transition to net zero. By doing this, we can unleash the benefits of the transition sooner – from lower bills, to energy security, and decent jobs and economic growth – while limiting the worst effects of climate change.

Labour will support the creation of over a million good jobs for people of all regions, ages, ethnicities, genders and socioeconomic groups. The next Labour government will set out a clear roadmap for decarbonisation so businesses and workers can plan ahead to play their part in the just transition.

In addition to cutting energy bills by £21 billion for high street businesses by 2030, we will develop robust sectoral plans with trade unions and industry, to protect and create good quality and secure jobs across the whole of the economy, including in retail and distribution, helping to deliver a just transition for every sector.

We recognise the role of government in showing leadership in moving towards decarbonising our public services in a way that supports working people. Local government

across the country is already showing leadership on the path to Net Zero, innovating and responding to local challenges effectively. We will learn from this and work in partnership with local government to harness the power of local leadership in reaching Net Zero.

Labour will ensure a just transition that addresses regional imbalances and ensures that no workers or communities are left behind. Under Labour the path to decarbonisation in sectors will be developed with workers, businesses and trade unions. We will learn from the success of the Welsh Labour government in convening unions, businesses and local communities to achieve this. Labour will develop plans which will see existing workers upskilled and trained and we will give young people the knowledge and skills to thrive in the transition to a net zero society. A Labour government will integrate learning about climate change and sustainability throughout the curriculum in schools and on vocational courses, and provide training and support for teachers.

Labour's policies will be aligned with our obligations under the Paris agreements to aim for 1.5°C and we will cooperate with likeminded countries pushing for action. We will also cooperate with relevant partners, including in Europe, on energy security and will continue to work with the North Seas Energy Cooperation (NESC).

The Energy Charter Treaty is outdated, as shown by the number of countries leaving it or calling for it to be overhauled, and Labour would take co-ordinated action with other likeminded nations, so it does not obstruct the delivery of our climate commitments.

Firefighters – in the UK and abroad – are increasingly confronted by wildfires and floods

on an unprecedented scale. There is clear and established evidence linking climate change to their increased prevalence. Labour will ensure the responsibility of the fire and rescue service to respond to extreme weather events is properly recognised and supported.

### *National Wealth Fund*

Labour will create a National Wealth Fund to build British industry and ensure the British people will benefit from the long-term return that investments produce. This will invest alongside the private sector in gigafactories, clean steel plants, renewable-ready ports, green hydrogen, and carbon capture along with supporting our world-leading service industries. It will ensure that the whole country benefits from the wealth and talent in our nation, so that with every investment, wealth and decent jobs flow into our communities, and the British people benefit from the returns on those investments. Labour's National Wealth Fund will invest in the projects we need that will help Britain win the global race for modern industries.

Labour's National Wealth Fund will help finance new gigafactories, boosting UK competitiveness in electric vehicle production and bringing good jobs back to Britain's industrial heartlands, supporting the transition of UK automotive supply chains.

Workers and businesses are crying out for certainty and stability so there can be investment for the long term, spurring on economic growth and creating the jobs we need for everyone to prosper.

Labour's National Wealth Fund would invest in at least four industrial clusters in Scotland, Wales and England, ensuring an industrial future for every part of Britain. Labour's commitment to developing a net-zero

industrial cluster at Grangemouth will also deliver support for the Scottish cluster carbon capture project – in contrast to the Tories dither and delay. We would also invest in offshore wind clusters across the country, capitalising on the unique natural resources of the North, Atlantic and Celtic Seas, developing the next generation of jobs in offshore wind and ensuring that unlike under the Tories and the SNP the manufacturing supply chain jobs are located and maintained here in the UK.

### *Steel*

Labour believes that Britain can lead the way in the development of clean steel, but thirteen years of Conservative neglect, inaction and lack of industrial strategy mean that the UK's steel sector is falling further behind its global competitors and the industry is in crisis. In line with best practice in Europe and the United States, Labour will support our steel industry to meet net zero targets and protect good British jobs by co-investing in clean steelmaking through our National Wealth Fund. Labour wants more British hospitals, schools, wind turbines, railways and Navy ships to be built with clean British steel. As part of Labour's commitment to a domestic steel industry we will also tackle the UK's sky-high industrial energy costs. Our sprint towards a clean electricity system will save business energy users £53 billion by 2030. Our British Jobs Bonus will also incentivise energy developers competing for contracts to source clean steel made in Britain's industrial heartlands. A Labour government would deliver a strategic long-term Plan for Green Steel – including our £3 billion investment through the National Wealth Fund – to achieve near zero emission steel production by 2035. A Labour government will work in partnership with industry and provide match funding for both full and pilot-scale innovation activity





and follow-up demonstration projects for the development of clean steelmaking, led by the UK's world-class industry research and development experts. Labour will examine the best way to mitigate the risk of carbon leakage to ensure that energy-intensive sectors like steel remain competitive, and will consider the conclusion of the Government's consultation on a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, among other approaches.

### *Defence procurement and steel*

The defence sector plays a vital role in supporting UK jobs and growth, a key part of Labour's wider commitment to buy, make and sell more in Britain. Labour sees our steel sector, shipyards, aerospace and materials industries as national assets and will ensure as much of our equipment as possible is designed and built here in the UK. In government, Labour will make it fundamental to direct British defence investment first to British business, with a higher bar set for any decisions to buy abroad.

### *Warm homes*

A Labour government will deliver a national Warm Homes Plan, upgrading every home that needs it to EPC standard C within a decade by installing energy-saving measures such as loft insulation, going street by street in locally-delivered programmes. Labour would work with devolved governments and local authorities to deliver retrofitting programmes across the country, ensuring that they had the power and resources necessary so that every home in their area is brought up to standard within a decade, with particular urgency for those in fuel poverty.

Labour's Warm Homes Plan will cut household bills by up to £1,000, reduce gas imports, provide opportunities for British businesses of all sizes, and create thousands of good jobs for

builders, electricians, plumbers, carpenters and architects.

### *Green transport*

The next Labour government will build transport infrastructure and a safe, efficient, integrated, accessible and affordable transport system that protects and creates good jobs, reduces carbon emissions and drives economic growth across our country.

To deliver net zero, it is essential to decarbonise transport. We want a world-class green public transport network and will work with devolved governments and local authorities to deliver good public transport in every city, town and village to cut travel costs and emissions. Labour will ensure a rolling programme of electrification to improve services and decarbonise our transport system, while also promoting the development and use of other low or zero-carbon fuels such as hydrogen, sustainable aviation fuel and biogas in transport. We will promote the use of rail freight to lower carbon emissions, noting it produces 76 per cent less CO<sub>2</sub> than the equivalent road journey.

Labour will build on our successes in Labour-led local government in delivering zero-emission bus and rail fleets, utilising local supply chains, to ensure that travelling public and taxpayers alike get value for their money.

Labour will also support motorists by turbocharging the just transition to cheaper electric vehicles, making them affordable and accessible by helping families manage the higher up-front cost. Labour will also accelerate the roll-out of charging points and associated infrastructure in areas currently being left behind, with access to good, unionised jobs a part of the funding process.

Labour will work in partnership with devolved nations on shared objectives as they take forward transport plans across our nations.

## Protecting the environment

Labour will protect our natural environment and support our rural communities to thrive. Labour will breathe life back into our countryside and coastal communities and break down the barriers to opportunity that they face. The millions of people living in rural and coastal areas face a range of challenges and in government Labour will address the challenges, disconnection and disparities communities face through improved cross-government working.

The next Labour government will improve people's access to both urban and rural green space. The Welsh Labour government is already creating a new national park in North Wales as well as planting a national forest. As a UK government, Labour will take this further. We will consider expanding national parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and creating new ones, where there is a robust, objective case upon thorough assessment of the social, economic and environmental benefits. We will also support better management and enhancement of the countryside around our villages, towns and cities. Labour recognises the importance and benefits of strategic tree planting, with both forestry and native woodland species included. Labour will also ensure that there are sufficient responsibilities and protections to manage and conserve our natural environment for all.

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world and Labour will protect and improve the UK's biodiversity with a considered approach to land use.

## Clean air and water

Governments have a central role to play in improving and protecting the cleanliness of the air we breathe and the water that runs through our rivers and taps, which are vitally important for public health and biodiversity.

For too long, poor air quality has contributed to childhood asthma and dangerous respiratory diseases in adults, particularly in disadvantaged communities. Labour will treat air pollution as the serious public health threat that it is. We will pass a Clean Air Act – building on the pioneering work of Labour in Wales – establishing a legal right to breathe clean air and placing tough new duties on Ministers to ensure air quality guidelines are met. We will write standards for safe air developed by the World Health Organization into UK law, working with employers to appropriately protect workers who are at high-risk of breathing in polluted air, such as roadside workers.

Under the Conservatives, our critical water infrastructure has significantly deteriorated. They have knowingly allowed water companies to build up huge debts, which have been used to pay billions in shareholder dividends rather than investing to improve the resilience of our water supply and tackling the environmental and health impacts of wastewater systems.

Not only this, but Conservative governments have consistently failed to empower weakened regulators to make companies act on water leaks or to ensure that those companies face meaningful consequences for the millions of tonnes of sewage dumped into our rivers and seas.

Labour will reform the water industry so that it delivers for consumers and the natural environment by using regulatory powers to



keep consumer bills down, and ensure that water companies – rather than the public – pay for any failures. Labour will ensure that the water industry’s workforce see decent conditions and security at work. Our new regulatory approach will give customers, workers and their trade unions a strong voice and participation in the governance of the industry. Labour will ensure that more effective regulation goes hand in hand with good conditions for the workforce and a good deal for customers.

Labour will hold those running water companies to account to ensure they work in the public interest. For those who routinely and systematically break the rules, we will strike off company directors who continually breach and ignore their responsibilities, ensure illegal activity is punished and ensure payments of dividends are linked to key performance metrics.

We will also learn from different regulatory models in Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Labour believes that strong regulatory safeguards are vital to ensuring that our water utility delivers value for money, operates in the interests of consumers, workers, and businesses, and abides by environmental aspirations. Labour’s reforms will address the issue of water companies taking on spiralling and unsustainable debts, which impacts consumer bills. We will look to increase the accountability of the industry to bill payers.

We will set mandatory targets to halve water leaks, which would reduce supply pressures that lead to water shortages and drought orders.

We will also ensure that our water infrastructure, supplies and quality are secure for future generations.

A Labour government will introduce mandatory monitoring of sewage outlets. We will introduce automatic fines for sewage discharges, with a penalty for outlets that do not have monitoring in place, ending costly and inefficient prosecutions. Labour will set ambitious targets to cut sewage outflows and clean up our rivers, streams, and seas once and for all. Labour will ensure regulators can take on these new roles and tackle polluters whatever the source.

Under the SNP sewage spills have been increasing and monitoring of storm overflows lags well behind elsewhere in England and Wales. Meanwhile, Scottish Water are hiking bills for households, despite building up a cash balance of over half a billion. The next Labour government will work with colleagues across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure water infrastructure is better managed in the public interest in order to deliver value for households and taxpayers.

### *Backing British farmers*

The next Labour government will support the British farming sector, including farm workers. We will deliver a land-use framework in England that supports sustainable farming, enables the country to reach our climate goals, and improves our national biodiversity. Farming and environmental protection are complementary priorities and Labour will ensure both are supported. The best farmers are good employers, custodians of animal welfare and custodians of nature, and Labour will embrace, support and encourage more farming businesses to play this role. Labour will ensure that our support for British farming always recognises the diversity of farming models across the UK and under Labour the UK will maintain our world leading animal welfare standards.

A Labour government will ensure more home-grown sustainable food is bought, made and sold, supporting farmers across the country through public procurement targets. Labour will support agricultural cooperatives, including new entrants. Labour will ensure that 50 per cent of all food purchased by the public sector is locally produced or certified to higher environmental production standards. Labour will also back our farmers by protecting British standards in trade deals, rather than watering them down.

### *Animal welfare*

Labour will close loopholes in the fox hunting ban, outlaw trophy hunting, including imports from overseas, and ensure animal welfare in the UK is of the highest standard.

## **The digital economy**

Labour is committed to harnessing digital technology to transform our economy and society for the better. Digital technology has the potential to accelerate growth in our economy, build brilliant public services and transform lives, if properly deployed and nurtured by an active government. Labour will use new technologies and innovations to benefit as many people as possible, unleashing Britain's innovative talents and supporting people to live connected lives.

### *Economic growth*

A Labour government will enable world-class digital technology companies, creating well paid and secure jobs both within the sector and across the wider economy, while simultaneously improving our productivity through digital transformation across the economy.

Labour will modernise and build the capacity of the state to be a more active, capable and reliable partner. A Labour government will work with businesses, workers, and universities to grow the high-tech, competitive industries of the future.

We will work with emerging businesses and start-ups to nurture their talents. Fast-growing digital businesses struggle to access the finance they need to scale, with the UK lagging behind our competitors in supply of patient capital for technology-intensive, early stage businesses. Following Lord Jim O'Neill's review into start-up and scale-up finance, we will unlock the supply of patient capital for fast growing digital businesses.

We will reform the British Business Bank, and give it a more ambitious remit, as well as the ability to attract additional external funds to amplify investments.

We will ensure the UK capitalises on its world-leading universities and research base to grow the number of spinouts that make the very most of our ground-breaking research.

Labour will build the reliable infrastructure on which the digital economy depends. The last Labour government delivered on digital infrastructure, securing first-generation broadband. But under the Conservatives the UK's telecommunications infrastructure has been neglected for over a decade. The next Labour government will turbocharge gigabit broadband and develop UK supply chains in 5G technology. We will also ensure our world-class researchers and businesses have the data and computing infrastructure they need to compete internationally.

Labour will ensure our intellectual property system is fit for the digital age and strikes the



right balance between the interests of creators, businesses and consumers. Labour will ensure that workers have new rights, protections and access to training to keep pace with the changing nature of work and technological advancements including those who as part of their role create content.

Labour will support the BBC to change with the times and adapt whilst supporting jobs and British content. We will protect and promote British broadcasting and UK radio in the streaming age, to ensure British made and produced content is easily available and accessible for audiences, whilst ensuring that content creators are fairly remunerated whether their work is broadcast or streamed.

The UK's world-renowned creative industries are a huge asset to the UK's economy but the workforce has suffered from years of Conservative neglect, particularly in skills and the talent pipeline. Labour will support and promote growth in this important sector and ensure that it translates into jobs and opportunities for a diverse workforce through our reform of the schools curriculum and growth and skills levy. Labour will work with trade unions to achieve this.

As part of our industrial strategy, Labour will harness data for the public good and will introduce robust regulation that opens up data while enshrining consumer rights, and unleashes the growth of small businesses.

Labour will maintain Britain's data adequacy status meaning our data protection rules are deemed equivalent to those in the EU, enabling UK digital services companies to compete across Europe and the world.

### *Digital public services*

Not only should government support a flourishing digital economy, but it should also look to learn from the best technological advancements elsewhere and see how they can improve the delivery of our public services. A Labour government will make it easier for public services to adopt innovative technologies by removing barriers to data-sharing and smart procurement.

Allowing public services to procure new innovative technologies to improve their efficiency, capacity and quality, while supporting jobs, pay and conditions, will transform how citizens are able to access them. Labour believes that with innovation public services can be made more personalised, responsive and accessible.

There is great value in publicly-held data that can be used for population-level innovations both in the public and private sectors, such as the pioneering UK BioBank and Citymapper.

The next Labour government will use new capabilities in data analysis and AI to deliver better public services and improve people's quality of life, and ensure society is fairly rewarded for the data it generates. This must be built on frameworks and institutions that build public trust and uphold the privacy and security rights of UK citizens, including in the workplace.

Labour will also ensure we have cyber resilience and security against rogue states and other hostile actors.

## Changing lives

The digital revolution has provided millions of people with access to information at a scale never seen before. People are now better connected, access to content is democratised and millions of lives are better for it. But too many people are unable to take full advantage of the benefits and opportunities it presents. Some are digitally excluded because of their age, location, socioeconomic status or disability. Others feel apprehensive because of security concerns or the risks of online harm.

To ensure everyone can participate in the digital economy, Labour will look at ways to close the digital divide. We will improve digital education in schools and upskill the workforce to ensure we are all more technologically-literate citizens, consumers and workers.

Broadband is the newest utility – essential for everyday life and not a luxury. Labour will support regulation that is fair to businesses and consumers, to encourage investment in infrastructure while keeping prices stable and affordable, supporting jobs and protecting decent labour standards in the sector. Labour will direct Ofcom to strengthen consumer protections in the broadband market, and ensure there is an industry-wide social tariff for low-income families.

Labour will make sure people are safe online by ensuring there is robust legislation backed by effective enforcement that protects people from online harms – including algorithms that promote legal but harmful content – and holding social media and technology companies accountable for them. This will include a focus on making sure children are protected from grooming, harmful content, bullying, and online abuse.

Labour will harness technology for public good, ensuring the UK is the best place in the world for safe and responsible technology, building the world's most competent regulatory environment for AI and automation, and supporting a thriving and effective AI and automation assurance ecosystem. Labour will act to ensure that the regulatory environment appropriately and proportionally mitigates the potential harms that AI could cause by taking a principles-based approach to tech and AI, with fairness, accountability, safety by design, and a strategic government at its heart.

We will also explore whether the companies developing the underlying 'foundation models' that power specific AI tools and applications should also be subject to regulation. We would act quickly to set the standards for safe and responsible AI, influencing international regulation, attracting investment from those firms looking for guardrails and certainty, and protecting workers and consumers at home. Labour will ensure that workers have new rights, protections and access to training to keep pace with the changing nature of work and technological advancements.

If the UK wants to be a world leader in using AI across the economy, workers, businesses, the public sector, and citizens need confidence that these systems are safe and reliable. The UK should act as an international convenor on AI safety and standards.

## Royal Mail

Labour believes that Royal Mail provides crucial services to the public, is a key part of our national infrastructure and remains a significant contributor to the UK economy. Labour recognises Royal Mail staff are essential workers. We recognise the mismanagement



of Royal Mail has failed both workers and customers and the status quo will not deliver the service customers deserve.

Labour is committed to the Universal Service Obligation (USO) as the company's central mission. The next Labour government will guarantee that the USO is secure for the future and will continue to be provided by Royal Mail in a way that is affordable and accessible to all users and financially sustainable for the long term. This will include a comprehensive regulatory review to improve quality of service and labour standards across the wider sector.

Labour stands against the break-up of Royal Mail and will oppose any attempt to turn this vital service into a "gig economy" employer. Labour will support Royal Mail and unions in the development of plans to expand the role of postal workers, adding social value to our communities and innovative products and services that will support the growth of local and regional economies. To align the interests of customers, workers and the business, Labour will explore different approaches to corporate governance for Royal Mail, which will support growth and embed long-term investment.





# BETTER JOBS AND BETTER WORK





## Introduction

Britain has immense economic potential and the scope to lead the world in the new and growing industries of the future. The opportunities are there for the taking.

But the Conservatives have put our economy on a path of managed decline, with 13 years of 'trickle-down' economics failing to deliver a better future or stronger economy. In Scotland the SNP's neglect of the economy has let productivity stagnate and inequality grow. This has all been compounded by the chaos of the past year, with the Conservatives crashing the economy, sending mortgage rates spiralling and leaving working people paying the price.

Wealth and power are held by too few people in too few parts of the country, with the contribution of working people undervalued, and their skills and effort underutilised.

That is why Labour's first mission in government will be to secure the highest sustained growth in the G7 – with good jobs and productivity growth in every part of the country making everyone, not just a few, better off. We must restore growth if we are to drive sustainable improvements in people's wages and living standards, to lower inequality and drive prosperity in all areas of the country.

A Labour government will end the failed trickle-down ideology and sticking plaster approach, instead building our economy from the bottom up and middle out.

That begins with the foundation of economic stability, treating every penny of taxpayers' money with respect. On that foundation the next Labour government will implement a modern industrial strategy based on a partnership with businesses, workers and unions.

And we will use the economic power of an active state to deliver for people right across the country.

Our New Deal for Working People is a comprehensive plan to bring the world of work into the 21st century, upgrading rights and regulations so they are fit for the modern economy. As the party of working people, Labour will ensure that people have greater certainty and security, and the ability to plan for the future. Labour's New Deal will help to end the Conservative cycle of low pay, low investment and low productivity.

A Labour government will provide the stability and certainty businesses need to invest in the long term, in skills and in working conditions – all vital to growth and productivity. We will make Britain the best place in the world to start and grow a business by making the economy work for our entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Labour will transfer economic power from Westminster to the British people so that the right powers are in the right places. Our Take Back Control Act will devolve new powers over employment support, housing, childcare provision and transport – giving communities the ability to develop their own effective local growth plans. Locally designed employment support schemes will be focused on delivering opportunities for individuals to find employment, such as through Jobcentre Plus and will be more responsive to local economic needs. All devolved powers will still be subject to minimum standard requirements.

We will ensure businesses have the skilled employees they need to get Britain growing, and people have training when they need it, through a modern skills system. Alongside that, Labour will reform the points-based immigration system so that it works for all of

Britain: supporting our economy and properly respecting the skills, talent and contributions of both UK workers and those coming to work here from abroad.

And a Labour government will get Britain back to work. Because we believe that the Conservatives' failure to capture people's potential is a monumental waste of talent, not to mention a huge cost to society and the economy. Our reforms to employment support will get more people back to work, grow the economy and help tackle the cost of living crisis.

## Good jobs and growth in every part of the country

Britain can and should lead the world in the new and growing industries of the future and the decent jobs they create – supported by our geography, our advantage in high-tech sectors and our world-leading universities.

But after 13 years of Conservative rule, Britain is on a path of managed decline and we are falling behind our international competitors. British workers and businesses are being held back by the lack of a long-term plan for our country.

The Conservatives have failed to provide stable policy frameworks to guide long-term investment decisions, and they have undermined the credibility of independent economic institutions like the Bank of England and the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR). It is little surprise that the UK has the lowest level of business investment in the G7. Labour's National Wealth Fund will help finance new gigafactories, boosting UK competitiveness in electric vehicle production and bringing good jobs back to Britain's industrial heartlands,

supporting the transition of UK automotive supply chains.

Workers and businesses are crying out for certainty and stability so that there can be investment for the long term, spurring on economic growth and creating the jobs we need for everyone to prosper. A Labour government will provide a clear and consistent policy framework that businesses can trust and within which they can prosper.

### *Strong foundations of economic stability*

A flourishing economy can only be built on the bedrock of economic stability. That is why a Labour government will have iron-clad fiscal rules that treat every pound of taxpayers' money with the respect it deserves and allow for key investments in industries of the future which will create good jobs across the country, tackle the climate crisis and support our public services.

Thirteen years of Conservative government have left Britain weaker. Austerity starved the economy of the investment it needs to grow. Productivity stalled and has never picked up. Wages stagnated and left millions poorer. Even judged by its own aims – reducing the national debt – austerity failed: our public finances have got worse, with debt as a share of GDP now at the highest it has been in over half a century.

Labour rejects this failed approach. There can be no return to austerity. Instead, Labour will break free from this vicious cycle of stagnation, with fairer choices and a proper plan for economic growth.

We will reaffirm the role of independent institutions like the OBR and Bank of England and establish an Office for Value for Money to improve how money is spent and help put



an end to the obscene waste overseen by the Conservatives. We believe sustainable growth relies on an active government taking on a strategic role. This means expanding the capacity and the resilience of our economy and creating the solid foundations for a strong private sector to build on.

A Labour government will also always make fair choices, such as closing unfair and inefficient tax loopholes for private schools and private equity fund managers, and ending the non-domiciled tax loophole.

Labour wants to shift the burden of business tax away from high streets, SMEs and investment towards online tech giants and multinationals. Labour will make sure that multinational tech companies pay their fair share of tax. Labour supports implementation of the OECD global minimum rate of corporate taxation and backs an international agreement on the fairer taxation of large multinationals including the global tech giants.

The next Labour government will scrap and replace the current system of business rates in England and Wales with a fully costed and funded system of business property taxation that is fit for the 21st century, levelling the playing field so that our high streets can thrive. Labour's replacement to business rates would incentivise business investment, especially in those areas that contribute towards decarbonising the economy. It would reward rather than punish entrepreneurship and support the usage of empty properties.

### *Prosperity through partnership: Labour's industrial strategy*

A Labour government will introduce an industrial strategy based on a genuine partnership with businesses, workers, unions and universities to deliver our growth mission

by tackling key challenges and growing the industries of the future.

Our industrial strategy has four central goals: delivering clean power by 2030, caring for the future, harnessing data for the public good and building a resilient economy.

Delivering our mission will require a relentless focus from government. It will require genuine partnership: business with trade unions; the private sector with the public sector; national government with local government; and different government departments working together. Labour will ensure the structures for input in government follow best practice. As part of this, a Labour government will establish a Council for Economic Growth, which will be placed on a statutory footing and bring together experts, unions and business leaders, co-chaired by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for Business, to advise on Labour's mission to deliver the highest sustained growth in the G7. Local leaders have an important role to play in the delivery of industrial strategy.

Whilst we will ensure a stable and dynamic policy environment for all businesses to thrive, we are clear our industrial strategy must make choices. We cannot target all sectors with our industrial policy and will focus on areas where we have clear evidence of existing or potential comparative advantage. Labour's industrial strategy will recognise the importance of these sectors and will work with businesses and unions to support good, secure jobs in the everyday economy through our Council for Economic Growth.

Our approach mirrors the move towards more active industrial policy across other developed economies, with the state proactively expanding the productive

capacity of the economy via a modern supply side approach. Labour's industrial strategy recognises the state must use different levers in different parts of the economy and differentiates between four types of sector: sovereign capabilities, global champions, future successes, and the everyday economy like retail.

Sovereign capabilities are the foundational sectors critical to national economic resilience in the face of future shocks. They include certain defence, energy, security and manufacturing supply chains and the services that enable critical infrastructure. Our industrial strategy recognises the importance of maintaining and building back a strong, domestic industrial base, supported by public procurement, in sectors like steel for responding to shocks, from pandemics to wars. In government, Labour will set up a supply chain taskforce to review potential supply chain needs and support the development of sector strategies.

A Labour government will ensure overarching regulatory structures support sovereign capabilities and resilience, starting with our commitment to strengthen the public interest test on takeovers, to provide clear and credible principles for assessing takeovers based on long-termism and UK value creation.

Our global champions are the highly productive, export intensive sectors where we lead the world. The UK is the second largest exporter of services in the world, but our strength in 'intangible' knowledge intensive services like design and analytics combine with and complement our strengths in manufacturing.

Alongside our ambitions for existing global champions, we want to cultivate new clusters

of highly productive, high-paying, export-intensive businesses. Nurturing these new clusters requires an active role for the state to lay the groundwork for innovation and exploration.

The everyday economy consists of the sectors people interact with most in their daily lives and those that employ most people in the UK, including care, retail and hospitality. These sectors are often characterised by endemic low pay, insecurity and lack of progression. They were among the hardest hit in the covid pandemic and many are struggling to recover and adapt to new economic conditions and the failure of the Tory government to protect them. Labour will ensure that it works with representatives of businesses large and small to enable high street businesses to be profitable and secure so earnings and wages can rise and enable our high streets to become vibrant and prosperous once more. Labour's industrial strategy will recognise the importance of these sectors and will work with businesses and unions to support good, secure jobs in the everyday economy through our Council for Economic Growth.

### *Science and technology*

Labour will build on the UK's strengths in science and technology to support growth in all regions and nations. A Labour government will aim for at least three per cent of GDP across the public and private sectors to be invested in research and development. Labour will establish an ambitious long-term strategy for science that offers predictability of funding necessary for discovery-led science, but is agile and able to respond to emerging technologies and seize opportunities for the UK to lead in future industries including advanced manufacturing. And Labour will ensure our science and technology investment underpins



our Industrial Strategy objectives, which will in turn deliver good jobs and growth across the country.

### *The best place to start and grow a business*

As part of our ambitions for growth we will make Britain the best place to start and grow a business by increasing access to start-up and scale-up finance, including for those wishing to start up alternative business models. We will reform the British Business Bank, and give it a more ambitious remit, as well as the ability to attract additional external funds to amplify investments and make even more difference.

We will ensure the UK capitalises on its world-leading universities and research base to grow the number of spinouts that make the very most of our ground-breaking research. We will leverage more institutional and patient capital into the high-growth enterprises and scale-ups which will provide new opportunities and high-quality jobs in emerging sectors ahead of global competitors.

Small businesses are the backbone of the economy, investing in our country and people, providing vital services for communities and enriching all our lives. The UK is a nation of innovators and Labour would provide proactive support to those who show innovation through small businesses to revitalise our high streets. Small businesses are the backbone of the economy, investing in our country and people, providing vital services for communities and enriching all our lives. We will legislate to tighten rules on late payments and tackle the late payments crisis which is particularly acute for small businesses. However, Labour also recognises late payments are not the only unfair purchasing practice affecting small businesses. Labour will

consider further action to ensure a fair playing field for small business as well as ensuring firms have equal access to public procurement.

The Conservatives have allowed the running-down of our high streets, which are at the heart of our communities. That's why Labour will replace business rates with a fairer system that shifts the burden of business tax, levelling the playing field so that our high streets can thrive. The UK is a nation of innovators and Labour would provide proactive support to those who show innovation through small businesses to revitalise our High streets. Labour will act to promote a positive work-life balance for all workers, protecting the current compromise around Sunday Trading hours.

During the pandemic retailers and landlords worked together in the interests of the retail sector and wider economy and a Labour government would take action to support greater cooperation.

This Conservative Government has also done nothing to protect in-person banking services which older people, the poorest and the most vulnerable in our communities rely on for financial advice and support. The Conservatives' failure to protect these services risks cutting off millions of people from essential services. Labour would protect these vital banking services, guarantee free access to cash and monitor the use and acceptance of cash, while supporting innovation in payment and banking systems.

Labour knows that the Post Office provides an essential service across the country, from the largest cities to the smallest villages. However, there has been a serious degradation of responsibility from the Tory Government, which has seen the managed decline of the network, top-level mismanagement and the

unprecedented miscarriage of justice revealed in the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry.

A Labour government will assess what measures could strengthen the whole Post Office network, including in rural communities. Labour will work with the Post Office on developing new products and services, such as banking hubs, that will help reinvigorate the high street.

### *Competition and corporate governance*

Labour will ensure our competition regime remains robust and fit for the modern economy, promoting innovation while protecting consumers. This requires a pro-competition regulatory regime that addresses the novel challenges posed in digital markets. A Labour government will ensure overarching regulatory structures support sovereign capabilities and resilience, starting with our commitment to strengthen the public interest test on takeovers, to provide clear and credible principles for assessing takeovers based on long-termism and UK value creation.

Labour will ensure corporate governance frameworks embed long-termism, enable investment and ensure greater action in the interests of their workers, customers, communities and the environment.

We will work with business and relevant trade unions on the best approach to embed environmental, social and governance objectives, engage the workforce, and improve transparency.

Co-operatives are a great example of how businesses can work for the benefit of the company, workers and the community. Labour will aim to double the size of the co-operative sector in the UK. This will not happen overnight,

but Labour will work with the sector to ensure that co-operatives can reach their full potential in our country, removing barriers as we stand up to challenges and embracing opportunities in new ways.

### *Financial services*

Labour will boost investment in the economy by unlocking the full potential of the financial services sector to drive growth in every region and nation, and every industry in the UK.

Labour will give financial services across the UK the certainty they need to invest in the jobs and businesses of the future through our Green Prosperity Plan and our pledge to make the UK the post-Brexit, home-grown start-up hub of the world. Labour will unlock the £3 trillion of capital stored in UK pension funds to invest more in innovative British businesses, jobs and infrastructure.

Labour will protect the UK's competitiveness and status as a global financial centre, through a commitment to high standards not a race to the bottom and will bring forward long overdue consumer protection regulation in areas like Buy-Now-Pay-Later.

Labour would consolidate the UK's position as the green finance capital of the world, accelerating the transition to net zero by encouraging private finance to align its investments with the goals of the Paris agreement. Labour will support fair financial service initiatives, including supporting the growth of credit unions.

### *A fairer system of taxation*

For 13 years the Conservatives have delivered low growth and loaded the tax burden onto working people. Labour believes the tax system must be fairer while ensuring the UK remains competitive and incentivising investment,





including by ending tax breaks for private equity bosses and removing the non-domiciled tax loophole, putting in place a system for genuinely temporary residents. Labour will close the loopholes in the windfall tax on oil and gas companies. It is unfair that oil and gas giants are banking massive profits for their shareholders while many households struggle to afford their energy bills. We will also remove the tax loopholes that private schools enjoy. Labour will crack down on tax evasion, tax avoidance, and the use of offshore tax havens, ensuring people and businesses can no longer avoid paying their fair share.

Labour wants to shift the burden of business tax away from high streets, SMEs and investment towards online tech giants and multinationals. Labour will make sure that multinational tech companies pay their fair share of tax. Labour supports implementation of the OECD global minimum rate of corporate taxation, backs an international agreement on the fairer taxation of large multinationals including the global tech giants.

The next Labour government will scrap and replace the current system of business rates in England and Wales with a fully costed and funded system of business property taxation that is fit for the 21st century, levelling the playing field so that our high streets can thrive. Labour's replacement to business rates would incentivise business investment, especially in those areas that contribute towards decarbonising the economy. It would reward rather than punish entrepreneurship and support the usage of empty properties.

## An economy that works for everyone

The next Labour government will recognise the role of an active state: one that catalyses investment, breaks down barriers and acts in partnership with businesses and trade unions. An active state can also direct economic growth towards the public good, and ensure everyone – workers and employers, businesses large and small, local and national – feels the benefits of growth. That means ensuring that the considerable purchasing power of government is used wisely, and that we set a framework that encourages long-term, responsible behaviour from business.

### *The biggest wave of insourcing of public services in a generation*

Labour will learn the lessons from the collapse of Carillion and bring about the biggest wave of insourcing of public services in a generation. A Labour government will end the Tories' ideological drive to privatise our public services, extend the Freedom of Information Act to apply to private companies that hold contracts to provide public services, exclusively with regard to information relevant to those contracts, to ensure any outsourced contracts are transparent and accountable for delivery. We will also extend the Freedom of Information Act to publicly funded employers associations, where not already covered.

The next Labour government will also examine public services that have been outsourced as part of our drive to improve quality, design better services to meet changing needs, ensure greater stability and longer-term investment in the workforce, and deliver better value for money. Where relevant, we will work with local government to build

on their experience and expertise around procurement, drawing on best practice from local government.

In most cases, the best time to achieve value for money for publicly-run provision will be when existing contracts expire or are broken through a failure to deliver. Before any service is contracted out, public bodies must carry out a quick and proportionate public interest test, to understand whether that work could not be more effectively done in-house. The test will evaluate value for money, impact on service quality and economic and social value goals holistically. We will also reinstate and strengthen the last Labour government's two-tier code to end unfair two-tiered workforces. The scope of the two-tier code and the public interest test will apply to wholly owned subsidiary companies.

### *Procurement for the public good*

A Labour government will use government procurement to support local businesses, cutting red tape and streamlining the bidding process to level the playing field for small businesses.

Labour's plan to buy, make and sell more in Britain is a commitment to use strategic procurement for industrial strategy. Labour has set out plans to help British businesses win more government contracts, using stretching social, environmental and labour clauses in contract design to ensure British businesses are recognised for the high standards they meet, and make sure that trade union recognition and access is valued and considered as part of the process of awarding public contracts and determining strategic suppliers, alongside other factors that demonstrate a commitment to good jobs. A Labour government will also ensure that the economic and security benefits

of British ownership are adequately reflected by regulatory structures, starting with our commitment to strengthen the public interest test for takeovers, built on clear and credible principles.

Labour will set up a supply chain taskforce to review potential supply chain needs across critical sectors, which may include defence, energy, construction, medicines, food and critical manufacturing such as steel. The taskforce will assess the ability of supply chains to respond to shocks: both risks and opportunities.

Through our new National Procurement Plan, Labour will ensure social value is mandatory in contract design. Mandating consideration of social value will mean a Labour government will value organisations that create local jobs, skills and wealth and treat their workers well and equally, including on matters such as pay, conditions, trade union access, recognition and provision for collective bargaining arrangements, effective equality policies, adherence to high environmental standards and tax compliance. This will drive up employment standards across the economy and strengthen supply chains so these standards are upheld throughout the whole chain of the contract. The Procurement Bill will give a future Labour government the powers to implement our new principles of procurement through guidance, learning from the Social Partnership Act pioneered by the Labour government in Wales.

Our new Fair Work Standard will ensure the best employers get the recognition they deserve. The Standard will be created and upheld by our new Social Value Council - inspired by the Wales Social Partnership Council - made up of public, employer and trade union



representatives. The Council will also be tasked with reviewing how social value can be better strengthened and delivered in public contracts.

We will also ensure the UK Infrastructure Bank operates to new criteria so that recipients of public money through the Bank must be committed to creating good jobs with decent and enforceable conditions. Labour will ensure the Bank includes trade union representatives on its board, publishes an annual report on the geographical spread and impact of its investments, and is given an additional objective to support supply chain resilience and our industrial strategy.

Labour will ensure that government contracts support our national ambition to boost Britain's skills and create new apprenticeship and learning opportunities. Labour would lead a culture change with a focus on how we can help industries grow locally and nationally and will ensure our Green Prosperity Plan supports good jobs and the supply chain here in the UK.

## A New Deal for Working People

Our New Deal for Working People, as set out in Labour's Employment Rights Green Paper and these NPF documents, is an important part of Labour's comprehensive plan to make Britain work for working people.

That is why we will introduce a range of measures to help improve the world of work and tackle job insecurity, stagnant pay and the growth of in-work poverty and we will bring forward legislation to implement it, including an Employment Rights Bill, within 100 days of entering office. Labour is committed to strengthening and updating the rights of

working people and empowering workers to organise collectively through trade unions.

The Conservatives have no answer to the challenges raised by the changing world of work.

Post-pandemic, more people are able to work from home, others are choosing self-employment to start a business with more flexibility, while others are experiencing the positives and the negatives of technology.

21st century trends and technologies are fast outrunning our outdated frameworks for rights and regulations at work which need to be modernised to meet the challenges working people face.

We have experienced 13 years where 'trickle-down' growth strategies failed to deliver a better future or stronger economy.

Labour will move away from the failed trickle-down ideology to a new model, building our economy from the bottom up and middle out.

Growth does not just come from a few at the top, but from the talents and efforts of millions of working people and businesses in every part of the country.

A secure, well-paid and motivated workforce is good for business and good for the bottom line, and most employers respect, value and fairly reward their workforce. However, practices such as those deployed by P&O are not an isolated example and remind us that modern employment rights must keep up with experiences in the world of work to prevent the undercutting of standards.

Our New Deal for Working People will be a key part of our plan to grow our economy, moving from an economy based on insecure, low paid jobs, to prosperity from good work, strong employment rights, and higher productivity.

It is our plan to deliver a stronger, fairer and more aspirational future of work for Britain, upgrading rights and regulations so they are fit for the 21st century economy.

The New Deal will be a cornerstone of our legislative programme, and we will bring forward legislation to implement it, including an Employment Rights Bill within 100 days of entering office.

Labour believes strong collective bargaining rights and institutions are key to tackling problems of insecurity, inequality, discrimination, enforcement and low pay. When workers are empowered to act as a collective, they can secure better pay and conditions. Labour is committed to strengthening the rights of working people by empowering workers to organise collectively through trade unions.

Our existing framework for industrial relations and collective bargaining is rife with inefficiencies and anachronisms that work against cooperation, compromise and negotiation. It places unnecessary red tape on trade union activity that work against their core role of negotiation and dispute resolution.

Over the past 13 years, the Conservatives have consistently attacked rights at work, including through the Trade Union Act 2016, the Minimum Service Levels (Strikes) Bill and the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses (Amendment) Regulations 2022 – all of which Labour will repeal to give trade unions the freedom to organise, represent and negotiate on behalf of their workers.

Labour will update trade union legislation, so it is fit for a modern economy, removing unnecessary restrictions on trade union activity and ensuring industrial relations are based

around good faith negotiation and bargaining. This will end the Conservatives' scorched-earth approach to industrial relations, ushering in a new partnership of cooperation between trade unions, employers and government and putting us in line with high-growth economies that benefit from more cooperation and less disruption.

As the recent period of disruption has shown, arcane bureaucratic hurdles do not prevent strikes and make it harder for unions to engage in the bargaining and negotiation that does settle disputes. The rules around agency workers in breaking strikes were condemned by industry and put the safety of the public and workers at risk.

The law governing trade union statutory ballots is antiquated and fails to recognise the huge steps trade unions have made to engage and communicate with members. The current system of only allowing statutory trade union ballots via the post significantly impacts turnout and hampers democratic engagement with members. Labour will allow modern, secure, electronic balloting and workplace ballots, as political parties and listed companies use, while ensuring we maintain high standards of engagement and participation.

A Labour government will act to ensure that union members and workers are able to access a union at work through a regulated and responsible route where there is support within the workforce. Labour will introduce rights for trade unions to access workplaces in a regulated and responsible manner, for recruitment and organising purposes. Labour will ensure reasonable access within workplaces by introducing a transparent framework and clear rules, designed in consultation with unions and business, that



allow unions officials to meet, represent, recruit and organise members, provided they give appropriate notice and comply with reasonable requests of the employer, as in other models already present in successful economies.

We recognise it will be necessary to formally monitor these reasonable and regulated new rules, to ensure trade union officials and workplaces are complying with their responsibilities and obligations, and that rules allowing access are used proportionately and effectively.

Labour will simplify the process of union recognition and the law around statutory recognition thresholds, so that working people have a meaningful right to organise through trade unions. We will ensure workers in precarious and gig-economy sectors have a meaningful right to organise through trade unions, modernising rules to ensure they are fit for an economy with growing platform sectors and a rise in remote and home working. Labour will review the process for statutory recognition claims, with existing thresholds presenting too high a hurdle in modern workplaces that are increasingly fragmented.

Labour will create new rights and protections for trade unions reps to undertake their work, strengthening protections for trade union representatives against unfair dismissal and union members from intimidation, harassment, threats and blacklisting. Rules on blacklisting have not been updated for over a decade and need to be modernised to account for new technologies and ways of storing data.

Labour encourages employers and trade unions to negotiate signing up to the Dying To Work Charter, and we will work with trade unions and others to ensure that workers

diagnosed with a terminal illness are treated with respect, dignity and supported at work.

Labour will ensure there is sufficient facilities time for all trade union reps so that they have capacity to represent and defend workers, negotiate with employers and train as well as create fairer workplaces and tackle gender and other equality pay gaps. Labour will introduce statutory rights for trade union equality reps in order to strengthen equality at work for all.

Sector wide bargaining agreements on conditions, training, pay and other key issues can raise standards in key industries, and provide tailored policy solutions to tackle chronic labour market challenges, like insecurity, low pay, poor progression and recruitment and retention pressures. Fair Pay Agreements will be one such tool for lifting standards in the face of those challenges.

Collective bargaining, whether in the public or private sector, at enterprise level or sectorally, makes a positive contribution to Britain's economy and will continue to do so with the next Labour government. To achieve a stronger and fairer economy we will work with the grain of Britain's economic traditions, with employers and trade unions. We also agree with the OECD that collective bargaining can help companies and workers respond to demographic and technological change and adapt to the new world of work.

We will start by establishing a new Fair Pay Agreement in the adult social care sector, empowering workers and the trade unions that represent them to negotiate fair pay and conditions, including staff benefits, terms and training, underpinned by rights for trade unions to access workplaces, in a regulated and responsible manner, for recruitment and

organising purposes. This will help us tackle the serious recruitment and retention crisis facing the sector, deliver higher standards for those receiving care and help us to tackle NHS waiting lists.

Labour will consult widely on the design of this Fair Pay Agreement, learning from those economies where they already operate successfully, ensuring the highest standards of representation and accountability. We will monitor the implementation, ensuring it delivers for workers and employers in the sector.

We will publish a full and transparent review of the agreement. We will also assess how and to what extent FPAs could benefit other sectors and tackle labour market challenges. A Fair Pay Agreement will not be the best solution for many parts of our economy, where labour markets are operating effectively or where existing collective arrangements at employer or sector level are already working well and are supported by trade unions. We will look to support and build on these existing arrangements, with other forms of collective bargaining being most appropriate in many areas.

Our New Deal will also include basic individual rights from day one for all workers, ending the current arbitrary system that leaves workers waiting up to two years to access basic rights of protection against unfair dismissal, parental leave and sick pay. Labour will also act to promote a positive work-life balance for all workers.

This will not prevent fair dismissal, which includes dismissal for reasons of capability, conduct or redundancy, or probationary periods with fair and transparent rules and processes. However, the changes will help to ensure that newly hired workers are not fired

without reason or cause and will help drive up standards in workplaces.

The pandemic exposed just how precarious work and life is for those on acute low incomes, with many forced to choose between their health and financial hardship. It is simply unacceptable that the safety net of sick pay should not be available to those who need it most, and so a Labour government would strengthen statutory sick pay, remove the lower earnings limit to make it available to all workers and remove the waiting period.

Labour believes the exploitation of our three-tier system of employment status has contributed to the rise of bogus self-employment, with some employers exploiting the complexity of the UK's framework to deny people their legal rights. The complexity has meant businesses and workers are reliant on lengthy legal processes to resolve issues. Therefore, we will move towards a single status of worker and transition towards a simpler two-part framework for employment status.

We will consult in detail on how a simpler framework that differentiates between workers and the genuinely self-employed, could properly capture the breadth of employment relationships in the UK, adapt to changing forms of employment and guard against a minority of employers using novel contractual forms to avoid legal obligations, while ensuring that workers can benefit from flexible working where they choose to do so. We will also evaluate the way flexibility of 'worker' status is used and understood across the workforce and the way it interacts with and is incorporated into collective agreements.

We will also consider measures to provide accessible and authoritative information for people on their employment status and what



rights they are owed, tackling instances where some employers can use complexity to avoid legal obligations.

Labour is the party of the self-employed and recognises their significant contribution to the UK economy, and the next Labour government will support and champion them. We will strengthen rights and protections to help self-employed workers thrive in good quality self-employment, including the right to a written contract, action to tackle late payments, and by extending health and safety and blacklisting protections to self-employed workers. Our plans to strengthen trade union rights will also benefit self-employed workers.

Labour will end 'one sided' flexibility and ensure all jobs provide a baseline level of security and predictability, banning exploitative zero hours contracts and ensuring everyone has the right to a contract that reflects the number of hours they regularly work, based on a twelve-week reference period. We have an ongoing commitment to protecting the integrity of these policies, and will put in place anti-avoidance measures where necessary. We will ensure all workers get reasonable notice of any change in shifts or working time, with compensation that is proportionate to the notice given for any shifts cancelled or curtailed. Workers will continue to have the right to be paid overtime rates as now. We will strengthen the law to ensure hospitality workers receive their tips in full and workers decide how tips are allocated.

50 years after the implementation of the Equal Pay Act, in Government Labour will finish the business of ending pay discrimination at work, and deliver Barbara Castle's vision. Labour is committed to tackling the gender pay gap which is narrowing too slowly.

Labour will put in place measures to ensure that outsourcing of services can no longer be used by employers to avoid paying equal pay, including for work of equal value, to women, ending this longstanding injustice.

Equality Impact Assessments for public sector bodies will be strengthened. Labour recognises that the current equal pay framework is inaccessible, for example due to very long employment tribunal backlogs, and the lack of access to pay justice for women. Labour will implement a regulatory and enforcement unit for equal pay with involvement from trade unions.

Labour will reverse the Conservatives' attack on equal pay by restoring the ability to draw on equal pay comparators where workers' terms and conditions can be attributed to a single source, enshrining in UK law those provisions that were previously derived from EU law.

Large firms will be required to develop, publish and implement action plans to close their gender pay gaps, and we will ensure outsourced workers are included in their gender pay gap and pay ratio reporting. The publication of ethnicity and disability pay gaps will be made mandatory for employers with more than 250 staff, to mirror gender pay gap reporting, following years of inaction from the government.

Labour will also require employers to create and maintain workplaces and working conditions free from harassment, including by third parties.

More widely, Labour will embrace technological advancements in a way that ensures both workers and our economy benefit. We will make flexible working the default from day one for all workers, except where it is not reasonably feasible.

New technologies, including automation and AI, have the potential to boost wages, drive up productivity and empower workers, but they also pose risks to jobs and livelihoods. Our approach will be to protect good jobs and ensure good future jobs and that rights and protections keep pace with technological change. We will safeguard against discrimination, and we will put worker voice at the heart of Britain's digital transition. Furthermore, recognising the advancement of technologies at work, the next Labour government will work with workers and their trade unions, employers and experts to examine what AI and new technologies mean for work, jobs and skills, and how to promote best practice in safeguarding against the invasion of privacy through surveillance technology, spyware and discriminatory algorithmic decision making. At a minimum Labour will ensure that proposals to introduce surveillance technologies would be subject to consultation and agreement of trade unions or elected staff representatives where there is no trade union.

Labour recognises that in a number of sectors working temperatures are regularly unacceptably high, including for those working in strenuous and sedentary jobs, causing serious health and safety concerns. Labour will commit to modernising health and safety guidance with reference to extreme temperatures, preventative action and steps to ensure safety at work.

Labour will end the scourges of 'fire and rehire' and 'fire and replace', replace the inadequate statutory code and reform the law to provide effective remedies against abuse. We will also establish a Single Enforcement Body, with trade union and TUC representation, to ensure greater coordination in the face of complex

enforcement challenges. This body will have the powers it needs to undertake targeted and proactive enforcement work and bring civil proceedings upholding employment rights. This will be done in conjunction with our plan for better laws to enforce workplace rights, as set out in the New Deal for Working People.

Labour will also strengthen redundancy rights and protections, to protect workers' individual and collective rights, for example by ensuring consultation rights are upheld for workers working in large organisations with smaller establishments of 20 or fewer staff.

We will improve and strengthen enforcement through Employment Tribunals to provide quicker and more effective resolutions. In line with the Law Commission recommendation in April 2020, we would increase the time limit within which employees are able to make an employment claim from three months to six months, bringing the time limit for all claims in line with the time limit for statutory redundancy and equal pay claims. This will particularly support those who are seeking to make claims for pregnancy discrimination, as evidence suggests women struggle to make funds available to lodge claims within the time limit. It will also allow more time for internal procedures to be completed, potentially decreasing the number of claims.

The creation of the National Minimum Wage was one of the greatest achievements of the last Labour government and lifted many working people out of poverty. The next Labour government would go further and make sure the minimum wage is a real living wage that people can live on. To achieve this, we would change the Low Pay Commission's remit so that alongside median wages and economic conditions, the minimum wage





will for the first time reflect the need for pay to take into account the cost of living. We will remove the discriminatory age bands to ensure every adult worker benefits, and we will work with the Single Enforcement Body and HMRC and ensure they have the powers necessary to make sure our genuine living wage is properly enforced, including penalties for non-compliance. Labour will work with the Single Enforcement Body and HMRC to ensure the National Minimum Wage regulations on travel time in sectors with multiple working sites is enforced and that workers' contracts reflect the law. More widely, we will work with the Low Pay Commission, trade unions, employers, the Council for Economic Growth and more to address the ongoing issue of low pay.

## Taking back control: devolving economic power

The UK is simultaneously one of the most politically and economically centralised countries in Europe. That leaves us stuck with significant inequality and an economy that is less competitive.

By the end of our first term, a Labour government will have overseen a significant expansion of economic devolution in England, with local leaders using a range of powers to drive growth and prosperity in communities across the country.

Labour's vision of prosperity based on partnership will mean a government that is determined to enable, not frustrate, the potential of our regions and nations. This ability to act also creates the space for a long-term focus on priorities that cannot realistically get the attention needed in Whitehall. This is a natural fit for major businesses used to working

with powerful regional governments in other nations, linking their investment to regional clusters of strength.

### *Take Back Control Act*

A future Labour government will empower communities by introducing a Take Back Control Act in its first King's Speech.

Following the final report of the Commission on the UK's Future, chaired by former Prime Minister Gordon Brown, the Act will provide the framework and process for economic devolution and contribute to Labour's mission to deliver the highest sustained growth in the G7.

It will give English towns and cities the tools they need to develop credible, long-term growth plans, with bespoke packages of powers to support new internationally competitive economic clusters in high-value industries, creating high-skilled jobs in their areas. Public procurement should support this, and Labour will work to ensure it boosts creation of apprenticeships and learning opportunities.

It will establish clear frameworks for local leaders to request and take on powers over economic policymaking, establishing a presumption towards moving power out of Westminster and ensuring local areas can bid for any powers that have already been devolved elsewhere.

The Act will also force central government to respond to requests, with an inbuilt assumption that local areas know what powers they need from those that are available. If ministers are unable to agree the devolution of some powers, they will have to set out the conditions that would need to be met to do so.

## *Better economic governance*

Labour's national missions will rely on local capacity to deliver and a stronger partnership between local and central government and a strong local voice within Whitehall. Labour will work with leaders and trade unions to build up local analytic and operational capacity in areas covered by the Take Back Control Act, exploring the potential to move existing civil service capacity outside of Whitehall to where powers and funding have been transferred.

A rebalanced relationship between Westminster, Whitehall and the rest of the country will rely on meaningful reforms to central government and a stronger constitutional role for local government. The Act will also establish new structures for decision-making, accountability, evaluation and implementation, with a phased handover of powers after initial periods of intensive oversight, support and mutual learning.

Despite all the challenges they are facing, many councils and local government workers are performing miracles.

Councils are the backbone of local communities, providing vital public services, significant local employment, and helping to build economic prosperity and resilience through local democracy. The Tories have deliberately run down local government for the past 13 years, and our country is poorer and less resilient because of it. A Labour government will do things differently. We will treat local government and their workers as an essential partner in delivering our missions in government. As Labour grows our economy and improves our public finances, we will ensure that councils are enabled to achieve the best for their communities and provide good jobs in order to deliver the key services we all depend on in every part of the country.

Labour will bring an end to competitive pots of funding, in which local areas are forced into a Hunger Games style contest, fighting for small sums of their own money back after 13 years of resources being stripped out of communities. Instead, Labour's Take Back Control Act will ensure long-term stability in funding settlements for local government. Our enhanced devolution settlements available to all parts of the country will guarantee that local government leaders will be able to plan ahead on key services delivered by good, well-paid local government jobs.

The current government's incremental 'deal-making' approach will be replaced by a more strategic, sectoral approach. Local leaders that can demonstrate consistent and exemplary capacities and accountability frameworks for managing public money will be able to negotiate for longer-term, integrated departmental-style funding settlements from central government.

Scotland already has devolved control over many of the economic levers that would be covered by the Take Back Control Act, with extensive power over income tax, business rates, borrowing, local taxation, and elements of social security.

Labour will consider steps that strengthen Scotland's economic levers in line with the recommendations set out in the Commission on the UK's Future, encouraging cooperation at all stages between UK Government and the Scottish Government to grow the Scottish economy, ensuring there are no unintended consequences or negative impacts for the other nations in the UK.

Labour recognises the ongoing review of the Scottish Fiscal Framework and will take account of its final recommendations.



## A modern skills system

As part of our mission to deliver the highest sustained growth in the G7, the UK needs highly skilled workers. Businesses want skills which match their needs. People want skills training when they need it, and which sets them up for progression. But our broken skills system has left the country ill-prepared for the challenges we face over the next decade, including the just transition to net zero, and rapid technological change.

That is why Labour will prepare people for the future and ensure the businesses that drive this country's growth have the skilled, diverse, confident employees they need and that self-employed workers are able to gain new skills and adapt their business offer to new markets – through a modern skills system. The current apprenticeship levy is not fit for purpose. There is increasing evidence that some employment agencies, umbrella companies and other 'payroll' providers are deducting the apprenticeship levy directly from workers. This is not acceptable. Labour will remodel the system, ensuring that we increase the quality as well as quantity of training opportunities. We will focus on successful and timely completion rates, putting apprentices in good stead for the rest of their working lives, including when it comes to progression and employability.

Following the final report of the Council of Skills Advisers, chaired by former Education Secretary Lord David Blunkett, Labour will deliver a landmark shift in skills provision. Labour's skills system will give people the tools they need in the workplaces of the future, ensuring new technologies like automation and AI are an opportunity and not a threat for workers: helping to maintain good working conditions and high living standards through a

clear strategy of supporting lifelong learning, from improved careers guidance at school right throughout our lives and reforming the National Careers Service.

## Qualifications

Labour believes every young person should have access to high quality vocational and technical training pathways. That is why Labour supports the introduction of T-levels, enabling young people to develop skills that will help them to thrive, meet employers' needs and support a growing economy. However, the Conservatives' mismanagement of the introduction of T-levels, and transition from applied general qualifications, is putting both sets of qualifications at risk. The next Labour government will ensure all students are able to complete their qualifications and will review the diversity of options at Level 3 before making changes.

### *Greater flexibility for businesses, workers and local leaders*

A Labour government will devolve adult education and skills budgets to Metro Mayors and combined authorities, with all local areas in England able to negotiate for any powers that have already been devolved elsewhere as part of our Take Back Control Act. Decisions about training and skills opportunities should be made by people who understand the local area. The legitimate role of businesses, unions and other stakeholders should be recognised in all local areas and in particular through their engagement in the development of Local Skills Improvement Plans. Labour will work through Skills England to avoid unintended consequences of devolving funding creating additional barriers for some adult learners.

Labour will also give businesses the flexibility they need to train their workforce and deliver growth, by reforming the Conservatives' failed Apprenticeships Levy into a 'Growth and Skills Levy' that works across all nations and regions. This will allow businesses to spend up to half their levy contributions on a greater range of approved and quality assured training courses, including modular learning and skills bootcamps, addressing staff and skills shortages that are holding too many British firms back. Skills England will be responsible for the list of approved non-apprenticeship courses businesses can spend Growth and Skills Levy money on, to ensure they meet the wider ambitions set out in the Industrial Strategy, the report of the Council of Skills Advisors and the Green Prosperity Plan. This will include a focus on high-quality pre-apprenticeship programmes and other courses aimed at supporting people to access apprenticeship programmes, especially people who are already disadvantaged in the labour market. This flexibility will additionally enable employers to train staff across roles, and provide more training opportunities to give people of all ages the skills they need to secure good jobs. We recognise the cost of living crisis is creating challenges for people wanting to take on apprenticeships and learning opportunities; Labour will work with individuals, employers and unions to tackle these challenges.

The skills system is also an important tool of our industrial strategy, ensuring our plans for growth create good, well-paid jobs and tackle skills shortages in key sectors. We will explore lessons learned from Welsh Labour's responsive skills and employability initiatives that include more support for young people, extra help for those facing redundancy and free, flexible courses linking those on low pay to new opportunities in areas hit by labour market shortages.

Labour will work with small businesses to ensure the skills system is supportive and responsive to their needs.

### *Skills England*

Labour will establish a new expert body – Skills England – to oversee the English national skills effort of the coming decade, ensuring we have the skills we need for the challenges of the future, monitoring skills trends and approving the new training schemes the levy can be spent on.

Skills England will pull together the expertise of trade associations, employers from large and small companies, representatives of trade unions, central and local government, and further and higher education to develop and deliver on this national challenge, putting partnership and collaboration at the forefront of the plan for change.

Labour recognises the vital role of trade unions nationally in encouraging workers to take up training opportunities. Skills England will also work with trade unions and the TUC to help ensure that Union Learning Reps are supported and enabled to identify and deliver workforce training needs, in partnership with employers and government.

## **Getting Britain back to work**

A strong economy can only be achieved with high employment.

The failure of successive Conservative governments to get a grip on economic inactivity is holding the country back. Under the Conservatives too many people are trapped out of work with no meaningful way to get them help and support.



Labour has a plan to get Britain back to work, providing a path to good, secure and well-paid work that matches the skills and experience of workers, opening opportunity and spreading prosperity fairly.

We will reform job centres to ensure effective help to find work, make work pay via reform to social security and deliver specialist help for people with health conditions, disabled people and the over 50s. Labour will also treat people who are unable to work with respect and dignity.

### *Reforming employment support*

A Labour government will reform employment support, including by devolving powers down to Local Government across the UK. We will boost locally delivered partnerships, giving them the freedom to decide how best to design schemes so that they are targeted to the needs of the local area. Labour will allow self-referrals to employment services and enable GPs, housing associations and community groups in England to direct people more easily to employment support. Giving local government greater powers over employment support will ensure that schemes are tailored to local needs and challenges, allowing local leaders to deliver the most effective support that their communities need.

Labour will reform Jobcentre Plus to ensure it becomes more responsive to local economic needs and more actively engaged with the needs of people looking for work where rights to financial support are balanced by responsibilities to look for work and tailored help, through a clear strategy of supporting lifelong learning, from improved careers guidance at school and right throughout our lives and reforming the National Careers Service.

### *Targeted support for those who need it*

The number of people out of work for reasons of long-term sickness is now at a record high, but with the right support many will be able to find fulfilling work that suits their needs and skillset.

We commit to providing tailored support in every local area for those who need it, such as people with mental ill health or addiction. We will build on targeted programmes, including those that join up with the NHS, to provide better specialist support and break the link between inactivity and ill health.

The Tories have allowed waiting lists for Access to Work to rise to unacceptable levels. To address the disincentives to moving into work that are contained in the current system, Labour will fix the Access to Work scheme, with improved targets for assessment waiting times at reasonable time scales and by giving people who are looking for work 'in principle' indicative awards.

A Labour government would work in cross-departmental collaboration to provide targeted help for the over 50s and offer all those who have previously worked but recently left the labour market back-to-work support and guidance.

We will ensure people nearing retirement are better able to make informed decisions for themselves about work, savings and retirement through access to quality mid-life MOTs.

Labour will introduce further reform of employment support, devolving it to local areas, with a commitment to provide tailored support in every local area for harder to help groups.

We will provide a reliable safety net for people who lose their jobs or who cannot work due to ill health or disability and help people on their journey back into work by allowing people to try paid work without reassessments if it does not work out. We will replace the current system of work capability assessments with a system that supports people to live with security. Labour will work with employers, trade unions and other stakeholders to support the wellbeing of workers and their long term physical and mental health.

Labour will break down barriers for disabled people at work including by introducing disability pay gap reporting for large employers. Labour recognises the importance of reasonable adjustments. We will take action to make it simpler to secure reasonable adjustments in a timely manner including when changing jobs or when circumstances change.

## **The people and talent our economy needs**

Alongside our focus on raising the skills, productivity and working conditions of people here in the UK, a Labour government would reform our immigration system to ensure we get the skills and people our economy need. The immigration system and any decisions to change it need to be determined by what is in the interest of the UK, its businesses and workers.

Our economy and our communities have long benefited from people coming here from all over the world to work, from building our biggest businesses, to sustaining our public services to leading our scientific research and innovation to caring for our loved ones.

## *A points-based immigration system that works for our economy*

Labour's immigration system will be fair, firm and properly managed. There will be no return to freedom of movement.

A Labour government will sort out the points-based immigration system so that it ensures the economy has the skills it needs and that prolonged vacancies do not hold back growth in key sectors.

But immigration cannot be the only means of addressing labour shortages. For too long there has been no coordination between the immigration system and other labour market policies – including on training, employment standards and tackling economic inactivity. As a result, under the Conservatives there is no long-term or systematic approach to ensuring that our economy has the skills and the workforce it needs.

Labour will deliver a new, more integrated approach. We will reform and strengthen the Migration Advisory Committee with appropriate input from across the UK so that it can review shortages more often, take account of shortages specific to the nations and regions, and inform training decisions. It will also be empowered to work with Skills England and skills bodies in other devolved nations to project the workforce needs of the future. Labour will also scrap rules that allow overseas workers coming to the UK to be paid 20 percent less than the going rate for that job. Any movement in our points-based migration system will come alongside new conditions to boost skills and more training, provide better pay and conditions and invest in new technology to reduce the physical demands of work. When a sector is already heavily



reliant on immigration, a Labour government will require that sector to develop these plans through dialogue and negotiation involving employers and trade unions. We will ensure that all employers able to are meeting decent standards of pay and conditions.

Labour will ensure there is strong action to prevent exploitation in the immigration system including tackling abuse and exploitation of domestic workers after the Overseas Domestic Workers Visa was undermined by the Conservatives in 2012.

Labour will establish a single enforcement body to enforce workers' rights, including strong powers to inspect workplaces and take action against exploitation and discriminatory practices. This will include discriminatory practices against migrant workers, who are vulnerable to some unscrupulous employers.

### *Windrush*

The Windrush scandal revealed the huge injustices that exist within our current citizenship and nationality system. The Windrush generation have been failed twice – first by Conservative Home Office policies which denied British citizens their rights, and second by shameful delays in delivering compensation to victims of the scandal.

If it continues to fail, the next Labour government will be willing to overhaul the Windrush Compensation Scheme and put it outside of Home Office control to make sure it is delivering justice for victims. Labour will restart and improve community engagement and outreach work to encourage applications to the scheme and speed up compensation payments, to ensure that every victim gets every penny of compensation they deserve. Labour will implement the recommendations

of the Williams 'Lessons Learned' review of the Windrush Scandal, including conducting a full review of the "hostile environment" that led to the Windrush scandal to make sure it cannot be repeated.





# SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITIES





## Introduction

Labour believes that feeling safe and secure is the bedrock on which opportunities are built, communities can thrive, and local economies can prosper.

That sense of security has slowly eroded over the past 13 years. Too often people fear that when things go wrong, no one will come, and nothing will be done. And even if criminals are caught, victims fear that justice will be delayed or not delivered at all. At the same time, the connections within and between communities have been eroded, exacerbated by crumbling transport infrastructure. Our social fabric has been stretched to breaking point thanks to divisive and corrupt Conservative governments that have left people feeling like politics is broken and they have no voice.

Communities should be able to live free from fear and insecurity, and people should feel safe whether it is around the local high street, walking home at night, using the internet or at home. But this can only happen if the public feel confident that the police and criminal justice system will be there for them – to protect them, to support them and deliver justice for them.

The next Labour government will make our streets safe by preventing crime, punishing criminals and protecting the public. Within the decade we will halve the level of violence against women and girls, halve incidents of knife crime, raise confidence in every police force to its highest levels and reverse the collapse in the proportion of crimes solved.

To do that we will rebuild neighbourhood policing. The Conservatives have hollowed out our police service, closed police stations and undermined the vital criminal justice

institutions that tackle crime and stop criminals. We will recruit more police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) and embed them in communities. Labour recognises the importance to our police forces of police staff posts, including scene of crime investigators, 999 call handlers, forensic, administrative and technological staff and investigators. We will support 999 call handlers during peak times by providing trained domestic abuse specialists to work alongside them.

Labour will raise standards in policing by overhauling training, misconduct and vetting procedures and introduce mandatory national standards. We will work tirelessly to restore public faith in our criminal justice system, including breaking the cycle of reoffending. And we will take a whole-society approach, working with local leaders, to tackle violence against women and girls, looking beyond just reform of policing and criminal justice, to our education system, our online regulation, our media and our community services.

To reconnect our communities, a Labour government will also call time on 13 years of decline in transport and upgrade our infrastructure so it is fit for the 21st century. We will deliver transformational projects to unlock growth and investment across the country.

Rebuilding our country also involves restoring faith in our politics. Labour will bring new life into our democracy, empowering our communities to transform our society for the better.

The next Labour government will transfer power out of Westminster to local communities and build a better, deeper devolution settlement. And we will clean up politics and restore standards in public life. Our country deserves

a government which matches the ambition of the British people.

## Safer homes, safer streets and safer communities

Over the last 13 years, neighbourhood policing has been hollowed out and our criminal justice system has been broken. As a result, confidence and trust in our police and our courts have plummeted and it is the sad reality that in 21st century Britain many people have given up reporting crime, as they believe nothing will come of it.

Our enforcement agencies find it difficult to respond quickly to crimes, investigate them thoroughly and hold those responsible to account. Under the Conservatives, far fewer criminals are arrested, cautioned or prosecuted. The percentage of crimes recorded that lead to someone being charged has dropped by two thirds since 2015, meaning that in 2022 over two million crimes went completely unsolved.

Labour will work with Police and Crime Commissioners and the National Business Crime Centre to deliver consistent reporting of business and workplace crime, including greater standardisation, to make sure people feel safe at work.

In government, Labour will make it a national mission to make Britain's streets safe. We will halve serious violent crime, drive down anti-social behaviour, and raise confidence in the police and criminal justice system to its highest level. We will do this by putting more police in local areas, preventing young people getting drawn into crime and criminal gangs, and empowering victims. Our communities deserve a stronger and brighter future, and a Labour

government means safer homes, safer streets and safer communities.

### *Neighbourhood policing*

At the heart of Labour's plan will be rebuilding and renewing the neighbourhood police who are at the centre of our communities and the fight against crime. Labour will put 13,000 more neighbourhood police officers and PCSOs back on Britain's streets— paid for with the clear and tangible savings that can be delivered from a shared procurement and efficiencies plan for all police forces. We will work with the rail industry to support their efforts to improve safety on the railways via the British Transport Police. We also recognise the need to develop IT systems that better share data within and across different police forces, and with partner forces including the British Transport Police.

### *Fire and rescue service*

Conservative cuts have hollowed out our fire and rescue service, cutting jobs and closing stations, leading to slower response times and putting lives at risk. The next Labour government will equip the fire and rescue services to keep people safe.

Labour will work with fire and rescue services, trade unions and other stakeholders on a national structure to inform policy and establish national standards.

Police and fire services are very different and distinct services which each have vital, separate responsibilities to the public. Labour will ensure that governance arrangements respect those different and distinct roles and responsibilities.

Firefighters are four times more likely to get cancer than the average working person. This has been linked to toxic contaminants released during fires. Labour will therefore work with



the fire and rescue service and trade unions to record the incidence of cancer amongst firefighters and support health monitoring. A Labour government will ensure that it looks after those who run towards danger, when the rest of us run away from it.

### *Tackling anti-social behaviour and serious violent crime, and their causes*

Labour will be tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime. This means taking a prevention-first approach, including access to mental health support workers in schools and providing mentors for children who are excluded or sent to Pupil Referral Units to help them get back on track. Labour will also put youth workers into A&Es and custody suites to reach young people already involved in gangs.

Levels of anti-social behaviour remain persistently high and affect deprived areas the most. To tackle this, Labour will introduce Respect Orders: a new criminal offence to target persistent adult repeat offenders who are ruining lives with their anti-social behaviour. Labour will also take tough action against drug dealing with powers for police to shut down premises used by drug dealers, and data-driven hotspot policing targeted at common drug dealing sites, complemented by local neighbourhood police patrols of town centres.

We will continue our strong track record of keeping people safe in their work, building on the labour movement's ongoing campaign to protect shop workers from violence at work. This will include continuing our support for, and ensuring that all retail workers are protected by, the measures outlined in the draft Assaults on Retail Workers (Offences) Bill and the Protection of Workers (Retail and Age-restricted Goods and Services) (Scotland) Act 2021.

We also support the Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act which provides protection for our emergency service staff and will ensure it is properly enforced.

Labour has a clear plan to tackle forms of serious violence that are on the rise, such as knife crime. A Labour government will tackle websites selling knives through tougher online regulation. Labour will also introduce a new child exploitation register, for those convicted of modern slavery offences linked to county lines drug dealing. We will place youth workers in accident and emergency departments and custody suites to reach young people who are becoming involved in gangs.

This is an important part of ensuring we tackle the root causes of the problems that our communities face by introducing stronger preventative action involving local government, schools and community organisations, charities and frontline providers.

Labour understands that effective rehabilitation can break the vicious cycle of crime and addiction. We will learn from best practice across the UK so that individuals have every opportunity to turn their lives around.

### *Rebuilding confidence and trust in the police*

Policing by consent depends on trust, and when that breaks down, policing becomes harder and crime thrives. That trust has broken down. The first and most important means of restoring confidence and trust in the police is to ensure that they are there to tackle crime.

Restoring trust is also about ensuring the highest standards are upheld. Baroness Casey's independent review into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service, which found

evidence of institutional racism, misogyny and homophobia, revealed the extent of this challenge, and a Labour government will accept its findings in full.

Labour will raise standards in every police force in England and Wales. We will introduce mandatory national vetting, training and misconduct standards. We will automatically ban any potential applicants to the police service who have a history of domestic abuse, indecent exposure or sexual assault, and mandate specialist training for every officer on countering racial bias and tackling violence against women and girls.

Labour will ensure police officers who abuse their position to engage in sexual relationships with the victims of sexual or violent crimes are properly held to account.

Following the Wendy Williams review into the disproportionate use of police powers, Labour will establish a requirement for stop and search data to be recorded. Labour will work with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) to ensure confidence data is gathered and regularly published, including breakdowns by gender and ethnicity. Labour supports measures to put buffer zones around abortion clinics, because we believe in the fundamental right to access healthcare free from harassment. With Labour, it will also be a mandatory requirement for all police forces to implement the National Police Chiefs' Council Race Action Plan, which involves improving the recruitment, retention and progression of Black people within policing and identifying and tackling racial disparities in the use of powers.

Labour will look closely at the conclusions and recommendations of Sir John Mitting's undercover policing inquiry and consider the best ways to ensure vulnerable people,

and workers, involved in undercover police operations are protected, as it is important that no stone is left unturned. Undercover policing should always include strong oversight and safeguards on its use.

Labour has been clear that police had sufficient powers to police protests and did not need or ask for the new measures in the Public Order Act.

We opposed the bill because it targeted peaceful protest, not the irresponsible groups threatening our national infrastructure or putting public safety at risk, who are breaking the law.

Labour will always protect the right to peaceful protest and the right to picket in industrial disputes, which have won so many of our historic freedoms. In the labour movement we stand on the shoulders of people who have won our rights through peaceful protest.

Labour fought against measures in the Public Order Act like suspicionless stop and search and the offence of being equipped to lock on and argued they should be removed by the government. In government, Labour would seek to change these provisions. We will monitor and examine further the impact of the legislation and gather evidence to support change.

The next Labour government would give the police better training, guidance, and resources to deal with dangerous and disruptive protests.

### *Violence against women and girls*

In Britain, violence against women and girls is endemic. In 2019-20 alone – the latest year for which we have figures – 1.6 million women aged between 16 and 74 in England and Wales experienced domestic abuse and over 600,000 were sexually assaulted. These figures



have remained unchanged for years, with successive Conservative governments having taken little action taken to break down the patterns that lead to this violence.

Labour will use every lever available to tackle the epidemic of violence against women and girls, from education to policing, from community services to online regulation and more. Tackling violence against women and girls will be a government-wide strategic commitment, including working with domestic violence, workforce and prevention services to ensure victims are supported.

The next Labour government will put domestic abuse specialists in the control rooms of every police force, responding to 999 calls and supporting victims of abuse. We will ensure there is a specialist rape unit in every police force, to make sure every victim has access to appropriate support and to investigators who are rigorously trained to solve these complex crimes.

Labour will also seek to tackle misogyny as one of the root causes of violence against women and girls by preventing algorithms from promoting harmful content online and making tackling misogyny a key part of school accountability. Furthermore, Labour will make misogyny a hate crime to make sure all police forces record the violence and harassment suffered by women.

### *Fraud*

The next Labour government will also get tough on fraud by making it easier to convict corporate fraudsters and overhauling Companies House.

Labour fully recognises the impact that online scams and fraud is having on people in their day-to-day lives and remains deeply

concerned at the scale of the fraud crisis facing the UK and the rate at which it has increased in recent years. A Labour government will treat fraud in our country with the seriousness it deserves.

That will mean delivering root and branch reform of the current approach to tackling fraud, from turning the tide on corporate fraud to taking stronger action to protect individuals against scammers. In this and other areas, a Labour government will ensure the UK is ahead of the curve when it comes to tackling new criminal threats, and seek to make emerging technologies part of the solution in the fight against crime, not an increasing part of the problem.

### *Counter-extremism*

Labour supports the need for the Prevent programme, which is an important tool for early intervention to prevent radicalisation and extremism, and ultimately to prevent terror threats from all manner of extremist ideologies. But we want to see trust in the programme much higher and its work improved, updated and scrutinised.

A Labour government will update the Counter-Extremism Strategy which has not been updated since 2015 and is therefore unable to deal with the emerging and growing threat of online radicalisation.

## **Ensuring justice is delivered**

Every victim of crime deserves justice, yet under this Conservative government, justice is denied. Our criminal justice system has been left broken by 13 years of Conservative government and is failing to support the victims it was designed to protect. Last year saw the largest crown court backlog on record, with rape victims having to

wait on average over three years for their case to reach completion in court.

A Labour government will ensure that justice is delivered once again.

### *Accelerating access to justice*

It took the Conservatives eight years to bring forward a Victims' Bill and when they did what they proposed was far too weak.

Labour is committed to improving enforcement, ensuring victims' rights are fully enshrined and that there are appropriate duties in place for agencies to work together and signpost victims to the service they need. Victims should not be treated as an afterthought. The next Labour government will work with frontline organisations to ensure that victims are given the best possible protection. We will ensure that families and those left with caring responsibilities following violent or sexual crimes are informed of their rights within our legal system and receive the support, respect and treatment they are entitled to.

Labour will speed up the justice system, tackling the courts backlog. We will significantly increase the number of staff employed by the government to serve as Crown Prosecutors by lifting restrictions to allow more legal specialists to serve as Crown Prosecutors.

The Conservatives have decimated access to justice leaving thousands without legal advice and support. Labour is committed to transforming our justice system and improving access to justice.

A Labour government will also introduce specialist rape courts to fast-track cases and ensure rape victims get the justice they deserve. Using existing, unused space at every crown court in England and Wales, cases would be fast-tracked by changes to priority listings.

### *Sentencing that reflects the nature of the crime*

It is not just the speed of justice that matters to the victims of crime, but the appropriateness of the punishment. Sentencing should properly reflect the nature of the crime, and the harm that it has inflicted.

A Labour government will bring in tougher sentences by introducing a minimum seven-year custodial sentence for rape and whole-life orders for any adult offender found guilty of rape, abduction and murder of a stranger.

In addition, we will commission a review into the effectiveness of current legislation and sentencing policy, focused particularly on increasing sentences for domestic homicide and abuse, but also examining other areas where there is concern about the current framework, including sexual violence and other violent crime, assaults on frontline and emergency workers and offences against children.

Labour recognises the importance of good quality youth and community services and facilities for young people. Such facilities encourage young people to develop their potential and explore their interests, discourage anti-social behaviour, support positive mental health and encourage young people to develop relationships based on equality and respect. Labour will champion Youth and Community Services to open opportunity for young people and transform mental health services including for children.

Labour will also ensure that anti-social behaviour is prevented and punished by setting up Community and Victim Payback Boards to strengthen community sentences, with victims able to choose the unpaid work to be done by the perpetrator and to ensure that the work is carried out.





We will introduce tougher penalties for fly-tippers, establishing clean-up squads so that offenders have to clear up litter and fly-tipped rubbish, and clean up vandalism. They will be given Fixed Penalty Cleaning Notices that will be managed by the Local Authority.

Labour will review the Dangerous Dogs Act.

We will give domestic abusers no place to hide by introducing a new Domestic Abuse Register to track offenders and help protect victims. Labour recognises that there are complex drivers behind children who repeatedly engage in anti-social behaviour including trauma, poverty and school exclusion.

For parents whose children repeatedly engage in anti-social behaviour, Labour will extend the use of Parenting Orders, requiring parents to attend parental classes. Early intervention, stable housing, and a good education all play an important role in breaking this cycle and we will encourage local councils to work in partnership with public agencies and third sector bodies to address this. Delivered through the courts, and overseen by Community Payback Boards and Local Authorities, it will mean that parents are required to take responsibility for their child's anti-social behaviour while also being given the support they need to help curb it.

### *Breaking the cycle of offending and reoffending*

Under the Conservatives, eight out of ten crimes are committed by someone who has received at least one previous conviction or caution before. Even where criminals are coming into contact with the criminal justice system, in too many cases this is not stopping them from offending again.

Labour will consider a trauma-informed approach within the criminal justice system to

strengthen diversionary practices and end the cycle of reoffending. Under this approach, we will support families, local authorities and schools, intervening to tackle trauma at source where children are most at risk of offending. By working with the courts, youth offending institutions, prisons and probation to cut reoffending, Labour will tackle the deep-rooted trauma that often lies behind it.

### *Prisons and probation*

Labour will make prisons work and ensure ex-offenders are supported post-release to help reduce offending and keep the public safe. We will drive down reoffending by cutting drug use and violence on the prison estate and rehabilitating prisoners through reforming education and employment opportunities, reducing homelessness upon release from prison.

The Conservatives' botched privatisation and renationalisation of the probation service have put the public in grave danger as providers failed to adequately rehabilitate offenders, supervise offenders and subsequently drive down reoffending. Labour will ensure that decisions taken about the running of prisons and probation services will be driven by keeping the public safe, working in partnership with those organisations that will secure positive outcomes.

We will ensure that all those working in the justice system are safe at work including prison officers, who have been the subject of increasing numbers of assaults by inmates. Prison staff have been badly let down by the Conservatives. Prison officers are often exposed to great danger and suffer from a lack of leadership and declining experience within the system due to poor staff retention. Staff are also exposed through a lack of adequate training, professional standards and action

when assaults do occur. Labour will support staff to be safe in their workplaces with better individual rights.

Probation services play a crucial role in reducing reoffending and protecting communities from harm. The Conservatives' centralising approach to running services from Whitehall is failing badly. We will ensure that the Probation Service is run effectively in local areas so that probation staff can focus on rehabilitating people in their communities. We will positively explore options for more locally delivered and responsive services, and the devolution of powers over youth justice and the probation services to the Senedd and Welsh Government, building on the recommendations of the Gordon Brown review.

### *Tackling historic injustices*

Labour will not just seek to tackle the current injustices that we see, but historic ones too.

The next Labour government will put a Hillsborough Law onto the statute book to help prevent future injustices where there is state involvement. As part of the legislation, Labour will introduce a duty of candour to ensure that public authorities and officials proactively cooperate with official investigations as well as providing non-means tested legal aid for victims of disasters or state-related deaths. We will also establish an independent public advocate to act as a representative for bereaved families and to support those that have lost ones in a disaster. A Labour government will explore ways to collate, analyse and follow up on recommendations arising from post-death processes of investigations, inquests, public inquiries and official reviews to provide better learning, prevention, transparency and accountability following state-related deaths.

Labour supports a full investigation or inquiry into the events at Orgreave, whichever approach is the most effective in uncovering the truth, and the next Labour government will release documents held by government relating to the historic Cammell Laird prosecutions and carry out a review into the jailing of those striking workers.

A Labour government will ensure that unlawful blacklisting of trade unionists is a practice never seen again in Britain with the law properly enforced, and that anti-blacklisting laws and protections keep pace with the changing nature of work and technological advancements.

And in government Labour will do right by the survivors of the Grenfell fire and give them the support they need, bring those culpable to justice, and end the deregulation of building and fire safety to prevent a fire like Grenfell ever happening again. Labour supports the ongoing efforts of the victims, the bereaved and the wider Grenfell community and of firefighters to secure justice and a lasting legacy for the 72 victims of the fire.

We will act decisively to improve standards in social housing and make sure that all dangerous buildings are identified, registered and made safe. Leaseholders should be protected from the costs of remediating cladding and non-cladding defects in all buildings irrespective of circumstance; we will support social landlords with remediation; and we will take steps to accelerate the pace of remediation across the country.

In light of the deficiencies of the regulatory regime exposed by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, we will deliver and maintain tough building safety standards that address the failings



identified. We will ensure the new regulator can perform all required tasks assigned to it and that it delivers effectively on enforcement with local authorities and fire and rescue authorities.

### *Equality and human rights at the heart of our justice system*

Our criminal justice system remains deeply un-diverse, with the UK significantly worse in terms of diversity than other European and common law jurisdictions, with lower proportions of women and ethnic minorities in our judiciary. Labour will work with the relevant trade unions and employers to address the barriers the workforce face.

Following the Lammy Review into the treatment of, and outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in the criminal justice system, Labour will ensure that our judiciary and prison service reflects the diversity of our nation and that fair outcomes are delivered for everyone in our criminal justice system.

We will also strengthen and equalise the law on hate crime and extend the aggravated offences regime to all five protected characteristics recognised in law. This will ensure that all hate crime victims are treated equally and that the perpetrators of anti-LGBT+ and disability hate can no longer be let off lightly. Labour will ensure LGBT+ hate crime is taken seriously by the police and public bodies, so we do not see biases leading to more victims. Antisemitism, Islamophobia and hatred against other religious groups continues to rise under the Conservatives. Labour is committed to continue to work with the police and community organisations to root out hatred and discrimination of any kind as part of its zero tolerance approach.

Labour will also protect and promote the Human Rights Act. The Human Rights Act was introduced by the last Labour government to help people better defend the rights they are guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights, which was introduced in the wake of the atrocities that took place during and running up to the Second World War.

## **A 21st century transport system connecting our communities**

The Conservatives' broken rail system is failing passengers. Record cancellations, delays and chronic overcrowding are holding the country back. And the Conservatives' failure to invest has choked off growth, and left the North and Midlands with second-rate infrastructure, and crumbling services. Communities are being let down.

The next Labour government will build transport infrastructure and a safe, efficient, integrated, accessible and affordable transport system fit for the century ahead. We will call time on 13 years of decline and upgrade our infrastructure, drawing on the strengths of UK manufacturers, so it is fit for the 21st century, reconnecting communities while unlocking growth and investment across the country.

The next Labour government will ensure public transport workers are better protected from assault and harassment. Labour will ensure that the safety of passengers and staff, including on journeys to and from work, is at the heart of decisions when planning timetables, routes, facilities, services – deploying new technology and the built environment around transport stations and stops.

Labour will ensure there are national minimum licensing standards across local authorities, for taxi and private hire vehicles, including for the safety of passengers, to address the abuse of cross-border hiring.

### *Modern rail infrastructure*

Labour will put the interests of rail passengers first, providing better value for the travelling public and taxpayer alike. The next Labour government will bring our railways into public ownership as contracts with existing operators expire or are broken through a failure to deliver, consistent with our fiscal rules, putting passengers at the heart of our railways and investing in a world-class accessible and integrated network to help cut travel costs and meet our net zero ambitions. Labour will ensure freight is part of the ongoing conversation about rail.

Labour will build on our successes in Labour-led local government in delivering a zero-emission bus and rail fleet, utilising local supply chains to ensure that travelling public and taxpayers alike get value for their money.

We will also keep the promises made to the North and Midlands and deliver Northern Powerhouse Rail and High Speed 2 in full, unlocking billions in economic growth, creating decent jobs, slashing journey times and increasing capacity.

Labour will deliver a long-term strategy for rail, in consultation with trade unions, creating a stable foundation for long-term delivery of rail infrastructure across the country. Through our Take Back Control Act Labour will also give communities a greater say in local rail services.

After considering industry standards and assessing international best practice, Labour

will look at reducing the train driving licenses and certification regulations age to 18 in order to increase the diversity of train drivers and encourage more school leavers to join the profession.

We will learn the lessons from the exploding costs of Conservative governments' failing projects and ensure we have the capacity and regulatory framework to build infrastructure faster, cheaper and greener.

### *Greater power over local buses*

Labour will reform our broken bus system and hand power and control over services to local communities. Britain is one of the only countries in the developed world where local communities are completely cut out of the process of setting routes and fares. With bus services in crisis, the Conservatives are standing in the way of much-needed reform. Complex rules and bureaucracy leave communities powerless to stop routes and services disappearing.

Labour will end this broken system and hand power and control to local leaders through our Take Back Control Act. We will give communities the ability to take on powers to franchise local bus services. Franchising offers local leaders control to improve the design and implementation of services, and ensure this does not come at the expense of working conditions. Labour will also lift the ban on and promote municipal bus ownership, building on the success of Labour-run councils like Nottingham and Reading.

This would represent the biggest reform to the bus sector in a generation and put communities, both rural and urban, firmly back in control of the public transport they depend on.



Labour leaders in power are already delivering this with a simple, transformative vision to make buses cheaper, greener, faster and more reliable. Labour Mayors are using their devolved powers and funding to put more money in people's pockets. They are making local public transport and buses better and more affordable.

### *Transport for a healthier environment*

Recognising the damage caused to human health by air pollution, Labour wants to see just transition plans that enable people to switch affordably to low-emission vehicles.

Labour will encourage more people to walk and cycle wherever possible by supporting local authorities to provide safe, accessible walking routes and cycling infrastructure, making active travel an attractive choice for all. Labour recognises the huge benefits of walking and cycling for reducing carbon emissions, air pollution and congestion in towns and cities, and improving physical health.

## **A new politics for a new Britain**

The UK is the most centralised country in Europe and has some of the worst regional inequalities. This is not a coincidence. It is clear too much power is hoarded in Westminster, and that this is holding our country back.

The Conservatives have continued with short-term, centralising, sticking plaster politics; and despite all their promises, have failed to deliver on 'levelling up'.

Labour will deliver a new politics. In welcoming the report of the Commission on the UK's Future, Labour will build upon its recommendations and deliver the biggest

ever transfer of power from Westminster to the people of the UK and across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our plans for wider and deeper devolution will ensure the right powers are in the right places to transform our economy, our politics and our democracy. Labour will ensure everyone in the UK has access to high quality public services wherever they live, ensuring consistent high standards across the country.

We will give our communities control over their own destiny – by unlocking the pride and purpose of our towns and cities, devolving decision-making away from Westminster to those with the experience, knowledge and expertise, and putting power directly in the hands of the people of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We recognise that local government is a convener of communities and any reference to communities within this document includes the leading role of local government. Labour will work towards long-term, integrated funding settlements for local leaders to provide greater financial certainty for local areas, where they have the capacity and accountability to manage it. Labour will strengthen the powers available to local communities to regenerate their high streets and town centres, through a strengthened Community Right to Buy, which will provide communities with first refusal on a wider range of assets of community value, and will review the definition of community assets in existing legislation. Labour's support for local communities and high street regeneration will also include new laws to stamp out late payments; strong new powers for councils to bring empty shops on their high streets back into use; and tough new measures to crack down on anti-social behaviour that blights local high streets.

With Labour, people will get the change they deserve.

### *A new approach to politics*

Under the Conservatives, trust in politics and our democratic institutions is at an all-time low. Labour will clean up our politics and restore trust in our democracy, undoing the damage the Tories have caused through sleaze and scandal. Labour's new approach will restore confidence in politics.

We will establish a new independent Integrity and Ethics Commission, with the power to investigate misconduct and breaches of the ministerial code, including access to any evidence it needs.

The next Labour government will also ban second jobs for MPs, with only very limited exemptions for public service roles or to maintain professional qualifications. We will ban former ministers from lobbying, consultancy or any paid work related to their former job for at least five years, closing the revolving door between ministerial office and lobbying for companies they used to regulate. Labour will make it mandatory for former ministers to apply to the Integrity and Ethics Commission before accepting any job.

The next Labour government will reform the political system and its institutions so that it works for everyone and re-engages people in the political process.

As part of our Take Back Control Act, Labour will strengthen local government by giving local communities a greater say in their local area.

Labour is committed to abolishing the House of Lords. In its place, we will establish a second chamber that is smaller, offers the taxpayer better value for money, and

is reflective of the regions and nations with elected representatives rather than political appointees. This chamber will remain a revising chamber with the House of Commons retaining its exclusive powers over the formation of government and the approval of government spending. The second chamber will have a role in protecting the constitution and devolution settlement.

No legitimate voter should be locked out of democracy. Labour will review the voting system for directly elected Mayors and Police and Crime Commissioners. Labour will review and respond to the evidence of the impact of Photo Voter ID in elections.

The flaws in the current voting system are contributing to the distrust and alienation we see in politics, but there is no consensus for a new system. Any proposed change to our voting system must be carefully thought-through – it cannot be dictated by political leaders or forced upon the country from the top down. However, there are some urgent steps that can be taken to restore faith in our democracy. Labour will introduce votes for 16- and 17-year-olds, in line with Scotland and Wales, so that young people feel empowered and can fully engage in our democratic processes. Those who contribute to our society should have a say in how it is governed. A Labour government will also stop Conservative plans to allow foreign money to pour into British politics and will create strict rules about donations from shell companies.

### *Restoring stability and security to our United Kingdom*

Labour believes in the strength of our United Kingdom, and of all its constituent nations. Labour will deliver real change across our nations, harnessing their individual strengths and moving us on from the divisions of the past.



After 13 years of Conservative government, the union between our nations is less stable and less secure than ever before. In Scotland, the SNP's narrow constitutional obsession with a new referendum is completely the wrong priority, ignoring the growing cost of living crisis and letting Scottish people down. In Northern Ireland, Conservative chaos and neglect has led to repeated political stand-offs while the people of Northern Ireland are the ones left to suffer.

In contrast, the Welsh Labour government is making a real difference to people's lives in Wales, taking decisive steps to help people deal with the cost of living crisis. The next national Labour government will support this by returning power over its economic destiny to Wales, restoring the decision-making role for the Welsh Government on structural funds, as well as considering steps that strengthen Wales' economic levers in line with the recommendations set out in the Commission on the UK's Future. We will extend this to the devolved governments in Scotland and Northern Ireland, spreading power and opportunity out of Westminster.

Decentralising power in this way will be at the heart of Labour's approach. The Take Back Control Act will hand powers to local leaders to deliver the improvements they want to see, and let local people make the big calls about what affects them, rather than leaving everything to decision-makers in Whitehall. Following the final report of the Commission on the UK's Future, the next Labour government will ensure that devolved authorities and towns, cities and regions across England are given the right powers and resources to drive growth and champion their areas. Labour will ensure that new structures and institutions of shared government drive better cooperation, giving

each part of the UK an equal and respected voice in decision-making, and giving those responsible for delivery the freedom to innovate.

Labour will preserve our union by delivering a better, deeper devolution settlement for our devolved parliaments to spread power and opportunity more equally throughout the UK. Labour will not support a new referendum on Scottish independence. Instead our focus will be on a new vision for a new politics, constitutional reform and delivering for the people of Scotland. Scotland remains a proud nation within the United Kingdom. It has self-government through a powerful Parliament of its own, but also shared government in the United Kingdom Parliament.

Building on the recommendations set out in the Commission on the UK's Future, the Scottish Parliament and government should have greater powers to promote Scotland across the world, both to represent Scotland as a nation, and to promote its economic and social interests. The Scottish Government should, with the approval of the Scottish Parliament (and where appropriate, the assistance of the UK government) be able to enter into agreements with international bodies, insofar as they relate exclusively to devolved matters only.

In contrast to the Conservatives, where possible a UK Labour government would also seek to work constructively with Scottish Ministers in areas of shared interest because Labour believe an approach that prioritises cooperation over conflict will deliver the greatest benefit for the Scottish people. Scottish representation on national bodies and agencies will ensure that Scotland's needs are properly considered and inform reserved policy making. In recognition of the status of the

Scottish Parliament, Labour would ensure that elected MSPs are granted the same privileges and protections as MPs so they can properly hold power to account.

Within Westminster, Labour's plans to abolish and replace the House of Lords will also give Scotland a voice in the new second chamber reflective of the regions and nations with elected representatives rather than political appointees. Labour will ensure the Sewel Convention is strengthened and properly respected by UK Governments. Within Scotland, Labour also believe there is a need to reverse the trend of centralisation and push power out of Holyrood into the regions and communities across Scotland.

The Good Friday Agreement and the peace and prosperity it has brought to Northern Ireland are among the proudest achievements of the last Labour government. Labour will always be an honest broker for Northern Ireland, and work with all parties in Northern Ireland to make the Windsor Framework work effectively, ease tensions and find an agreed way forward.



# PUBLIC SERVICES THAT WORK FROM THE START





## Introduction

Strong public services are the bedrock upon which fair societies and successful economies are built, and they should be a source of national pride.

When they are working well, schools, colleges and universities create opportunity for individuals and drive our economic prosperity. Children's social care steps in to provide the love and stability that every child deserves. The NHS gives everyone the security of knowing medical help is at hand, should they or a loved one need it. Adult social care empowers older and disabled people – and their families – to live the life they choose.

But now, after 16 years of the SNP and 13 years of Conservative mismanagement and neglect, the people who rely on public services and those who provide them are being let down – as was brutally exposed by the pandemic.

There is now no guarantee an ambulance will arrive on time, and millions wait weeks to see a GP. Adult social care is in crisis and children's social care is at breaking point – leaving thousands of people without support, care, or dignity. Schools no longer have the capacity to provide excellence across the board, further education colleges have been neglected, and our world-renowned university sector is being treated as a political battleground, not a public good.

The decline of these vital public services is leading to worse and more unequal outcomes. Economic growth is only possible when working people have good health, where children and young people are fully nurtured and have the skills and confidence they need to get on, and when people who need social care can live

in comfort, without their loved ones having to give up work to look after them.

The next Labour government will invest in the people and infrastructure that make up our public services, recognising that when these services are in good shape everywhere, they benefit us all. We will strengthen our public sector workforce: training, valuing, and motivating our brilliant workers in social care, the health service and across the education sector. Because great public services are nothing without the dedicated people who work in them.

This Tory government has made the wrong choices, failing to sufficiently grow our economy and running down our public services.

They are responsible for the ongoing recruitment and retention crises, the lack of vision for the future of public services, and the failure to recognise and reward the positive role public sector workers play in society and the contribution they make to our economy.

Labour knows that public sector workers are critical to stronger public services in the future. That is why we will act to improve public service workers' living standards throughout the Parliament. We will look at the process by which public sector pay is set, ensuring any independent mechanism has the confidence of all involved, without undermining existing collective bargaining arrangements that are supported by unions, seeking to make pay awards quicker to make sure our public services can recruit and retain the workers they need in the national interest.

Investment alone is not enough. Labour recognises the essential need for reform as

well, and will work alongside the people who provide and use our public services to change and modernise them to make them fit for the future. Under Labour, reform will not mean needless, expensive, disruptive reorganisations. It will mean ending the Conservatives' sticking plaster approach to our once-great public services and instead making the necessary long-term changes to get them working for everyone.

So, in reforming our public services Labour will get the best technology in the hands of public sector employees, harnessing data to make services work around people's lives, fostering and scaling innovation, and prioritising digital access. We will also ensure that we use cutting-edge technology to radically improve communication both with users, and between public service organisations, so that the different services are more joined up. In doing so, we will end the current approach which is often ineffective and siloed, and move towards an integrated system of easily navigable public services that meet the needs of the people who use and work within them.

Under Labour, technology will be used to deliver better public services with improved outcomes, that are more inclusive and easier to access, and will not be introduced in a way which deepens the digital divide.

Labour stands for equality and social justice, so in reforming public services we will uphold national standards in each public service that reduce inequalities and improve people's experiences of these services and ultimately, their lives. Above all, we will shift services toward a 'prevention first' approach, which is weighted towards early intervention, because catching problems before they get bigger gives young people the best chance of a

successful future, is better for the public purse and ultimately saves lives.

## **An NHS fit for the future**

A Labour government will build an NHS fit for the future by transforming health and care services to reflect the fundamental principles of universalising the best care for all based on need, rather than ability to pay, from the cradle to the grave. We will speed up treatment, harnessing life sciences and technology to reduce preventable illness, cut health inequalities and meet the health challenges of the 21st century.

Under Labour, the NHS is not for sale. Labour will always protect our NHS as a publicly-funded service, free at the point of use, and will secure healthcare for all. We will ensure Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) are empowered to act as a bulwark against privatisation alongside NHS England and the Department for Health and Social Care. We will make the NHS the preferred provider of commissioned healthcare services and will end the reliance on outsourcing and cronyism that saw our public services weakened in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. Instead we will build resilience in the NHS, making sure every penny of taxpayer's money is spent wisely.

Direct public provision embeds a public service ethos, efficiency, resilience and democratic accountability into the heart of the NHS. Right now, one of the major challenges in the health system is that people cannot access healthcare quickly enough. A Labour government will end the two-tier system that currently sees patients paying to go private or waiting for years in pain for planned NHS treatment. Labour will always put patients



first. That is why, in the short term, to fix the Conservative mess we inherit, we will use spare capacity in the independent sector to treat NHS patients and bring waiting lists down as we reform and strengthen NHS-delivered services and capacity for the future, while recognising that use of the independent sector is no substitute for tackling wider issues such as staff shortages and the crisis in social care. Our ambition is to make the NHS so good that no one ever feels forced to go private and to make sure that the NHS is never put in this position again.

Thirteen years of Conservative neglect and mismanagement means the NHS simply does not have the staff, equipment and modern technology needed to ensure patients can be treated on time. Labour governments have fixed the Conservatives' mess in our NHS before and showed that only a long-term approach to investment plus reform can get the results needed to fix the current crisis.

### *Workforce planning*

Workforce shortages in the NHS are the root cause of many of the challenges that our health service faces. That is why a Labour government will oversee one of the most ambitious expansions of the health workforce in history. We will see thousands more doctors and nurses in training and bolster the community and primary care workforce where patients and families often struggle to gain access and staff too often struggle with dangerously high caseloads.

Solving the NHS's workforce problems is not just about recruiting new staff. It also means improving retention of the existing, highly skilled and committed people who already work there, including not only medical staff, but all allied health professionals and those who

keep the service running in non-clinical roles. In recognition of this, Labour is committed to establishing comprehensive long-term workforce planning for the NHS that focuses on retention as well as recruitment.

This planning will include independent projections of the numbers of staff needed to ensure our NHS is fit for a future that will bring new health challenges and opportunities. We will focus on ensuring we have the roles, trainees, and senior professionals needed to tackle the challenges and seize the opportunities – drawing on a diverse range of skills and inspiring people around the country to pursue an NHS career. We will also work with health staff and their trade unions to review existing training pathways and explore new entry routes to a career in the NHS, including high quality apprenticeships. Labour will also work with staff and their unions to ensure that there are high quality training and continuing professional development opportunities for everyone who dedicates themselves to a career in our health service.

Labour recognises that pressures on ambulance workers are contributing to wider strains on the NHS. In government, we will coordinate an assessment of the causes of ambulance workers leaving the profession early and bring forward proposals for addressing the problem.

Labour recognises that the tax treatment of doctors' pensions has discouraged some senior clinicians from continuing in the workforce. While Labour is committed to reversing the sweeping changes made by the government to pension allowances at the March Budget 2023, Labour will introduce a targeted scheme across the UK to address retention issues.

## *Change and modernisation of the NHS*

Investment alone will not tackle the problems facing our NHS; it must go hand in hand with reform. That is why a Labour government will introduce a 10-year plan for change and modernisation of the NHS. We are committed to innovation and modernisation in the design of our public services, using the best of humanity's advancements to make them work at their best.

We know that top-down reorganisations of the NHS waste time and money when our priority should be ensuring that patients get treated on time. So, Labour will build on the existing integrated care system structure in England as we build an NHS fit for the future. This will mean delivering more joined-up services for patients and reducing avoidable and unjust variations in the quality of care.

As a universal system that serves a population of tens of millions, our NHS is a unique environment that researchers and drug developers should want to conduct clinical trials in. We should be making the most of this massive opportunity, which would be good for patients, good for the NHS and good for the economy. Labour will make it easier to conduct life-saving research in the NHS with a quicker, more transparent and less variable process. Labour will give everyone the opportunity to participate in research if they want to, so we can speed up recruitment and give patients access to treatments faster. We will bring together existing clinical trials registries to create standing national registries, making sure signing up is easy and working towards more data-enabled recruitment, including through the NHS app.

As part of our 10-year plan, Labour will improve data sharing and portability in health and care to join up services, deliver more personalised health and care and assist with collaborative NHS planning and research. We will guarantee patients that we will safeguard health data and use it ethically to improve health and care services for patients. Labour will drive data inter-operability from the bottom up by making the NHS App a one-stop shop for health information. All health and care providers should publish into it, but all the data would be owned by the patient, who could see it in one place. This will act as a 'single front door' to personalised services that breaks down barriers between primary, secondary and tertiary care. We will also set a clearer, centralised direction for future procurement of data systems so they are genuinely interoperable between providers and with wider public services.

We will train the workforce needed to do clinical trials with a culture in the NHS that values them. We will use research to help to retain staff in the NHS. There is evidence that giving time for research to staff who are interested enhances recruitment and retention, and that some doctors use research as a mechanism to avoid burnout. Britain has enormous advantages when it comes to adopting technology—we have a world-class life sciences sector, the best university system in Europe and as a system that serves tens of millions, the NHS dataset is unique. But we have not had the leadership or systems needed to take advantage of these strengths, and we are struggling to adopt the latest technologies and innovations fast enough. Learning from previous failures, we will develop a comprehensive innovation and adoption strategy, working with industry, patients and ICSSs.



Alongside harnessing the opportunities of data and life sciences, Labour will ensure that the NHS has the accessible buildings, modern equipment, and cutting-edge technology needed to reduce preventable illness, bring down waiting times, and provide high quality healthcare that works for patients and puts them at the centre of the health system. We recognise that without fixing the social care sector, it will be difficult to deal with the challenges facing the NHS.

## A focus on community healthcare

As part of our overall plan, Labour will shift the focus of healthcare from the acute sector into the community to boost prevention, diagnose conditions earlier, and provide treatment closer to people's homes.

### *Primary care and public health*

Good hospitals are not the only, or even the most important, factor in promoting and protecting people's health and ensuring great outcomes for patients. We also need to ensure that primary care and public health are fit for the future. Right now, primary care is often not working for patients or for the professionals who provide it.

Labour will support effective and sustainable delivery of general practice to improve access and continuity of care, and to cut health inequalities. In government, Labour will bring back the family doctor by providing incentives for GP practices to improve their continuity of care offer for people who want and need this. Labour will work with the NHS to bring together services in the community, learning from sites where this is already happening and working well. Labour will encourage ICSS

to identify opportunities to join up services so that more patients have one point of contact for appointments with a range of professionals and services working together as part of a neighbourhood team. This will make a particular difference to patients who have more than one condition. To improve their experience of care, Labour will work towards ensuring everyone with complex multimorbidities has a named care coordinator in the community. Labour will expand the role of community pharmacy, accelerating the roll out of independent prescribing to establish a Community Pharmacist Prescribing Service covering a broad range of common conditions. We will cut unnecessary red tape to allow pharmacy technicians to step up to some roles, ensuring pharmacists can focus on their expertise in prescribing and medicines management, rather than repetitive dispensing processes. Under Labour, patients will be able to easily book appointments to see the doctor they want, in the manner they choose. We will also introduce improved routes for referral to specialist services in the community, such as allowing opticians to refer into hospitals and greater self-referral in areas where it is clinically appropriate such as physiotherapy.

If we are to tackle the health challenges of the coming decades, we will need to focus on the social, economic and environmental determinants of health: the root causes of why people end up in hospital in the first place, and not just how we treat them when they get there. That means a greater focus on, recognition of, and support for the incredible work done by health professionals who work within communities, like local public health teams, social prescribing link workers, health visitors, school nurses and Allied Health Professionals.

Prevention means early intervention. Labour will give every child a healthy start in life with a Children's Health Plan, to include implementing the 9.00pm watershed for junk food advertising on television and banning paid-for advertising of less healthy foods on online media. We will build on the success of the last Labour government with a roadmap to a smoke-free Britain. The first steps of this will be to make all hospital trusts integrate 'opt-out' smoking cessation interventions into routine care. We will also legislate to require tobacco companies to include information in tobacco products that dispels the myth that smoking reduces stress and anxiety. We will ban vapes from being branded and advertised to appeal to children and we will work with local councils and the NHS to ensure they are being used as a stop smoking aid, rather than a new form of smoking. A Labour government will improve living standards and ensure that everyone can afford a healthy diet and has opportunities for exercise, and work to reduce the harm caused by tobacco and excessive alcohol consumption.

Labour will also work across departments to tackle health problems related to poverty, including cold, damp, mouldy and overcrowded housing conditions.

Our focus must be on prevention as much as cure: on tackling modifiable risks so that we reduce levels of preventable illness in the first place. So, as well as protecting and enhancing primary care, which is the front door of the NHS, Labour will ensure strong local public health services, including 0-19 health services and national public health initiatives to make the most of the opportunities offered by a prevention-first approach.

The potential benefits of a prevention-first approach are not only that it reduces pressure

on health services, but also on other public services. For example, effective drug treatment programmes can lead to reductions in crime and criminal behaviour, such as shoplifting and theft. Providing accessible extracurricular opportunities for young people can give them wider opportunities and protect them from exploitation. These services have longer term benefits for the police service and criminal justice system, as well as for the individuals whose lives are affected by crime.

NHS dentistry is also in a parlous state, with dentists leaving the public sector in droves and huge areas of the country left without NHS services at all. Labour will address years of Conservative neglect of NHS dentistry, and the problems with the NHS dental contract, we will tackle the pressing access crisis, prioritise prevention of poor oral health and cut oral health inequalities. We will put children and vulnerable adults at the heart of our plans and ensure that close links are established with Primary Care and Community Care, including GPs and Health Visitors.

### *Tackling inequalities in health and access to care*

The fragmented nature of our healthcare services is resulting in dramatic inequalities in access to care, as well as failures in healthcare for women across their life course, and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, LGBT+ people, and disabled people. Labour's national health mission will tackle health inequalities, ensuring that any approach is intersectional and recognises the particular experiences of groups such as disabled women and women from ethnic minority groups, and the breadth of problems that inequality can cause such as exclusion, lack of access to care, delayed or mistaken diagnosis, or lack of funding for particular conditions or treatments.





We will have a strategy to ensure that women and girls around the country have access to safe, high-quality healthcare that supports their wellbeing and will address ongoing systemic failures to meet their health and care needs. This particularly applies to women's sexual and reproductive healthcare, which is fragmented and understaffed, meaning women do not always get the high-quality care that they deserve and outcomes are unequal. To address a particularly shocking inequality in sexual and reproductive health, Labour will act to end the Black maternal mortality gap and set a new target to do so.

Labour believes that abortion is an essential part of health care which is highly regulated and should not be subjected to custodial sanctions. Labour will provide parliamentary time for free votes on modernising abortion law to ensure women do not go to jail for getting an abortion at a vulnerable time.

We will ensure government and the public sector focus on delivering better outcomes for those on lower incomes and make narrowing and eliminating inequality through the health system – and all our public services – a priority. Labour will seek to work in partnership with the many charitable and voluntary organisations that support and advocate for patients, especially those who are under-represented in and under-served by our health and care system.

## Ending the crisis in mental healthcare

Everyone should be able to access the mental health services they need, and not be made to wait months or even years to receive support. Labour will treat mental health as seriously as

physical health and ensure genuine parity of esteem. Labour will publish the first ever long-term, whole-government plan to improve mental health outcomes.

As with physical health services, a Labour government will shift the focus of mental healthcare to prevention as well as cure. Under the Conservatives waiting lists have ballooned, with more people left waiting longer for the mental health care that they need, often seeing their condition get worse. This is unacceptable and Labour will ensure that the NHS plays an active role in the treatment and prevention of mental illness, with 8,500 more mental health professionals meaning that we can first work towards clearing this backlog, waiting lists can be reduced, and the NHS can move towards providing access to care within a month of referral in the long-term. This swift treatment to prevent conditions worsening, and ensuring a better quality of life.

### *Increasing access to services*

Using some of the revenue raised through our commitment to end tax exemptions for private schools, as well as the revenue from our policy to scrap the carried interest tax loophole enjoyed by a small number of private equity fund managers, Labour will transform mental health services.

Labour will also work with the NHS to develop and implement new NHS targets for mental health services in England and will ensure reporting standards improve.

### *Raising standards*

Labour will ensure high standards in mental healthcare in every part of England, with clear national and local accountability for the quality, safety, and availability of care. Where the Conservatives have

failed to incorporate into safety reviews the perspective of those who actually use mental health services, Labour will ensure patients' and families' voices are central to any national assessment of the safety of mental health services.

### *Children's mental health*

Labour has put children at the heart of our mental health plan, again recognising the importance of early intervention. Young people's mental health has been declining in recent years, with older teenagers most affected, and the disruption of the pandemic had a particularly detrimental impact. One in four young people aged 17 to 19 have a mental health problem, up from one in ten in 2017.

We cannot continue to allow the early, formative years of our children and young people to be blighted by poor mental health and months-long struggles to access inadequate support services. Young people's mental health matters for their education, as well as for their wellbeing. With Labour, every young person will have access to a specialist mental health professional at school, supporting them right from the start and, where possible, resolving problems before they escalate. Every community will have an open access mental health hub for children and young people, providing early intervention through drop-in services.

Labour will work to spread best practice across universities to deliver better support for the mental health and wellbeing of their students and faculty. Labour will work towards ensuring swift mental health treatment that will help to prevent conditions worsening, and ensure a better quality of life for patients.

## **A new system of social care**

The next Labour government will transform social care for older people, children and disabled people so that those in need never go without.

### *Adult social care*

Alongside our 10-year plan for change and modernisation of the NHS, Labour will deliver a long-term plan for reform of adult social care that will lead to a world-class National Care Service that makes people as proud as the NHS does. This will be underpinned by the principle of 'home first', delivered through the use of early help and technology, and defined through a set of national standards, enforced by a strengthened regulator, to end the postcode lottery for care and to clamp down on the poor employment practices that are alarmingly prevalent in the sector.

Labour's reforms will seek to provide high-quality social care for all who require it, shaped by the involvement of care users and their families and consistent with the principle of supporting independent living. We will promote public sector and non-profit delivery of care services. A Labour government would not allow new contracts to be given to care providers who do not meet high standards. We will not tolerate poor quality, extractive providers that have opaque and irresponsible financial practices and poor working conditions, in the care sector.

Labour recognises the preventative impact of high-quality, holistic and relational social care, which can keep people well and supports independent living for longer. As such, the National Care Service will be a needs-based, locally delivered system, where people are helped to stay in their homes for as long as



possible and where disabled adults have choice and control over their support. The social care system is currently fragmented and confusing for people who rely on it. To tackle this, Labour will ensure consistent standards and transparent information, as well as clearer national leadership and accountability for the Secretary of State.

Labour will ensure that disabled people have choice and control over their support, prioritising the principle of independent living.

### *A fair deal for carers*

Labour will ensure that both paid and unpaid carers – who are often overworked and overlooked – are valued and supported. As a first step, as set out in our New Deal for Working People, our priority will be that care workers receive the pay, the conditions, and the training they need to provide great care and to stay working in the sector. Labour will also establish a new partnership with families who care for their loved ones, to ensure they do not put themselves at risk simply by looking after people they love.

Labour will back national partnership working in social care, bringing together employers, unions, and government to replicate the benefits this model has brought to other services. Labour will establish a Fair Pay Agreement in adult social care to negotiate fair pay and conditions, terms and training.

Social care workers are currently hugely undervalued. Labour will move towards professionalising the social care workforce, to give this vital group the recognition and professional standing that they so clearly deserve. We will ensure the social care workforce is well prepared for the care needs of today and the future, including through aligning adult care and NHS workforce

planning functions nationally and through reviewing requirements for training and skills. We will ensure relevant regulatory standards are adjusted to enable this shift. For example, as part of our work on progression in the sector, we will task regulators with considering allowing social care workers to carry out simple health checks, like blood pressure readings.

Labour will ensure high standards in the adult social care sector. In government, Labour will require all care providers to demonstrate financial sustainability and responsible tax practices, to value their staff, ensure all social care workers are paid fairly for what they do and to deliver high quality care for service users. A Labour government would not allow new contracts to be given to care providers who do not meet these standards; we will not tolerate extractive firms in the care sector.

### *Children's social care*

Severe issues in the children's social care workforce mean many children are cared for by a revolving door of professionals. Too many children are uprooted and moved around the country because of issues in the provision of adequate homes, and young people face a 'care cliff' when they leave the system at 18.

Labour recognises the importance of continuity of care for children in the system and, in government, will address issues in the social care workforce as well as supporting the vital contribution of kinship carers. Labour will work with local government to ensure that there are the right kind of care homes in the right places, including through strengthened regulation of standards. Care leavers and care experienced people currently have unacceptably poor outcomes and are over represented in the criminal justice system and amongst homeless people. Labour will work to reduce poverty, alleviate the pressures on families which are contributing to increasing numbers of children in the care system and provide effective early help. Labour will support foster carers to increase the number of secure, loving homes for children, end profiteering from children's care homes and work to provide coordinated support for care experienced people to reduce the disadvantages they face and enable them to thrive.

There is also a clearly disproportionate representation of children from ethnic minority groups and disabled children in care, and the system is not set up to meet their needs. Labour will ensure the children's social care system is inclusive and culturally sensitive, and will tackle the structural inequalities that mean children from these groups are more likely to be in care.

## **Reforming education to break down barriers to opportunity**

Labour's vision is of an education system where schools deliver excellence for every child and which enables lifelong learning in every corner of our country: transforming opportunities, raising standards, supporting a growing economy and providing everyone with the foundations for a rewarding life. Our mission is to break down the barriers to opportunity at every stage, by reforming the childcare and education systems, raising standards everywhere, and preparing people for work and life. Labour is determined that every child has access to an excellent education to open up opportunities and help them thrive.

### *Driving up school standards*

Every parent, no matter where they live, should be able to send their child to a high-quality local state school with excellent teaching and a broad curriculum that prepares them for the future. To secure that vision, Labour is committed to rolling out an ambitious school improvement plan that would see investment in a high-quality teaching and support staff workforce to deliver an excellent education for all.

The last Labour government made record investment in education, and through using money raised from ending tax breaks for private schools Labour will once again prioritise investing in an excellent education for every child. We understand that children cannot get a first-class education in a second-class school and will work to ensure every school is fit for purpose rather than a potential danger to students and staff.



Labour will invest money raised through ending tax breaks for private schools, in recruiting thousands of new teachers to fill vacancies and skills gaps, mental health professionals and careers advisors to ensure every child gets an excellent education and support throughout their time at school.

Labour will value and recognise the professionalism of leaders, teachers and support staff including teaching assistants, and understands that school support staff must have a voice in our education system and deserve decent conditions and role profiles across all types of schools.

Recognising that the quality of teaching is the most important in-school factor for improving outcomes, Labour will focus on ensuring the highest standards across the profession. Labour will deliver ongoing teacher training, so each teacher has the skills to support every child to thrive, create more training opportunities for support staff, and will equip all school leaders with the knowledge and skills they need to lead outstanding schools.

Labour will ensure schools can use these new teachers to provide every child with a broad curriculum. Labour will launch an expert review of the current school curriculum and assessment for England. The review will be based on lessons learned from international best practice and expert research. It will support teachers' professionalism and innovation, enabling them to adapt how they teach the core national curriculum to their children's lives and life experiences. Labour will make this new national curriculum compulsory for all state schools, to ensure we are equipping young people for their futures. Alongside the core knowledge and skills children need, a broad curriculum must include

subjects such as music, art, sport, learning about climate change and sustainability and drama, it must ensure that citizenship and the importance of democratic participation and active citizenship is taught appropriately at every age, and it must prepare children for the modern world of work and changing world by embedding digital skills across the curriculum. In Ofsted's 2020 annual parent survey just half of parents said that music was sufficiently covered within their child's education despite evidence showing that music education can improve children's engagement with their education and lead to improve academic outcomes, in addition to the benefits of playing and listening to music on health and wellbeing.

Labour will ensure a level playing field for all young people, by tackling the narrowing of the curriculum to ensure children can access and enjoy the creative arts as part of their education and recognise teachers supporting children to learn instruments and take advantage of creative opportunities as a valued part of the education workforce.

Labour will ensure young people are ready for the move from secondary education into work, further, and higher education, ensuring a smooth transition for students. Labour will ensure citizenship education is appropriately taught at every stage and updated to include practical life skills such as managing personal finances, and build an understanding of our democratic processes. Labour will introduce two weeks' worth of compulsory work experience for every young person, and provide professional careers advice in schools and colleges.

All families should feel confident about the education their children receive and so Labour will focus on ensuring high and rising

standards everywhere. Labour will ensure all teachers have qualified status. We will reform inspections to ensure Ofsted provides true quality assurance for the government and the public and supports positive, proactive school improvement. Under Labour, Ofsted will become the critical friend every good leader and good teacher needs, moving beyond the current adversarial approach to one that supports, improves, and celebrates our schools and colleges.

We will end the system of headline grades, which creates unnecessarily high stress for staff and little helpful information for parents. Instead, Labour will consult parents, education staff and experts to introduce a report card that tells people, simply and clearly, how well their school or college community is performing. To ensure these inspections are thorough, Labour will require Ofsted inspectors to be experts in the phase of education they are inspecting. Labour will consult on creating a new annual review of safeguarding, health and safety, attendance, and off-rolling – ongoing issues that affect every school. Under Labour, multi-academy trusts will become subject to Ofsted inspections.

Labour recognises the combined impact of 13 years of public service neglect, growing child poverty, and the Covid-19 pandemic on the attainment gap between children experiencing deprivation and their peers, and the influence this has on children's life chances. Similar effects have also been seen in Scotland despite the SNP government's rhetoric on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap. Labour knows that ambition needs to be backed up by actions, so to address this, Labour will implement a national strategy with clear targets to close the attainment gap, as part of our national mission to break down the barriers to opportunity at every life stage.

### *Schools rooted in their local communities*

Labour believes that place is crucial and that all schools should be working together for the benefit of the local communities they serve. Under the Conservatives, too often schools are incentivised to compete against one another, including through admissions and exclusions policies that are not always in the best interests of all children.

Labour's priority is the same priority as parents': for every child, a good local school where children are happy and get the first-class education they all deserve. Labour's focus will be on ensuring that academies, multi-academy trusts, maintained schools and local authorities deliver high and rising standards for every child. Labour will require all schools to cooperate with their local authority on admissions, SEND inclusion and place planning. Labour believes that academies must be part of their local communities and will set national standards to require academies to follow a revised national curriculum and to recruit teachers who have or are working towards qualified teacher status. Rather than focus on imposing top-down structures, Labour will demand collaboration and cooperation in the best interests of our children.

Labour will value and recognise the professionalism of the entire school workforce and address recruitment and retention challenges by reinstating the School Support Staff Negotiating Body. This body will be tasked with establishing a national terms and conditions handbook, training, career progression routes, and fair pay rates for support staff. This reform will ensure that schools can recruit and retain the staff needed to deliver a high-quality, inclusive education.



## SEND education

A properly inclusive education system should meet the needs of all children and young people, in particular addressing the disadvantages faced by children with special educational needs and children who are disabled (SEND).

Labour will put inclusion at the heart of our education system by working with all parents, carers and children with additional needs to deliver the system they have rightly been calling for over so many years, and to enable every child and every young person to achieve and thrive. By joining up services and improving data use, Labour will identify children's needs earlier so that intervention supports child development from a young age, which is better for individuals, their families, and wider society.

Labour will work to support inclusivity and expertise, to ensure children's rights to receive their education and support in a mainstream school is upheld, if that is their family's choice; while ensuring that specialist provision is available, and that schools are well equipped to support children, so all children and young people can receive the support they need set out in their Education Health and Care Plans and SEN Support entitlements.

This will include ensuring teachers and support staff including teaching assistants have the training they need and recognition they deserve, including in specialist SEND and alternative provision settings, and providing better consistency in conditions for staff and support for students.

Labour will work with families to end the battle for SEND support that so many families face and ensure schools are better equipped and

designed to enable these children to thrive, alongside their peers. Labour will strengthen accountability arrangements to better support and empower parents, carers and children.

## Breakfast clubs

As part of Labour's new modern childcare system to support families from the end of parental leave to the end of primary school, we will introduce fully-funded free breakfast clubs in every primary school, including making clubs accessible for children with SEND. This could save parents up to £50 a week on before-school childcare and ensure that every child is getting the best start to the day, boosting school attendance and performance. Breakfast clubs are a well-evidenced intervention that supports learning and development, through the club as well as the breakfast, and that effectively extends the working day for working parents. Where families need support around the school day Labour recognises the importance of wraparound support to meet those needs and understands that a modern childcare system must stretch into primary school and support families for those years too.

It is an appalling hallmark of Conservative failure that after 13 years child poverty is soaring. As part of Labour's Mission to break down barriers to opportunity, we will work to reduce child poverty, including involving child poverty experts in our cross-government mission taskforce. Labour will strengthen the statutory guidance on school uniforms to help reduce the cost for families. Faced with a Conservative-made economic crisis, Labour governments in London and Wales have temporarily extended the provision of free school meals. The next Labour government will work to ensure families can have stable

household finances and able to buy the food and supplies they need. Labour will encourage school meals to be made to high nutritional levels in school kitchens from locally sourced ingredients, wherever possible.

## **First class further and higher education**

Further and higher education are hugely important for individuals, who should have access to lifelong learning opportunities and the personal enrichment they provide, and for our society, as an educated and skilled population can drive economic growth, raising living standards for all. Labour will therefore ensure all learners have a genuine choice of first class further and higher education, with brilliant vocational and academic courses.

In further education, a Labour government will encourage a thriving college and independent training sector that can provide high quality vocational courses, including apprenticeships, fosters a love of learning, links students with exciting job opportunities through excellent careers advice, and works with local government and businesses to meet local skills needs. There are brilliant further education colleges around the country, yet years of Conservative neglect, and a lack of coordination, have led to limited training courses and even college closures, denying people access to learning and upskilling opportunities. Labour will ensure fairness and sustainability in further education, address recruitment and retention challenges to tackle the current staffing crisis across our colleges. Labour will work to ensure the Conservatives' cost of living crisis does not hold back students' learning. We recognise the current financial pressures on students, and will learn from

the success of the last Labour government and Labour governments in Wales in getting disadvantaged young people into education and training and break down the barriers in order to raise participation. We will champion further education as part of a thriving skills system that improves opportunity for all, boosts student outcomes in local job markets, and meets the workforce needs of our changing economy, embedding skills and knowledge to assist in the transition to a net zero society.

In higher education, Labour will ensure the university system provides excellent teaching, fosters cutting-edge research and supports researchers, prepares graduates for successful careers, and is genuinely accessible to people of all backgrounds. It will also encourage these world-class academic institutions to play a role in their local communities, linking with local business to create thriving and dynamic regional economies.

Britain has some of the best higher education institutions in the world but too many are struggling as a result of Conservative Higher Education Policy. Our internationally recognised universities and research bases provide ground-breaking research year on year and need a government willing to support their contributions. Labour will work to grow the number of spinouts from universities and help to bring more of their research to market.

To ensure universities have the resources they need to invest in staff, teaching and research, to maintain their world-class status, and improve student access, participation and success, our university sector needs a sustainable funding model. Issues faced by university staff impact students' learning experience. Yet the Conservatives' broken





tuition fees system is holding people back, failing to provide the stable funding universities need, and does not even deliver what was promised to taxpayers. For new students taking out loans from September 2023, this will get worse.

Low and middle earning graduates will see their payments rise while the highest earners will see their repayments fall. Labour will fix the current broken tuition fees and loans structure. We will ensure that people from every background and all parts of our country have the opportunity to study at Britain's world-class universities, benefiting individuals, the economy and wider society.

As well as ensuring the repayment process is fairer, Labour recognises the cost of living crisis is hitting students and its impact on low-income students in particular. Labour's reforms will make the system more progressive, to reintroduce fairness and to encourage people to pursue and stay in jobs that are facing serious vacancy crises, like teaching, nursing, allied health professionals, social workers, hospitality, and social care work.



# A FUTURE WHERE FAMILIES COME FIRST





## Introduction

Labour is the party of family. Labour knows that it is the people and families of Britain, in all their wonderful diversity, that make this country great. Britain is an amazing country, where all our families can succeed, but that will only happen when every family has a secure foundation to build upon, when parents are not forced to leave their jobs because childcare is too expensive and wages are too low, when decent homes are genuinely affordable and when social security properly protects and supports those who rely on it.

A Labour government will bring security for people at home, at work and across society. Unlike the Conservatives and the SNP, we will not offer short term, sticking plaster policies but instead we will deliver a decade of national renewal with support for families at its heart. We will raise living standards across all parts of the country and reverse the path of managed decline that the country is on after 16 years of the SNP and 13 years of Conservative governments.

Labour will help every family to give every child the best start in life. We will treat childcare as a vital part of our social and economic infrastructure that supports children and enables parents to work the jobs and hours they choose. We will make childcare more flexible for families, increase its availability and raise standards so that we break down the barriers to opportunity for every child, everywhere. We want a broad and rich set of opportunities for every child in their early years and around the school day, including creative activities such as learning an instrument, supported by a childcare system that runs from the end of parental leave to the end of primary school.

A decent and affordable home is the bedrock of family life. But under the Conservatives the dream of home ownership is drifting out of reach for a generation of young people, and the building of new council homes in England is at a record low, leaving more and more families stuck in expensive, insecure and poor-quality rented housing. A Labour government will support more families and first time buyers across the whole UK into home ownership, build more high-quality, genuinely affordable homes, including council homes, and make renting fairer and more secure.

Families have faced an unprecedented squeeze on their finances under the Conservatives. Real wages are lower now than they were 13 years ago and living standards are falling sharply. The costs of childcare, housing, food and fuel have all soared while people's incomes have failed to keep pace. Food banks have proliferated and in-work poverty has risen substantially. There are now more than four million children living in poverty, an increase of 600,000 since 2010, and more than two million pensioners living in poverty, a rise of over 400,000 since 2010.

A Labour government will fundamentally reform the current unfair and punitive social security system that leaves families struggling with housing costs and childcare costs, and instead we will treat all people with dignity, care and respect.

Our beloved cultural and sporting institutions also play a crucial role in happy family life, as well as making an enormous contribution to our economy. Tourism, libraries, galleries, museums, nightclubs, theatres, live music venues and leisure centres are crucial to the revival of our high streets and town centres. And charities are at the heart of a society that

works for everyone. Sport and culture also have a deeper value. They give us identity, belonging, shared experiences and joy, and are at the heart of our communities.

Families of all different kinds deserve to be treated equally, fairly and with respect. Labour is the party of equality and social justice, and a Labour government will make Britain an even more inclusive, tolerant and accessible society. The next Labour government will build on the proud legacy of previous Labour governments to make Britain a more equal place for everyone.

In everything we do to build a more equal Britain, we will be guided in government by our experience that greater progress and equality comes from bringing people together, treating each other with respect, and understanding that we have more in common than that which divides us.

## **A modern childcare system that supports families**

Under the Conservatives, parents are paying more for childcare and getting less. Millions of families face a postcode lottery as they navigate an overly complicated system trying to secure the childcare they need. Our childcare system is defined by spiralling costs and unmanageable complexities and is in urgent need of reform.

The next Labour government will reform childcare from the end of parental leave to the end of primary school as part of our mission to break down barriers to opportunity for every child.

Labour's ambition for families is pivotal to our ambition for Britain as a whole: getting it right means boosting education, health, wellbeing

and jobs and our economy too. It also means delivering better outcomes for children, for parents, and for families as a whole, because our vision for a modern childcare system acknowledges that childcare is both vital infrastructure and a key driver of economic growth.

Labour is determined that childcare offers more flexibility, better availability, and high standards for children and families, to break down the barriers to opportunity for every child, everywhere.

Delivering on this ambition will mean that children can thrive and parents – especially women – can work the jobs and hours they choose, boosting family finances and growing our economy.

The current model of family leave entitlements does not support families to share caring responsibilities equally, entrenching the discrimination that women face in the workplace. Under the Tories, pregnancy and maternity discrimination has risen. Labour recognises protecting women and families from discrimination not only protects women's economic participation but the health and wellbeing of their child. As part of our commitments in the New Deal for Working People, Labour has committed to reviewing the parental leave system so that it best supports working families within the first year of a Labour government. As part of our mission to reduce the impact of parental income on a child's opportunities, we will ensure that parental leave is a day one right.

### *Flexible support from the end of parental leave to the end of primary school*

A Labour government will give children the best start in life by building a modern childcare



system that supports families from the end of parental leave to the end of primary school.

As a first step, we will deliver free breakfast clubs in every primary school in England, boosting children's learning and improving reading, writing and maths. These breakfast clubs will be funded through the ending of the non-domiciled tax status.

As has been clear in Scotland and the challenges faced there after the increase in funded hours, childcare cannot be delivered through a rigid, inflexible system but must recognise the reality of families' lives and working patterns today, which often also includes the vital childcare responsibilities taken on by extended families across the country. Labour will bring that flexibility to a modern system of childcare. Where families need support around the school day Labour recognises the importance of wraparound support to meet those needs and understands that a modern childcare system must stretch into primary school and support families for those years too.

### *High quality childcare provision everywhere*

Under the Conservatives, millions of families face a postcode lottery, unable to find the childcare they need, when they need it, at a price they can afford. Nurseries do not have enough places or staff to cater for all the children who need them, leaving many families without provision. Under the Tories, there are two children for every early years childcare place in England.

Drawing on best practice internationally, and working with the additional expenditure for childcare to which the government has already committed, Labour will drive an ambitious and coherent programme of

childcare reform, with higher standards for early education, better availability for all parents, stronger regulation of the financial sustainability of providers and to ensure the sustainability of the sector, and a clear strategy for the childcare workforce, to deliver the bright future all our children deserve. Labour will ensure that childcare for working parents and carers is affordable, accessible, and available, wherever you live.

A Labour government will remove the barriers that prevent local councils from opening more nurseries and childcare provision where parents need it, as part of a range of models of provision including also cooperative childcare. Parents cannot be faced with 'deserts' when it comes to access to childcare or be priced out of access to provision. Labour recognises the current model is unsustainable, with high numbers of nurseries and childminders closing and leaving families in the lurch, and the need to support the security of childcare providers and staff. By ensuring families have the early support they need, we can provide every child a firm foundation that sets them up for life.

Labour understands the challenges around working conditions, low pay and low status that impact retention in the early years workforce. We know too that to have quality childcare available to every family, early years and childcare professionals must be better recognised, rewarded and provided with opportunities for training and progression and recognised for the skilled and important work they are doing. Labour is proud of its record supporting children and their families, including the Surestart programme introduced by Tessa Jowell, in which local communities as well as professionals were able to contribute. Labour will recognise the importance of children's first two years, learning from the programmes

of the 1997-2010 government which reduced health and education inequalities, as well as the latest research, to ensure existing and planned Early Years Hubs benefit children and parents alike.

Labour will work to alleviate the pressures on families that are contributing to increasing numbers of children in the care system, to ensure high standards in children's homes in order to deliver the right kind of homes for children, including through strengthened regulation of standards. We will work with foster and kinship carers and local authorities to raise common standards and improve care for children. Labour is determined to ensure that foster and kinship carers are properly supported, not just by the central government and the legal framework, but at a local level too. Learning from best practice in local government, we will ensure that information about the way foster carers are currently supported in different parts of England is available.

Care leavers and care experienced people have poorer outcomes and face multiple layers of disadvantage; Labour will coordinate support for care experienced people to reduce these disadvantages and enable them to thrive. Labour is determined that foster carers themselves, government agencies, unions, and local government are all able to be informed partners in the push for better in every corner of our country.

## **Securing a decent home for everyone**

Housing is a human right, but Britain is in the midst of a housing crisis of the Conservatives' making. Average house prices across England

are now over eight times average earnings, locking millions of families out of home ownership. Homelessness and rough sleeping have risen sharply over the last 13 years whilst soaring rents and insecurity are rife in the private rented sector.

A home should be a place where people build a life and raise a family, but too often they are treated as a speculative financial asset. Labour's approach will ensure a decent, secure and affordable home for everyone regardless of tenure. Labour's approach will aim to ensure housing adequacy in the long-term, exploring ways to meet housing need across government.

Our plans to build more houses will support aspiration and bring the dream of homeownership to millions more families, rebalancing the market towards working families. With housebuilding projected to fall to levels not seen since the Second World War, amid a dire housing crisis, Labour in government will build more houses to meet local housing need, encourage more private investment, properly regulated, in new supply, reforming planning and spurring a new generation of locally led development corporations. We will put construction of social and genuinely affordable homes at the heart of our plans to fix the housing crisis, with development corporations providing capacity, support and expertise to councils looking to increase supply of homes.

Labour will work with partners in local government, the housing industry and investors to unlock the patient, private capital ready to be unleashed into housebuilding and the necessary wrap around social infrastructure, with the right regulatory framework and more stability from government.





With a renewed national purpose to build homes, construction workers and apprentices will have more opportunity for direct employment and will benefit from good, well-paid jobs and industry collective agreements.

We will make the tough choices needed to make this happen. We will reprioritise government grant by reforming the underperforming Affordable Homes Programme; where green belt is released, we will do it in a strategic way, prioritising poor-quality ex-industrial land and dilapidated, neglected areas to build more housing whilst protecting, enhancing and increasing access to genuine green spaces in the greenbelt; reform compulsory purchase orders to unlock land value in sites where there is clear public interest in doing so; use development corporations as a delivery model that can deliver more supply and unlock institutional funding and scrap the poorly designed infrastructure levy which could see new affordable and social supply plummet.

Labour supports the principle that people who have lived in their social home for years should have the opportunity to own it, if they wish. We believe a fair and sustainable balance between the expansion of assets to be held by individuals and families and assets to be held for the common good is not just desirable, but achievable. To maintain the stock needed to support community-held assets, we will introduce a better approach on right to buy. Labour recognises the need to protect our social housing stock and we will seek to decrease the number of social homes being rapidly sold off through right to buy without like-for-like new social housing being built to replace them. We will review the increased discounts introduced under the

coalition government in 2012, as well as strengthening covenants to protect new social homes built from being quickly sold off.

Labour's Warm Homes Plan would upgrade all the homes that need it, cutting bills and creating thousands of good jobs for electricians, engineers, and construction workers across the country. The scheme would be led by local councils across the UK, building on the success of Labour councils such as Kirklees Council and mayoralities in London and Manchester to deliver locally led homes upgrade schemes that are providing warmer homes for local people.

And Labour will create a workable housing-led strategy to tackle homelessness, provide people with access to support before they arrive onto the streets, and ensure everyone has a meaningful route out of rough sleeping. This will include an updated role for supported housing. The combination of secure housing and high-quality support can transform lives, helping people settle into a new home, maintain tenancies and improve life chances.

### *Helping families get on the housing ladder*

Labour is the party of homeownership, and the next Labour government will set the ambitious target of a homeownership rate of 70 per cent.

A Labour government will help first-time buyers onto the ladder with a new, comprehensive mortgage guarantee scheme.

Under this scheme, the state will act as guarantor for prospective homeowners who can afford mortgage repayments but struggle to save for a large deposit. Too often these families find themselves locked out of homeownership and stuck in expensive rented accommodation. We will also give first-time

buyers first dibs on new developments in their area, ensuring investors cannot buy up new developments 'off-plan' before they are even advertised to local families.

Our plan to build more high-quality homes across the country will create decent jobs, stimulate investment and will also help working families get on the ladder, tackling affordability pressures in areas of high housing need. Our plan to ensure more of these are genuinely affordable will allow more families to save towards the dream of homeownership in affordable rented housing.

Labour will end the current system of leasehold housing in England and Wales, overhauling it to the lasting benefit of leaseholders and reinvigorating commonhold to such an extent that it will become the default. We will legislate to enact the recommendations of the Law Commission's three 2020 reports. Leaseholders should be protected from the costs of remediating cladding, irrespective of circumstance.

Unlike the Conservatives, we know it will not help to stoke demand across the board, so we will accompany support for first-time buyers with measures to redistribute demand away from those looking to purely speculate on house prices. Labour will raise stamp duty paid by foreign individuals, trusts and companies when they buy UK residential property, helping to reduce speculative pressures in places like London and Manchester.

### *Building the homes we need*

The Conservatives have failed to build enough houses in the right places during their 13 years in power. Rates of affordable housebuilding have been woeful while the supply of new social houses has fallen off a cliff. The result is a worsening housing crisis, and endemic

challenges of affordability, insecurity and poor quality.

The situation is set to get much worse. The government caved into its own backbenchers and snuck out planning reforms last year that are set to cut housebuilding to its lowest level in decades.

Labour will build more homes, including more genuinely affordable homes, and spur a new wave of high quality, diverse communities with infrastructure, green spaces and amenities, creating decent local jobs and apprenticeships.

We will reform planning and arcane land purchase rules to get Britain building, while fixing our broken development model that is overly reactive, adversarial and drives down quality to the detriment of local communities.

We will spur the creation of a new generation of development corporations, spearheaded by and accountable to communities. These new bodies will allow local leaders, working with trade unions, to play a more active role in development in their areas.

Labour will learn from the estate regeneration ballot arrangements in London which has driven up resident engagement and consult on further pilots of the system out across England.

We will allow local authorities, Metro Mayors, combined authorities or groups of local authorities to pioneer new models of strategic development for larger sites, alongside our wider plans for greater economic devolution.

Over a quarter of a million people in rural England are on a housing waiting list, yet the government are on course to miss their target on new rural affordable homes. In order to thrive, rural communities need both good jobs



and affordable homes. Labour will work with local councils to ensure their voice has traction in delivering what is needed for rural and coastal communities.

Labour will also put genuinely affordable housing, and in particular social housing, at the heart of our plan to increase housing supply, ensuring a safe, warm and secure home for all people. Labour will also seek to improve the quality and safety of existing social homes. Labour will seek to decrease the number of social homes being rapidly sold off through right to buy without like-for-like new social housing being built to replace them. Where councils do not currently have housing stock, they will be supported to start building homes. Labour will also support new co-operative and community led housing provision, including developing adequate tenure.

One in five of the UK population are disabled, and Labour recognises that disabled people are less likely to own their own home and that disabled people often struggle to find suitable rented accommodation. Labour is committed to the principle of co-design and conscious of the lack of minimum standards for new build properties to be either adaptable or wheelchair accessible. We will work with Disabled People's Organisations and groups led by disabled people to ensure new builds are accessible and adaptable, building on the ongoing review by government. We will ensure new requirements are enforceable and empower local leaders to ensure new developments meet designated standards. By doing so Labour will enable people to remain in their existing homes as their needs develop either by further disability or age.

### *Planning for housing, growth and net zero*

After a decade of piecemeal and largely inept tinkering, the planning system is failing to meet the housing and infrastructure needs of most local areas. We cannot deliver on our housing ambitions – nor our net zero ambitions – without updating the planning system.

We will revise national planning policy and guidance, and reform the planning system in England to provide the clarity and certainty that industry and local government need to get Britain building more houses, to create new sources of green energy and to get the economy growing.

A Labour government will reform arcane purchasing rules to rebalance power between speculators and communities. Reformed compulsory purchase rules will also support strategic development on large sites, allowing local leaders and development corporations to play a more active role in land assembly.

Labour in government will actively work with local areas looking to spur development and will seek to repurpose and reform Homes England to better meet our emerging priorities around housing supply, mixed use placemaking, and strategic regeneration and to ensure it provides local authorities and others with greater support in terms of capacity and expertise.

In many cases, a new generation of development corporations will help communities manage delivery of large sites, assemble the land, engage local people and build supporting infrastructure, with developers and housebuilders eventually able to bid for and buy serviced plots as part of these schemes. As part of this process, Labour believes that meaningful public participation

in the planning system is essential and helps to drive outcomes, particularly when it comes to upstream engagement in the preparation of local plans and positive visions for local areas. Conservative government policies have often undermined the legitimacy of the system in the eyes of communities.

### *A high-quality, secure private rented sector*

Millions of people renting privately live day in, day out with the knowledge that they could be uprooted with little notice and minimal, if any, justification.

The lack of certainty and security and the high costs that are now inherent to renting privately takes an immense toll on private tenants, including more than one million children with families.

The situation is particularly acute for those at the lower end of the private rental market who have little or no purchasing power who often have to put up with often appalling conditions for fear that a complaint will lead to instant retaliatory eviction.

That is why some of the worst housing standards are to be found in the private rented sector, why one in five private rented homes are still not meeting the decent homes standard and one in ten having a category 1 hazard posing a risk of serious harm.

As many people must continue to live in the private rented sector, Labour will fundamentally reform the private rented sector, overhauling its regulation to markedly drive-up standards and conditions and provide tenants with long-term security and better rights.

Our Renters Charter will level the playing field between landlords and tenants and make renting privately secure and affordable.

It will abolish 'no fault' Section 21 evictions; introduce a legally binding Decent Homes Standard for the private rented sector; ban landlords from refusing to rent to those in receipt of benefits or with children; provide for longer notice periods; introduce a national landlord register; and introduce a right to have pets. Our charter will improve the experience of renting by tackling disrepair, damp and dangerous homes, unfair fees and harassment, and crack down on rogue landlords and unscrupulous letting agents.

We recognise that once Section 21 is abolished, private renters will be more at risk of extortionate within-tenancy rent increases and we will seek to close loopholes that disreputable landlords might use to exploit tenants and jeopardise their security of tenure.

## **Social security delivering social justice and opportunity for all**

Labour will tackle poverty, break the cycle of deprivation throughout people's lives and build a society where no one is held back by disadvantage or lack of opportunity.

We will reform our social security system to guarantee every child the best possible start in life, and we will help people move into quality work and progress at work while guaranteeing security for those who cannot work.

Labour will always support retirees to live with dignity, security and comfort.

### *A plan to reform social security*

After 13 years of a Tory government millions of people are struggling to make ends meet and feel they have less control over their lives. They are not experiencing hardship because they



do not know how to budget their finances or have low aspirations. Far from it. Successive Conservative governments have undermined social security in this country. Cuts to support, divisive rhetoric from government ministers and a punitive culture have altered the landscape completely.

As a result, our threadbare social security system is failing – deepening poverty, magnifying existing inequalities and undermining our economic security. Social security under the Tories no longer rescues people when they fall, offers real security nor provides a platform of opportunity.

That is why Labour will take a different approach: growing the economy, boosting opportunity and supporting households with the cost of living crisis, we will increase living standards across the country. We understand that fiscal responsibility and supporting the most vulnerable are not conflicting priorities but go hand in hand.

Labour will provide a reliable safety net for people who lose their jobs, including through large scale redundancies and insolvency, or who cannot work due to ill health, disability, or caring responsibilities. This safety net will continue to apply to those on legacy benefits too.

The last Labour government lifted two million children and pensioners out of poverty through a comprehensive child poverty strategy and through the introduction of measures such as Pension Credit and Winter Fuel Payments.

The next Labour government will ensure that respect and dignity are once more at the heart of our social security system and that it works to tackle poverty and put an end to the soaring use of food banks. A Labour government will

also work with campaigners and community groups to ensure food security for all.

### *Fundamental reform of social security*

We will reform and continually review the social security system to ensure that it tackles poverty and supports those hit hardest by the Tories cost of living crisis. A Labour government would grow the economy, drive up wages and create decent jobs, and in doing so, we will reduce the cost to the taxpayer of subsidising low wages.

That starts with making Universal Credit work for everyone who relies on it. A Labour government will deliver this much-needed, fundamental reform of Universal Credit to tackle child poverty and offer a proper safety net. We will ensure it makes work pay, supports people back to work, allows people to live their lives in dignity, and addresses inequalities across society. Labour will do this by overhauling the current unfair and punitive system and end punitive sanctions which strip away people's dignity, trap people in a cycle of low pay, insecurity and poverty. We will ensure every child has the best possible start in life and the opportunity to thrive.

In government, Labour would examine whether the assessment period and payments are being delivered in a way that is responsive to changes in claimants pay, in recognition of the rise in zero hours contracts. Universal Credit payments must work for families where the main carer of children may not be the main earner, and we will consider whether split payments should be made the default to prevent domestic abuse and financial control. We recognize the importance of in person appointments in supporting people to access the social security system, such as those without digital skills.

We will ensure that respect and dignity are once more at the heart of our social security system and that it works to tackle poverty and put an end to the soaring use of food banks. We know that increasingly those who are in poverty and reliant on the social security system are already in-work, and that a failure to tackle soaring inflation, bills and stagnant wages are hitting working people hard. Under this government, in-work poverty has risen.

For those in-work, real wages are lower than they were when the Tories took office. Overcoming worklessness, rewarding work and tackling low pay while providing security is Labour's path to reform of social security and offers a viable route out of poverty for working people.

Under Labour, the rights to financial and employment support for the unemployed will be conditional on, and balanced by, responsibilities to look for work and take it up. As part of our welfare reform and job support plan, Labour will offer tailored support, coaching and training opportunities. With Labour, every stage of the social security system will be supportive and accessible. Labour will do this by overhauling the current unfair and punitive Tory system and end punitive Tory sanctions which strip away people's dignity, trap people in a cycle of low pay, insecurity and poverty, such as sanctions for missing appointments due to public transport delays or medical appointments, and we will always treat everyone with the dignity and respect they deserve.

Disabled people are suffering as a result of a flawed testing regime that does not focus on the support that people need in their daily lives, and to get back into work. The Tories have

allowed waiting lists for Access to Work to rise to unacceptable levels. To address the disincentives to moving into work that are contained in the current system, Labour will fix the Access to Work scheme, with improved targets for assessment waiting times at reasonable timescales, and by giving people who are looking for work 'in principle' indicative awards.

A Labour Department for Work and Pensions would be committed to the social model of disability, not the medical model, and also incorporate principles of working with disabled people throughout policy processes, often referred to as coproduction.

With Labour, every stage of the social security system will be supportive and accessible, and we will always treat everyone with the dignity and respect they deserve.

### *Child Poverty*

Decisions taken by successive Conservative governments have left hundreds of thousands of families and over a million children in poverty.

The last Labour government targeted child poverty as will the next one. Labour will break down the barriers to opportunity for every child at every stage with a bold and ambitious strategy to tackle child poverty.

This strategy is a core component of one of Labour's five missions and will be a focus of a cross-government effort to break the class ceiling. It will be the responsibility of all government departments to tackle the fundamental drivers of poverty and take action to address the big issues that hit those on the lowest incomes the most. But tackling poverty is not just the responsibility of the social security system; it is a platform upon which all Labour policy sits.



Our vision to transform the country and deliver opportunity for every child will be laser-focused on delivering security and tackling disadvantage. We will reform childcare and early years support, improve school standards, while we deliver an improved social security system, which recognises the long-lasting damage of child poverty.

Our strategy to tackle child poverty will monitor and measure absolute and relative child poverty levels, child attainment, parental incomes, and infant mortality. We will target increasing the number of young people in education, employment or training, better health outcomes, and more children living in safe, quality homes.

We will strengthen rights to representation at work, extend sick pay to those on low incomes, and boost wages by removing minimum wage bands for all adults and expanding the remit of the Low Pay Commission to take account of the cost of living. Raising earnings will lift more families out of poverty and out of the welfare system.

To help working parents, and ensure children have access to nutritious meals, we will ensure there are free breakfast clubs in every primary school in England. We will raise education standards and ensure that more children are hitting early learning targets. We will turn the tide on parental income dictating children's future earnings, boosting social mobility so your background does not dictate your future, and better support parents.

Just as important are our plans for housing. Inadequate supply of housing has led to direct hardship and put a strain on the social security system. By building more social and affordable housing, we will help ease the strain of housing costs, whilst our plans to drive up standards in

the private rental sector will make housing safer and more secure. We will act to bring down energy bills through our plan to retrofit millions of homes and bring them up to acceptable standards, tackling cold and draughty homes. Housing and housing insecurity are barriers for too many people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Labour will turn this tide, delivering the opportunities everyone deserves. We cannot do this through Westminster alone. Labour will work with local government to deliver on our strategy to tackle poverty allowing local leaders to deliver the most effective support that their communities need.

And we will tackle the wide-ranging health inequalities that exist, impacting on disadvantaged groups the most. Our reforms will prioritise giving every child the best start in life and we will do this through our children's health plan, which will include teaching children healthy habits in school, ending the promotion of junk foods and vapes targeted at children, and training more midwives and health visitors to give new parents greater support and advice.

### *Security in retirement*

The last Labour government halved pensioner poverty, but after 13 years of the Conservatives hundreds of thousands more pensioners, nearly one in five, are now living in poverty. In recent years too many people have had to contend with the instability and insecurity caused by the Conservatives repeatedly wavering over their commitment to the triple lock for the state pension.

The last Labour government legislated for the earnings link in the state pension, ensuring increases were written into law. The Tories broke their promise on the earnings link, and it was

Labour who pressured Tories to honour the triple lock the following year. The triple lock remains an important tool in ensuring older people are given security and dignity of a good pension at the end of their working life.

A Labour government will protect pensioners from the cost of living crisis and ensure that older people have security in retirement. We will implement a strategy for ageing well, including covering those approaching pension age, that values older people's voices, in close consultation with the groups affected.

Decent occupational pensions play an important role in tackling pensioner poverty, Labour will work with industry to ensure that workplace pensions provide a secure income through retirement.

We also want further partnership between employers and workers, based on shared responsibilities to make pensions contributions and plan for retirement, so that people can build up meaningful pension pots to provide financial security in retirement, including low earners who do not currently qualify, younger workers and the self-employed.

We will stand by increases to the state pension to protect pensioners from the cost of living crisis. Labour recognises the triple lock in how it has protected pensioners' incomes and providing certainty in retirement. That is why Labour has defended the triple lock when the Conservatives have sought to break their promises.

For dignified retirement, we need good workplace pensions on top of state pension. This includes encouraging good Defined Benefit schemes as well as Defined Contribution arrangements and Labour will work in partnership with industry to ensure these

schemes remain sustainable and provide a secure income throughout retirement. We will encourage the creation of Collective Defined Contribution (CDC) pensions and explore other policies that could encourage saving for retirement and better standard of living in old age, such as building on the success of the auto-enrolment scheme of the last Labour government. Parliament's current legislation that gives governments the power to lower the age criteria from 22 to 18 and remove the earning threshold has Labour's backing. Tackling the cost of living crisis is crucial to encourage and help workers save for their retirement.

We recognise the enormous damage that Tory economic mismanagement has done to life expectancy, which is now stalling or going backwards in some places. This has an impact on people's plans and decisions for retirement, which is why reviews of the retirement age must look at the impact on different groups of people from different working backgrounds and healthy life expectancy at retirement. This must include the impact on quality of life and life expectancy, and give proper notice and certainty.

We recognise the hardship faced by many of the 1950s women who were impacted by changes to their state pension age with insufficient notice. Labour will continue to engage respectfully with women born in the 1950s recognising the hardship they have faced.

## **Enriching family life**

A decent home and support in childhood, adulthood and in retirement are essential foundations. But family life is enriched through





our shared experiences of culture, media and sport bringing us all together and creating a shared sense of community.

### *Great British cultural institutions*

Labour believes in the importance and power of culture to build places that people can be proud of. Our great British cultural institutions are known and loved everywhere, from the BBC to Channel 4, from the British Museum to the Edinburgh Festival, from Glastonbury to the Eisteddfod.

Our iconic film, TV, music and culture thrives because of our public service broadcasters. The BBC has a vital role to play bringing the nation together, serving all sectors of UK society and delivering a world-leading service that is respected across the globe.

Labour will support the BBC to change with the times and adapt. We will bolster the BBC's independence and ensure that it can continue to be a universal, publicly-owned, publicly-funded public service broadcaster. We have set up an independent review panel ahead of the next charter period, to inform how we will ensure the long-term security of the BBC and a fair deal for licence fee payers.

We will protect and promote British broadcasting and UK radio in the streaming age, to ensure British made and produced content is easily available and accessible for audiences.

Labour recognises the important role BBC Alba plays in supporting creative jobs in rural and inland communities and in promoting Scottish Gaelic as one of the UK's living languages, and we continue to support this.

Trusted press and journalism play a vital and valued role in our democracy and faces many threats due to disinformation and

misinformation. News organisations should be held to the highest standards and are accountable for what they publish. Labour will also ensure publishers and journalists are fairly remunerated when their content is used online.

### *Sport that brings people together*

Sport sits at the heart of family life, from the communal experience of watching the Premier League or EFL, the FA Cup or Wimbledon to the bonds made and healthier lives led through participation in community sport. A Labour government will preserve the place of sport in our country's social fabric.

Labour has consistently backed fans and footballs clubs' calls for independent regulation and for a fair settlement across the leagues, while the Conservatives have flip flopped and delayed. A Labour government will introduce a statutory regulator for English football, with a strong voice for fans, financial regulation to prevent more clubs going bust, and distribution down the pyramid to support lower league clubs and communities.

For too long, the Conservatives have failed to update analogue gambling laws that are not designed for the digital age. Labour wants to see updated regulation for the 21st century; if the Conservatives continue to fail to act, the next Labour government will.

### *World-leading creative industries*

The UK's world-renowned creative industries are a huge asset to the UK's economy.

Labour will offer a 'creative compact' to deliver our mission on economic growth, while maintaining and enhancing the UK's world-leading position as a global hub of creativity. Labour will work with the Welsh Government to build on the success of Creative Wales, and partner with other

devolved governments to support creative industries across all four nations. This compact will make the creative industries a leading light of the economy, delivering sustainable growth in creative clusters across the country. Labour will maintain and build on our creative exports and global reputation. We will ensure the creative economy is open to everyone by breaking down barriers to opportunity and unlocking talent through offering flexible skills and training opportunities, with a commitment from industry to improve access and social mobility.

## Equality at the heart of all we do

Women, disabled people, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, LGBT+ people and working class people have borne the brunt of many of the Conservative government's failures over the last 13 years, leading to a less equal and less fair society. Inequality has risen under the Conservatives and the impact of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis has exposed deep underlying inequalities, which have been felt disproportionately by people who have already faced discrimination throughout their lives.

The next Labour government will ensure that equality is at the heart of all our policymaking as we look to build a more inclusive, more tolerant and more accessible society for all. Specific commitments to this effect are made throughout these final NPF policy documents: from implementing better ethnicity data and monitoring into the criminal justice system, to introducing mandatory ethnicity and disability pay gap reporting, and from our commitment to ensuring international development policy tackles deep-rooted gender inequality to

equalising the treatment of all protected groups under hate crime legislation.

Labour recognises women's economic inequalities come in many forms including unpaid care work and maternity discrimination. Labour's gender pay gap review will engage with the women's sector, trade unions, local government and business organisations to identify and eliminate these inequalities in earnings and small business financing. This includes policies to support working women, including self-employed women and mothers of young children in the New Deal for Working People. A Labour government would actively pursue global goals to achieve women's equality and empower all women and girls as set out in Section 5 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### *Building on our legacy*

Labour is proud to be the party of the Equality Act 2010 and we will protect and uphold it, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and ensure its provisions cover all parties exercising public functions. We will also seek to build on that achievement for all groups with protected characteristics in the next Labour government. We will enact the socioeconomic duty under Section 1 of the Equality Act and a Labour government will take its responsibility to conduct equality impact assessments of major announcements seriously. Following the success of All-Women Shortlists and their key role in finally achieving gender parity in the Parliamentary Labour Party, Labour in government will ensure that political parties can take the action necessary to deliver and maintain diverse elected representatives, including greater representation of Women, Black, Asian and minority ethnic people, disabled people and LGBT+ people, through positive action measures.



The Conservatives have spent 13 years neglecting women's equality: they have turned back the clock on women's workplace equality while violence against women and girls has sky-rocketed and women's healthcare has been deprioritised. The next Labour government will introduce a New Deal for Working People containing a raft of reforms to transform women's working lives including requiring large employers with more than 250 employees to produce Menopause Action Plans, setting out how they will support employees through the menopause, much like gender pay gap reporting. Labour will require all large employers to publish action plans detailing how they are supporting women experiencing menopause at work and we will publish guidance, including for small employers, on measures to consider relating to uniform and temperature, flexible working and recording menopause-related leave and absence. And we will ensure health and safety reflects the diversity of the workforce. Our Violence Against Women and Girls green paper sets out ambitions for a cross-government plan to end VAWG, and our NHS workforce pledge will train more doctors, nurses and midwives to bring down women's health waiting lists.

We will tackle structural racial inequality by introducing a Race Equality Act to deliver a better Britain for everyone. Labour recognises that structural racism harms our society in many ways, and that in areas from housing and employment to criminal justice and health, many Black, Asian and minority ethnic people continue to experience structural racial inequalities which inhibit progress. Labour will focus on ending these disparities in government, with our landmark Race Equality Act to tackle them at source.

Labour's new landmark Race Equality Act will introduce ethnicity pay gap reporting for large employers and include comprehensive action to tackle structural inequalities faced by Black, Asian and minority ethnic people so that everyone has a fair shot in the workplace.

As the party of equality, Labour will always treat all LGBT+ people fairly, with dignity and respect. Labour accepts everyone without exception. The next Labour government will build on the positive legacy of the last by breaking new ground for LGBT+ rights. Labour recognises the need for people to be able to explore their sexual orientation and gender identity, but that must not include any therapy that seeks to convert them. Labour would therefore introduce a full, no-loopholes, trans-inclusive ban on conversion therapy. The current process of gender recognition is intrusive, outdated, and humiliating. Labour will modernise, simplify and reform the gender recognition law to a new process, taking into account international evidence of what works effectively, while continuing to support the implementation of the 2010 Equality Act passed by the last Labour government, including its provision for single-sex exemptions. Labour will also work to end discrimination against trans people, non-binary and gender diverse people, and ensure they are treated with respect and dignity in society.

Labour's national health mission will tackle health inequalities, taking account of the specific and intersectional disparities facing women, Black, Asian and minority ethnic people, disabled people and LGBT+ people so that everyone can access treatment without risk of discrimination. We will ensure that the government and public sector are working to close gaps in access to care, delayed or mistaken diagnosis and language barriers.

As part of our commitment to introduce a new Race Equality Act that tackles structural racial inequalities, we will introduce reforms to care including a new target to close the Black maternal health gap. Labour will oversee one of the biggest NHS workforce expansions in history which will help cut huge waiting lists for specialist care faced especially by women, Black, Asian and minority ethnic and disabled and LGBT+ people and will allow us to incentivise continuity of care in maternity services by restoring relevant targets when staffing levels allow.

Labour will treat disabled people with respect and dignity. Labour will work with disabled people to create policies which remove barriers to equality and focus on their representation at all levels of government. The Labour Party is committed to the social model of disability, not the medical model, and also to the principle of working with disabled people throughout policy processes, often referred to as co-production. This acknowledges that life is made more challenging for disabled people because of barriers in society and structural inequalities, not by their illness or impairment. We will honour our commitments to the United Nations' Convention for the Rights of Disabled People and ensure its principles are reflected across government to create policies which remove barriers to equality and focus on disabled people's representation at all levels of government.

# BRITAIN IN THE WORLD





## Introduction

Britain has huge potential to be a force for good in the world. Labour is and has always been an internationalist party and under a Labour government, Britain will once again be a trusted partner in world affairs: promoting our values and interests while delivering prosperity and security at home.

Global challenges are growing, and the world is ever more interconnected, meaning that the effects of geopolitical frictions are felt right here in the UK. Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has brought war to Europe and driven up food and energy bills across the continent. The global pandemic sent shockwaves through the international system, with widespread disruption to supply chains. The climate emergency is prompting extreme weather, destroying crops and causing growing food shortages.

Yet in other ways, the world is becoming more divided. The global economy is splitting into competing blocs, with competition between the United States and an increasingly assertive China set to dominate the years ahead – but in a more fragmented and multipolar manner than the bipolar world of the Cold War. Regional powers, including the collective bloc of the EU, are asserting their own influence.

Over the last 13 years, successive Conservative governments have undermined British influence and strained relationships with key allies. Foreign policy has been misguided, misjudged and lacked purpose.

Britain needs a fresh start on the world stage.

Multilateral cooperation has never been so vital. Labour has stood firmly with NATO allies in support of Ukraine, as the world focuses

increasingly again on the importance of coordination in defence and security. Labour's commitment to NATO remains unshakeable.

A Labour government will reconnect Britain with our international partners, including through the UN, G7 and the Commonwealth, to ensure that as a country we fulfil our potential.

Through an active and engaged foreign policy, Labour will put our internationalist values into action, rebuilding neglected alliances by promoting solidarity and cooperation with our key partners. Labour will build and amplify Britain's influence in order to protect the British people, stand up for our values and defend our national interests.

For Labour, national security is the first priority of government. Our armed forces play a vital role in defending our country but have been let down by the Conservative government. Labour will stand up for armed forces personnel and their families, while ensuring veterans are treated with the respect they deserve.

The next Labour government will pursue a clear and coherent trade strategy that delivers economic growth at home, builds security and resilience into global supply chains and drives progress on fundamental issues such as climate change, anti-trafficking and workers' rights.

Labour will not return to the single market or customs union, but this does not mean we will turn away from Europe. Closer cooperation with our largest trading partner on a wide range of issues will be a core part of Labour's approach, as an essential pillar in delivering prosperity and security at home. The current government's Brexit deal has led to increased bureaucracy, putting jobs and investment at risk in sectors like chemicals, science and the

automotive industry. A Labour government will seek to support businesses and consumers by working to reduce unnecessary red tape.

Labour is committed to re-establishing Britain's leading role in development. A Labour government will modernise our approach to international development in order to tackle poverty, conflict, inequality, displacement of people and global health insecurity.

## **National security as our first priority**

A Labour government will fulfil its first duty: to keep Britain safe and protect our citizens. In an increasingly unstable world, Labour will make Britain strong abroad and secure at home.

Labour's commitment to NATO is unshakeable. A Labour government will defend Article V as the cornerstone of our commitment to Britain's security and ensure that the UK is the leading European nation in the alliance.

To ensure that the UK meets its NATO obligations, a Labour government will apply a 'NATO test' to major defence programmes in government to ensure our NATO commitments are fulfilled in full. In government, Labour will never allow defence spending to fall below our NATO commitments.

### *Modernising our armed forces and backing British business*

The UK needs modern armed forces combined with coordinated and integrated security services to counter emerging and interconnected threats around the world while identifying and preparing for future challenges. In government, Labour will conduct a Strategic Defence and Security Review to ensure that we fully understand the nature of these threats

and align defence and security spending accordingly. Labour will ensure our armed forces and security services always have the capabilities necessary to defend the UK.

As the party of working people, Labour understands that defence procurement plays a key part in strengthening the UK's economy and its sovereignty. Since 2010, the Conservatives have wasted billions of pounds of taxpayers' money through mismanagement of the defence procurement system. For this reason, military strategic leadership and defence procurement reform will be a priority for a Labour government, to ensure our troops have the kit they need to fight and fulfil our NATO obligations. Labour will also commission a comprehensive audit of departmental waste at the Ministry of Defence. Labour will ensure that our NATO defence spending commitment is always met, that the UK defence manufacturing base receives the investment it needs to grow and our armed forces have the equipment needed to defend the UK and provide long-term assistance to Ukraine.

The defence sector plays a vital role in supporting UK jobs and growth, a key part of Labour's wider commitment to buy, make and sell more in Britain. Labour sees our steel sector, shipyards, aerospace and materials industries as national assets and will ensure as much of our equipment as possible is designed and built here in the UK. In government, Labour will make it fundamental to direct British defence investment first to British business, with a higher bar set for any decisions to buy abroad. Defence procurement strengthens our economy and sovereignty. Labour is committed to reforming defence procurement, recognising that British investment can be directed first to British industry when decisions





consider factors such as good employer weightings and taxation paid in the UK.

Labour will end the Conservatives' policy of sending defence shipbuilding contracts overseas, and Labour will work to secure a 30-year pipeline of orders that can deliver investment and high-quality apprenticeships in the UK's shipyards that are essential to our national security.

### *Defence procurement and steel*

The defence sector plays a vital role in supporting UK jobs and growth, a key part of Labour's wider commitment to buy, make and sell more in Britain. Labour sees our steel sector, shipyards, aerospace and materials industries as national assets and will ensure as much of our equipment as possible is designed and built here in the UK.

### *Working in partnership with allies*

In response to Vladimir Putin's illegal and brutal invasion of Ukraine, Labour guarantees continued long-term UK support for Ukraine and will work with allies to provide the assistance it needs to defend itself.

Indeed, increased cooperation with our closest allies will be fundamental to Labour's approach to defence. This will include a new EU-UK security pact to strengthen our resilience to new threats and developing the new AUKUS partnership with Australia and the United States, which has the potential to deliver long-term jobs for British industry.

Labour's support for nuclear deterrence is absolute. It provides vital protection for the UK and our NATO allies. As one of the five recognised nuclear powers in the non-proliferation treaty and a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, we also want to see Britain doing more to lead efforts to

secure strategic arms limitation and multilateral disarmament and reduce nuclear risk, working with international partners and NGOs.

### *Supporting our veterans and armed forces personnel*

Labour will ensure there is a strong voice – in parliament and outside Westminster – for our forces, veterans and their families. With the Conservatives in power, veterans' services are currently a postcode lottery – a betrayal of the men and women who have selflessly served their country and put themselves at risk to protect us all, undertaking the ultimate public service. A future Labour government will tackle this head on, with better support as troops transition into civilian life, improved mental health services for veterans, and fairer access to justice for personnel.

Labour will fully incorporate the Armed Forces Covenant into law, fulfilling the moral contract our society makes with those who serve. This starts with tackling the poor state of service accommodation currently provided to our serving personnel, and ensuring that former personnel have easy access to high quality, affordable homes fit for heroes. Labour would also scrap visa fees for non-UK veterans and their dependents if they have served four years or more in British forces.

Labour recognises the outstanding contribution of Gurkha veterans as soldiers in the British Army and we will engage with them in government on all the issues that concern them.

## **Britain reconnected: foreign policy**

Reconnecting Britain on the world stage will play a crucial role in driving prosperity and security at home. Labour will use Britain's many

strengths to deliver for the British people here at home. We will once again be a confident country, a reliable partner, a dependable ally and a good neighbour.

In government, Labour will face the task of repairing Britain's damaged reputation and rebuilding fractured relationships with our key partners. This begins by championing international law and universal human rights at home and abroad, as well as the multilateral treaties that uphold them.

Britain has grown increasingly isolated and has lost influence in the world over the course of 13 years of Conservative government. This has sent a clear and highly damaging message to the rest of the world: that Britain can no longer be relied upon to uphold the international rule of law.

A Labour government will repair that damage and reconnect Britain with the world. We will unite like-minded nations behind a new outward-looking, forward-thinking foreign policy.

### *Ukraine*

Labour will continue to support the people of Ukraine in their efforts to defend their sovereign territory. This includes providing Ukrainian forces with the equipment and training they need to protect their homeland.

In government, Labour will push for the international community to hold Vladimir Putin and his cronies to account. This includes the dictatorship in Belarus, where Labour will continue to support brave opposition leaders.

Putin and his cronies must face justice for their crimes. Labour supports the International Criminal Court's issuing of an arrest warrant for Putin and his associates, and will push for the creation of a special tribunal to hold Russia to

account for the crime of aggression. We will pursue legal mechanisms in the UK to seize and repurpose frozen Russian assets so they can be used to pay for a socially-just reconstruction of Ukraine. Our plan includes completing the Register of Overseas Entities at Companies House and closing loopholes in identifying frozen Russian assets.

### *An improved relationship with Europe*

To deliver prosperity at home, it is vital to re-establish the UK as a trusted and reliable partner. As part of our mission for the UK to achieve the highest sustained economic growth in the G7, Labour will seek to improve the UK's trade and investment relationship with Europe while maintaining its new role outside of the single market and customs union.

As part of the review of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) in 2025, a future Labour government will seek to reduce trade barriers for British business and ensure better access for professionals providing services in EU markets. Labour will aim to fix the problems with the current deal by strengthening mutual recognition of professional standards and qualifications to unlock trade in services, as well as unblocking participation in the Horizon scheme to unleash research and development. We will also improve links between our students and universities.

Labour will also begin to develop long-term structures to ensure cooperation between the UK and EU in key areas such as the green just transition, energy, cultural exchange, tackling cross border crime and protecting supply chains by removing trade barriers in food manufacturing and supply, improving food security here within the UK.



## *Building multilateral alliances to tackle growing threats*

To help tackle the climate emergency, Labour's foreign policy will include a strong green agenda. At the heart of this will be a new Clean Power Alliance, a coalition of nations committed to achieving 100 per cent clean power by 2030. By working as an 'inverse OPEC', this alliance will share the explicit goal of reducing energy prices at home and abroad, while helping free countries around the world from dependency on dictators like Putin. At the United Nations, Labour will also push for climate action as a fourth pillar.

Just as it helped create structures like NATO to protect western democracies against external threats, Labour will drive forward cooperation to protect democracies from hostile entities, tackle tax avoidance and ensure key infrastructure is resilient to outside threats.

## *A holistic approach in a multipolar world*

Beyond Europe and the US, Labour will seek the benefits of wider cooperation. In an increasingly multipolar world, it will be vital to build our relations with a rising India and rapidly growing African nations. We will deepen our relationship with countries in the Global South, building modern partnerships based on mutual respect. We will make best use of the unique framework of the Commonwealth to address shared challenges like climate change. Labour's holistic approach will connect development, trade and foreign policy into a new coherent strategy that aims to tackle the root causes of poverty and inequality, delivering both at home and abroad.

A future Labour government will take a strong, clear-eyed and consistent approach to China, standing firm in defence of national security,

international law and human rights, while engaging on key areas of cooperation like climate change, trade and global health. Labour will carry out a complete audit of UK-China relations to ensure the relationship reflects Britain's long-term interests and values. The Labour Party has consistently raised the plight of the Uyghur people and the dismantling of democracy in Hong Kong.

The Labour Party has also expressed clear and serious concern about China's increasingly aggressive actions towards Taiwan and the attempts to intimidate its democratic leaders, alongside broader aggression in the region. In government, we will support dialogue and peaceful moves to address issues across the region.

In Kashmir, Labour supports and recognises UN resolutions on the rights of the Kashmiri people but maintains that a lasting settlement to end this conflict can only be achieved by India and Pakistan working together with the people of Kashmir. Labour will call for thorough and transparent investigations of allegations of human rights violations.

There must also be a negotiated, diplomatic agreement to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on two states: a safe and secure Israel, alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state. There will not be a just, lasting peace until the occupation is brought to a permanent end, and both Palestinians and Israelis enjoy security, dignity and human rights. Labour condemns the use of violence against civilians in this conflict.

The Labour Party will work alongside international partners to recognise the state of Palestine alongside the state of Israel, as part of efforts to contribute to securing a negotiated two state solution. With a deteriorating security

situation and the lack of a meaningful peace process between Israel and Palestine, a future Labour government will lead diplomatic efforts with international partners to support a just and lasting peace and uphold international law as a matter of priority.

Labour's comprehensive approach will also maximise the role of Britain's great strengths, from world-class universities and cutting-edge technologies, to our vibrant cultural industries. Protecting the role of the BBC World Service and the British Council will form a key part of Labour's plans to restore Britain's soft power, giving us a stronger voice on the world stage.

## Trade policy that delivers for every part of the country

The Labour Party is proudly pro-trade, pro-worker and pro-business. International trade has a key role to play in Labour's mission to sustain the highest economic growth in the G7.

In government, Labour will seek to boost exports from, and investment into, every region and nation of the UK. Export-led growth plays a vital role in creating regional jobs and supporting communities here in the UK. To ensure the benefits are distributed across the country, Labour will work closely with devolved governments, trade unions, and local authorities, and introduce new binding responsibilities for trade negotiators to deliver for the whole of the UK.

### *Scrutiny and engagement in trade negotiations*

Too often under the Conservatives, trade negotiations are conducted with a worrying lack of scrutiny and consultation, with no voice for trade unions or business at the negotiating stage and minimal parliamentary debate. As a

result, existing trade deals have sold British workers short and overlooked key issues like climate change, equality and community impacts.

The Conservative government's failure to engage effectively with workers' representatives in the negotiations process is unacceptable, as trade union members are among those best placed to outline tangible impacts of trade policy. A Labour government will establish structures that give business and trade unions guaranteed engagement with the government to inform our approach to future trade deals.

As part of ensuring trade works for the whole of the UK, Labour will ensure that trade negotiators work meaningfully with devolved governments to help promote their visions for economic growth.

Labour will also reform the Trade Remedies Authority, to safeguard industry from trade dumping practices and better take account of the UK regional impact of trade injuries and their impact on nationally important industries.

### *A stronger trading relationship with Europe*

Outside the single market and customs union, the UK must work closely with our friends and allies in the European Union. Improving trade and investment relationships with the EU and tearing down trade barriers will be vital to Labour's mission to boost economic growth.

For this reason, we will seek to secure a veterinary and phytosanitary agreement with the EU and mutual recognition of professional qualifications, as well as improving scientific collaboration through Horizon. We will also push for an EU visa waiver for UK touring artists and the reduction of other administrative burdens.



We will work with businesses including creative industries to ensure they have the skills to allow business and research to grow, as well as working with European partners to ease travel disruption at the border.

We will also work to address the lack of regard the Conservative government has given to our services sector and the barriers it now faces in trading with our nearest neighbours.

Labour will not seek to initiate a race to the bottom with EU neighbours. Instead, a Labour government will maintain high standards in areas such as workers' rights, environmental protections and production standards. Together, these will work to significantly improve export opportunities for British businesses.

### *Trade as a tool in tackling the climate crisis*

A future Labour government will use international trade to boost our mission to make Britain a clean energy superpower, working with international partners to coordinate our approach to green investment and ensure international trade can facilitate a global green transition.

Labour will ensure outside green investment will benefit all parts of our country. A Labour government will establish Climate Export Hubs in each nation and region of the UK, to take the innovation driven by our Green Prosperity Plan and export it to the world. These hubs will work with businesses, universities and other innovators in every nation and region of the country to export UK climate science innovations to the world, creating skilled jobs and opportunities nationwide.

Labour is committed to buy, make and sell more in Britain. With Labour the UK will lead in international discussions to modernise

trade rules to reflect the need for security in strategic supply chains, supporting domestic manufacturing.

The next Labour government will strengthen domestic supply chains and encourage the re-shoring of jobs.

Labour will examine the best way to mitigate the risk of carbon leakage to ensure that energy-intensive sectors like steel remain competitive, and will consider the conclusion of the government's consultation on a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, among other approaches.

### *A values-based approach to trade*

In contrast to the Conservatives' reckless approach to international rules, Labour will restore our global reputation by abiding by international law and our treaty obligations including free trade agreements.

In government, Labour will aim to strike trade deals that prioritise jobs, businesses and livelihoods while promoting Labour values around the world, including human rights, workers' rights, trade union freedom, equality, protecting our environment and ensuring the highest standards for consumers. Labour will ensure that our trade policy and negotiations protects and strengthens our public services and the supply chains that support them. Labour's progressive trade policy will deliver for all.

For Labour, protecting and embedding workers' rights in trade deals will always be essential. This includes the use of human rights protection clauses to tackle the use of modern slavery in supply chains.

The Conservatives have an appalling record on enforcing human rights clauses. In line with existing international standards, a Labour

government will assess the best way to prevent environmental harms, modern slavery and human and labour rights abuses in both private and public sector supply chains including effective due diligence rules. Labour's trade strategy will champion human rights, promoting equality for people at home and abroad.

Labour has repeatedly highlighted the weaknesses in the UK's arms export regime that the government has failed to address. In government, Labour would establish a new arms export regime that is truly transparent, free from arbitrary judgements and committed to upholding international law.

## **A strong, humane asylum policy**

Over the last 13 years, successive Conservative governments have overwhelmingly failed to maintain a functional asylum system, relying on dangerous rhetoric and prioritising short-term gimmicks over long-term solutions. Criminal gangs continue to profit as Conservative ministers stagger from one failed plan to the next.

The Conservatives' Illegal Migration Bill is unworkable, unethical and will not prevent dangerous boat crossings putting lives at risk, will make it easier for people traffickers to exploit their victims and makes the asylum backlog worse.

Labour will take strong action to tackle channel crossings, reduce the asylum backlog and make sure Britain plays its part internationally through a fair and transparent asylum policy that does not discriminate.

Labour will ensure we have a fair, effective and properly managed asylum system and

strong border security, so the UK does our bit alongside other countries to help those fleeing persecution and conflict.

### *Ending the backlog*

We need proactive measures to speed up asylum decisions. The current backlog is leaving huge numbers of people in limbo, placing costs on the taxpayer and leaving vulnerable people housed in unsuitable hotels.

Labour will speed up asylum decisions and clear the backlog. We will make processing more efficient, restore casework targets and introduce fast-track processing for safe countries where people can be returned.

### *Legal routes and safe returns*

Labour will ensure we have a fair, effective and properly managed asylum system and strong border security, so the UK does our bit alongside other countries to help those fleeing persecution and conflict.

Labour will also redesign existing resettlement schemes, which are not working properly as safe legal routes, for example providing a clearer process for refugees with family connections in the UK to be considered for resettlement, preventing them being exploited by criminal gangs or making dangerous journeys. We will ensure that there is no return to the indefinite detention of child refugees.

Following the UK's exit from the European Union, Labour will also negotiate a replacement for the Dublin Agreement that includes safe returns of those who arrive in the UK and safe family reunions.

### *Tackling small boat crossings*

A Labour government will crack down on the criminal gangs that are fuelling and facilitating small boat crossings. Labour will end the Conservatives' unworkable and unethical



Rwanda deportation scheme, invest in the National Crime Agency and will establish a new cross-border police unit with officers based throughout Europe to tackle the gangs upstream.

Collaboration with international allies will be key to this approach, and Labour will work with partners in the EU, Northern Africa, Europol and elsewhere to address crises leading people to flee their homes and provide the leadership needed to tackle criminal gangs and prevent boat crossings.

## A new model for international development

Labour will restore Britain's leadership in international development. This will ensure that we are ready to play our part in tackling the converging global crises of poverty, famine, inequality, health insecurity and climate change, and get the UN Sustainable Development Goals back on track.

This is rooted in the knowledge that an effective development strategy also works in Britain's national interest, making people here safer and more secure.

### *British aid strategy*

The Conservatives' cuts to the development budget have caused immense damage, with billions stripped from vital lifesaving programmes. This includes cutting support for vulnerable women and girls in Afghanistan and malnourished children in some of the world's poorest countries.

Labour is committed to spending 0.7 per cent of GNI on development as soon as the fiscal situation allows. This will be implemented alongside the restoration of transparency and

accountability to British aid spending, ensuring that taxpayer money is always treated with the respect it deserves.

### *Improved international development policymaking*

The Conservatives' mismanaged merger of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department of International Development (DfID) has deprioritised development and led to a concerning loss of expertise, tarnishing the UK's reputation as an international development superpower.

Labour has a proud record on international development, establishing DfID in the first place and in doing so helping to make Britain a world leader in development expertise.

A future Labour government will therefore put in place a new model for international development, with global leadership and the independence needed to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Labour understands that development policy must look beyond the provision of aid. Debt payments for the poorest countries are at the highest level for 25 years. Building on the successes of the last Labour government, a future Labour government will restore Britain's global leadership in tackling the build-up of unsustainable debt by actively exploring incentives, regulatory and legislative, for debt relief, including multilateral initiatives.

It is investment in long-term development that can better equip us to face global challenges, and must be built around partnerships and cooperation. To this end, Labour has outlined its commitment to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as a framework for rebuilding partnerships around the core principle of leaving no-one behind.

## *Tackling 21st century challenges and inequalities*

The pandemic exposed widespread inequalities in Britain and abroad. In the global south, clear gender disparities were exacerbated by poor access to health, education and basic supplies. In recognition of the disproportionate impacts of poverty on women and girls, the next Labour government will ensure international development policy tackles deep-rooted gender inequality and violence and harassment against women and girls globally. This will include supporting the development of quality, gender sensitive, public services. The United Kingdom ratified the United Nations' Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1986. Labour will honour our commitments and seek to ensure its principles are reflected across government.

As the world continues to recover from the outbreak of Covid-19, a new Labour government will help prepare for future pandemics by strengthening global health systems. The UK will look to work with international health organisations, such as the World Health Organisation and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. This will focus on establishing a new international mechanism to rapidly produce and distribute vaccines, share technology, knowledge and skills, and build the infrastructure needed to deliver it.

A Labour government will ensure climate is considered in every aspect of UK development policy. We recognise and support the UK's role in providing climate finance for lower income countries.









