

CHANGING BRITAIN TOGETHER

LABOUR WILL

1. Raise the Minimum Wage to £8 an hour and ban exploitative zero hour contracts
2. Freeze energy bills until 2017 while reforming the broken energy market
3. Cut the deficit more fairly by asking those earning over £150,000 to contribute a little more through a 50p rate of tax
4. Get at least 200,000 homes built a year by 2020 and deliver a fairer deal for private renters
5. Scrap the Bedroom Tax
6. Require all firms that have a major government contract to offer apprenticeships
7. Repeal the Tories' plans to bring competition and privatisation to the NHS
8. Ensure the NHS has time to care with 8,000 more doctors and 20,000 more nurses, funded by a mansion tax on homes worth over £2m
9. Control immigration so that entitlements to benefits are earned and wages are not undercut
10. Devolve power to Scotland, Wales, and the cities and counties of England

ED MILIBAND

My mission is to make Britain work for everyone, not just for a privileged few. Building a recovery that works for you and your family, ensuring that the next generation does better than the last and that the NHS has time to care for those that need it most.

Over the last four years we have worked hard to listen and respond to you: the British people. With just months to go before the next General Election I want to give you a sense of what we have heard and how we will seek to turn things around.

People are they being told there is a recovery when they aren't feeling the benefits. They are working hard, but not being rewarded. Young people fear that they are going to have a worse life than their parents. Even those making a decent living are often still unable to afford to buy a house. Families worry that the NHS, one of the foundation stones of their security, is under threat. Meanwhile they see a privileged few doing better and better.

These are symptoms of a country that is too unequal. It is a country I am determined to change and that is why I want to be your Prime Minister.

Some people say this is too difficult, that it doesn't matter which party you vote for. Or that Britain not working for hardworking people is just the way things are, especially when there is a deficit to bring down. I don't agree and the policies outlined here show why. There is a very real choice on offer. I am proud of our policy programme, our plan for Britain.

This isn't our manifesto, because there is more to come and we want your ideas. But in setting out our priorities for Britain it should give you an idea of just how deep our commitment to change runs. It explains how together we can build our economy on the success of the many, a society based on our shared values and a politics that gives power away instead of guarding it. And it shows that even when there is less money around we can change things with big reform not big spending.

Millions of people in this country are resting their hopes for a fairer, more just, more equal Britain on us. We will not let them down.

As we finalise our manifesto we want to hear your views about this plan and what else we need to do. Please get in touch by visiting labour.org.uk/changingbritaintogether.



Ed Miliband
Leader of the Labour Party

PS. Opposite are just 10 ways in which we believe that together we should change Britain.

Even if you don't have lots of time you can hopefully see what's at stake for our country.



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INTRODUCTION

Life is getting harder for so many people in this country. Under this Government people have increasingly seen working life become more stressful, precarious and poorly paid. The younger generation have seen their employment prospects hit hard, and have been shut out of the housing market. Poverty and inequality are increasing. In many communities there is a sense of being abandoned. People feel that something has been taken from their lives that they will never get back.

The Conservatives didn't cause all of these problems but they have made them worse. Their divisive policies mean they cannot renew our country nor unite us around the things we have in common as a nation. They have broken their promise to reduce the deficit, borrowing £219 billion more than they planned. In 2015, George Osborne will leave the country with a deficit close to £76 billion,

the national debt still rising, and a trade deficit grown to £31 billion. That's why we need a new start. The British people are proud and patriotic. They want the chance to use their skills and talents to make a better life for themselves, their children and our country. There is a fantastic energy and willingness to work hard and to build a better future.

But without radical reform to our economy, the future will only belong to the few. And because our system of government is failing people, politics has to change too. With the need to bring down the deficit and no room for more spending, we literally cannot afford to continue with the status quo. Our task is one of big reform not big spending.

In 2015 Labour will begin laying the foundations of a new economy and a new approach to government. We will devolve power, not just to Scotland and Wales but to our great English cities and counties

too. We will reform markets and institutions, from energy to the banks, to deal with the causes of our economic problems.

We will share power and responsibility with people to help them help themselves and shape their services in response to their personal circumstances. We will invest to prevent social problems, promoting early intervention,

rather than wasting money reacting to problems. We will increase the local power of local places by building cooperation among public services and organisations, pooling funds to stop inefficiency and avoid duplication.

We will promote a model of citizenship based on the give and take of contribution and shared responsibility, with new approaches on immigration and social security. A Labour government will lend a helping hand but we will also ask more of people. Everyone will need to contribute and play their part in building a better country.

By sharing power and responsibility with people we will renew our traditions as a party of work, family and community. We will work to create trust again in our democracy and we will build a strong, inclusive economy together. The following pages spell out our ideas about how we will do it.

without radical reform to our economy, the future will only belong to the few

A FAIR PLAN TO DEAL WITH THE DEFICIT

Britain has experienced the slowest economic recovery in over a hundred years. This has not only led to a cost-of-living crisis, it has meant the Tory-led Government has failed to get the deficit down too. Because when people's earnings are squeezed so is the tax we bring in.

In 2010 David Cameron and George Osborne pledged to balance the books by 2015. But they are on course to break this promise, instead still borrowing over £90 billion this year and with a large deficit set to remain next year.

As well as failing on the deficit the Tories have failed to address it fairly, raising VAT for ordinary working families while giving those earning over £150,000 a £3 billion tax cut.

KEY FACTS

- **The Government has borrowed £219 billion more than they planned.**
- **David Cameron raised VAT costing hardworking families £450 each, while cutting tax for people earning over £150,000.**
- **Tax and benefit changes since 2010 mean that families are set to be on average £974 a year worse off by the time of the General Election.**

RHETORIC

"In five years' time, we will have balanced the books."

David Cameron
Speech to CBI,
25 October 2010



REALITY

Borrowing over the parliament is set to be £219 billion higher than was forecast in 2010.

#onlyforafew

LABOUR'S PLAN

In 2015 we will have to plan on the basis of falling departmental spending. The current day-to-day spending totals for 2015-16 will have to remain our starting point, with no additional borrowing for day-to-day spending.

We can only properly reduce the deficit if our recovery is balanced, long-term and delivers rising living standards for the many. So the next Labour Government will balance the books and get debt falling, but we will make different, and fairer, choices.

We will ensure that the burden is fairly shared by restoring the 50p rate on incomes over £150,000, while helping those on middles and lower incomes by introducing a lower 10p starting rate of tax. And in tough times we will remove Winter Fuel Payment from the richest five per cent of pensioners and cap increases in child benefit at one per cent for the first two years of the Parliament.

The next Labour Government will work to change Britain at a time when money is tight – it will be about big reform not big spending. So our manifesto will contain no spending commitments without saying where every penny of the money is coming from – we will not make promises we cannot keep and cannot afford.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Balance the books and deliver a surplus on the current budget and falling national debt as soon as possible in the next Parliament.**
- **Reverse the 50p tax cut so that those at the top will pay a little more and introduce a lower 10p starting rate of tax, paid for by scrapping the unfair Marriage Tax Allowance.**
- **Stop paying the winter fuel allowance to the richest five per cent of pensioners.**
- **Cut ministerial pay until we have balanced the books.**
- **Ensure every commitment in our manifesto is fully funded, with no additional borrowing.**

SUPPORTING GROWTH AND BUSINESS

Britain will never succeed if it tries to compete with a low wage, low skill business model – a race to the bottom in which ordinary, working people are always the losers. This approach will not secure more and better paid jobs for the longer-term. Nor will it lead to the more resilient and competitive economy that Britain needs following the financial crisis.

Like families, businesses are being hit by the cost of living crisis too. Many small and medium sized firms are struggling with rising costs and a lack of finance from the banks – a problem that must be solved in order to get our economy growing in a more balanced way.

KEY FACTS

- **Business lending is down by over £50 billion since May 2010.**
- **The Tory-led Government has failed to deliver on infrastructure with infrastructure output down since May 2010.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

We believe that prosperity must be built by the many, not the few. That means winning a race to the top, with well paid, high skilled jobs in new industries, and more people setting up, leading and succeeding in business. This private sector growth needs to be supported by an active government, investing for the long-term, setting clear priorities, and enabling businesses to grow.

Labour's focus will be on raising productivity, generating sustainable growth, creating more well-paid jobs, and broadening our economic base across more regions and sectors. To support this, Labour will reform our banking system so that it works for businesses and families, back small business that is the backbone of our economy, including by ensuring they are paid on time by their suppliers, and devolve power from Whitehall to our towns and cities.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Cut business rates in 2015 and then freeze them in 2016 for over 1.5 million business properties.**
- **Devolve £30 billion of funding and give control over the full revenue from the growth in business rates to powerhouse economic regions so they can back local growth.**
- **Reform our banking system: taxing bank bonuses and increasing competition with at least two new challenger banks on the high street.**
- **Introduce a new levy on payday lenders and use the funds raised to boost low cost alternatives like credit unions.**
- **Create a British Investment Bank along with a network of regional banks to boost lending for small businesses to grow.**
- **Establish an Infrastructure Commission to plan and secure the infrastructure that Britain needs.**
- **Safeguard the services consumers and businesses get from the privatised Royal Mail and keep the remaining 30 per cent in public ownership.**

CREATING LOW CARBON JOBS

Climate change is real, man-made and happening. But David Cameron mistakenly believes there is a trade-off between protecting British jobs and tackling climate change,

In betraying his promise to lead the greenest government ever, David Cameron has undermined Britain's ability to compete for a global green industry market worth £3.4 trillion a year and growing. Supporting our low-carbon industries, creating new high skill, high paying jobs in green technology, should be an essential part of a strategy to earn our way out of the cost-of-living crisis. Instead, the Tory-led Government has put jobs at risk by undermining the strength of one of our key industrial sectors.

KEY FACTS

- **Britain lags behind Germany, India, Japan, China and the United States in green investment.**
- **With the Tory-led Government Britain risks falling further back – UK renewables investment fell from \$14.3 billion in 2012 to \$13.1 billion in 2013.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

Labour will make Britain a world leader in low carbon technology and green jobs. We are determined to take advantage of the opportunities arising from the low-carbon economy. When we open new renewable energy sites, we want to see British manufacturing companies producing the plants, equipment and technology that make them possible. Britain's low carbon industries can create a million more of the high skilled jobs we need to win the race to the top.

We will make Britain the most attractive place in the world to invest in low-carbon technologies, setting a legal target to remove the carbon from our electricity supply and developing an active industrial strategy for the green economy. We will strengthen the Green Investment Bank with borrowing powers, ensuring it is better placed to support investment in small and medium green businesses seeking to grow.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Create a million new high technology, green jobs by 2025.**
- **Set a legal target for decarbonising electricity by 2030.**
- **Strengthen the Green Investment Bank with borrowing powers.**
- **Insulate five million homes over the next ten years.**

MAKING WORK PAY AND TACKLING EXPLOITATION AT WORK

In Britain today the link between the wealth of our nation and family finances has been broken. The result is a cost-of-living crisis for millions of hard working people, who are left feeling more precarious and insecure. Half of all those in poverty live in working households. Over five million people are in low paid jobs - one in five workers. Meanwhile, from allowing the exploitation of zero-hours contracts, to the introduction of employment tribunal fees the Tory-led Government is failing to live up to its responsibilities to protect the vulnerable and ensure people are able to earn their way to higher living standards.

KEY FACTS

- **Since 2010 people are on average earning £1,600 less a year after inflation.**
- **More children in poverty are growing up in working households than workless ones.**
- **There are 1.4 million zero hour contracts in Britain today.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

We need to change our economy to make it work for working people, tackling the root causes of the problems we face. No-one should go out to a hard day's work and be rewarded by living in poverty.

Labour will tackle the low pay and insecurity that is fuelling the cost-of-living crisis, halving the number of people on low pay in our country by 2025, changing the lives of over two million people. To do this we'll raise the National Minimum Wage to £8 an hour before the end of the next Parliament, while strengthening enforcement so that those paying less than the minimum wage do not get away with it. Meanwhile we will promote the Living Wage with government using its spending power to encourage more employers to pay it and tax rebates for businesses who sign up in the first year of a Labour Government.

Good workplaces are not just beneficial for employees; they are good for business and our economy as a whole. So as well as tackling low pay, we will tackle the causes of insecurity at work, including by banning exploitative zero hours contracts.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Increase the National Minimum Wage to £8 an hour before the end of the Parliament.**
- **Give Local Authorities a role in enforcing the National Minimum Wage.**
- **Ban exploitative zero hour contracts so that if you work regular hours you get a regular contract.**
- **Reform the employment tribunal system to ensure workplace justice is affordable.**
- **Abolish the loophole that allows firms to pay agency workers less than permanent staff.**
- **Launch an inquiry into blacklisting in the construction industry.**

CREATING OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

For too long, our education system has been focused only on providing opportunity through A-Levels and university. It has failed to provide alternatives for those who do not choose that path. As a result, many talented young people, for whom a quality vocational qualification would have been a better option, have been let down by a system that offers no clear route to a successful career.

This is limiting life chances for young people while preventing businesses from getting the skills they need to succeed - holding Britain back. Yet instead of ensuring we compete with our European counterparts in delivering opportunities for all young people, the Government has downgraded apprenticeships and neglected vocational education, treating them as the second class option.

KEY FACTS

- **Just one in ten employers in Britain offer apprenticeships.**
- **Less than 60 per cent of students have five good GCSEs including English and maths by age 16. And less than a fifth of young people without good English and maths grades at 16 go on to achieve these by 18.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

To build the kind of economy Britain needs to compete with our European and global neighbours we need to make best use of the talents of all of our young people. That means taking a new approach to how we educate and train them – one which offers opportunities for everyone to succeed. So Labour will radically reform vocational education and apprenticeships, creating a higher skilled workforce, driving up productivity and underpinning higher wages.

Our plan for transforming vocational education includes a gold standard 'Technical Baccalaureate' in schools and colleges, many more apprenticeships and the introduction of Technical Degrees. And to help give vocational training equal status with academic studies in our education system we'll transform good FE colleges into new specialist Institutes of Technical Education.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Introduce a new gold standard Technical Baccalaureate for 16-18 year olds.**
- **Ensure that all young people study English and maths to 18.**
- **Require every firm getting a major government contract to offer apprenticeships.**
- **Give businesses more control over apprenticeships in exchange for offering more opportunities and raise the standard and quality of apprenticeships so they last a minimum of two years.**
- **Require large employers hiring skilled workers from outside the EU to offer apprenticeships.**
- **Create thousands more apprenticeships in the public sector.**
- **Introduce new Technical Degrees delivered by universities and employers.**

DELIVERING RESPONSIBLE AND FAIR SOCIAL SECURITY

There are too many insecure, low paid jobs in Britain. This doesn't just undermine our ability to earn our way out of the cost-of-living crisis, it means more welfare spending too. The Tory-led Government has failed to address this problem. Their reforms are not working, hardship is increasing, and the costs of their failure are mounting.

Because our economy is not working for everyday working people, the Government is spending billions more on social security than planned while its attempts to reform welfare have led to a catalogue of chaos, waste and unfairness.

KEY FACTS

- **An increase in low-paid jobs is pushing up the benefit bill, as working families are forced to rely on welfare to make ends meet.**
- **The housing benefit bill has gone up under the Tories, while we have seen house building levels at their lowest in peace time since the 1920s.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

Britain needs a responsible and fair social security system. One that rewards contribution, and protects those who cannot work or cannot earn enough to support themselves and their families. It also needs to be affordable.

Keeping social security spending under control, and putting decent values at the heart of the system, are not conflicting priorities, but go hand in hand.

Labour will build a social security system which ensures those who are able to work find a job, and supports people when they need it. We will control the overall cost of social security spending by tackling the root causes of rising spending. That means making work pay and building houses once again. Only by getting more people into work, and creating better paid and more secure jobs, will we tackle the drivers of rising benefit bills and ensure the system is sustainable for the long term.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Introduce a Compulsory Jobs Guarantee, paid for by a bank bonus tax, to provide a paid starter job for every young person unemployed for over a year.**
- **Abolish the cruel, costly and failing Bedroom Tax.**
- **Reform the Work Capability Assessment so it focuses on the support disabled people need to work.**
- **Cap structural social security spending as part of each Spending Review so that it is properly planned and controlled.**
- **Allow councils that make savings in the Housing Benefit bill to recycle them into building homes.**

TRANSPORT

The rising cost of transport is a central part of the cost of living crisis. People are being squeezed by eye-watering fare increases on buses and railways, and a reduction in the quantity and quality of local bus services. Since 2010, rail fares have risen by 20 per cent on average leaving British rail passengers paying the highest rail fares in Europe.

This has been allowed to happen because David Cameron has chosen to stand up for the companies who operate our rail and bus services, rather than empowering the passengers and communities who rely on them.

At the same time motorists have seen the quality of our roads deteriorate with rising congestion and promised road improvements not being delivered.

KEY FACTS

- Rail fares are up an average of 20 per cent since 2010, while wages have fallen.
- 2,262 miles of local roads are in need of maintenance - further than from Land's End to John O'Groats and back again.
- 1,300 bus routes have been cut since 2010.



LABOUR'S PLAN

We want an affordable transport system that works for passengers, giving them a real voice, with decisions on services taken far closer to those who use them. We will devolve decisions on transport to local authorities working together to ensure integrated networks across city and county regions. They will be given control of budgets over road investment and powers to decide what bus services they want.

We will stand up to vested interests in the transport sector where their interests are being served instead of those of passengers. We will end the situation where the only public sector that cannot run our railways is our own.

LABOUR WILL:

- Introduce a strict cap on annual rail fare increases across all routes.
- Legislate so a public sector operator can take on lines and challenge private train operating companies on a level playing field.
- Devolve regional transport decision making so that areas can bring together trains, buses, ferries and trams into a single network with smart-ticketing.
- Give city and county regions London-style powers to regulate bus services.
- Make cycling safer and more accessible with national standards to reduce deaths and serious injuries.

REFORMING THE ENERGY MARKET

The energy market isn't working for families and businesses in Britain. Energy bills have risen by £300 since 2010, and many businesses say energy is the biggest cost they face. When wholesale energy prices go up, bills rocket, but when they fall, bills stay high. One of the reasons for this is that the big energy firms are operating in a broken market. They generate electricity, sell it to themselves, then they sell it to consumers. Ofgem, the regulator that is supposed to be responsible for putting things right, has failed to do so.

We need change but instead of standing up to the big energy firms who dominate the market unfairly, David Cameron has stood by as bills have soared.

KEY FACTS

- Household bills are up by £300 since 2010.
- The 'Big Six' supply 95 per cent of households with gas and electricity.



LABOUR'S PLAN

Where the current Government has stood up for vested interests in the energy sector, the next Labour government will stand up for families and businesses. Our energy policy will tackle rising bills and reform the market, as well as securing a sustainable, low carbon energy supply for Britain.

We will freeze prices until 2017, saving the average household £120. While prices are frozen, we will reset the market so that it works for consumers; breaking the stranglehold of the 'Big Six' energy companies by separating their generation and supply businesses, and forcing them to buy and sell their energy through an open exchange. And we will create a tough new regulator to ensure consumers get a fair deal.

Meanwhile, we'll undertake an ambitious, long-term programme to support millions of households and businesses in improving their energy efficiency and put an end to cold homes.

LABOUR WILL:

- Freeze energy bills until 2017.
- Fix the broken energy market, increasing competition and transparency.
- Abolish Ofgem and replace it with a tough new energy watchdog.
- Improve the energy efficiency of at least five million homes over 10 years.

AN NHS WITH TIME TO CARE

David Cameron promised that under the Tories there would be no top-down NHS reorganisation. He broke that promise. They have wasted £3 billion on an upheaval which puts profits before co-operation and patient care, and ties hospitals up in competition law.

This wasteful and chaotic reorganisation is having a knock-on effect on the thing that matters most: patient care. Waiting lists, already rising, look set to be pushed up even further as budgets are squeezed and more hospitals fall into deficit. There is a crisis in A&E, not just in winter but all year round. Vital treatments are being rationed, giving patients the choice of waiting longer or paying to go private. Millions of people can't get a GP appointment when they need one.

KEY FACTS

- One in four patients wait a week or more to see or speak to a GP.
- Over a million people have waited longer than four hours in A&E over the last 12 months.



LABOUR'S PLAN

The National Health Service is the Labour Party's greatest achievement. We created it, we saved it, and we will always support it. Labour's vision for our NHS will bring together physical health, mental health and social care into a single service to meet all of a person's care needs, with a focus on prevention. It is a true One Nation vision: a health and care system shaped around people, not bureaucratic structures or markets.

We will protect and strengthen the NHS, even in an era when money is tight. We will repeal the Government's Health and Social Care Act, ensuring an NHS based on collaboration and integration, not competition and fragmentation.

We will strengthen the NHS for the future and ensure it has time to care with 20,000 more nurses and 8,000 more GPs by 2020, paid for by tackling tax avoidance and introducing a tax on properties worth over £2 million.

LABOUR WILL:

- Recruit 20,000 more nurses and 8,000 more GPs paid for by a tax on properties worth £2 million or more.
- Guarantee a GP appointment within 48 hours – and on the same day for those who need it.
- Repeal the Tories' Health and Social Care Act.
- Integrate health and social care services into a system of "whole-person care".
- Give mental health the priority it deserves with a new right to access talking therapies enshrined in the NHS Constitution.
- Guarantee that patients will wait no longer than one week for vital cancer tests and results by 2020.
- Ensure that when changes are proposed to local hospital services patients and the public have a seat round the table from the very start, helping design and decide on plans for change.

SOCIAL CARE

The growing social care crisis is one of the biggest challenges we face as a society. Since 2010, £2.7 billion has been cut from budgets that pay for adult social care while the number of older people needing care has increased. The result is that the system is close to collapse with some elderly people receiving just 15 minute visits and care for by a workforce that is undervalued.

The tighter eligibility criteria which are being applied to deal with this mean that hundreds of thousands fewer people are getting help. And the rising burden of care charges is adding to the cost of living crisis: increases in charges now mean that since 2010, elderly and disabled people are paying almost £740 a year more for vital home care services.

KEY FACTS

- **Despite an ageing population, since 2010, £2.7 billion has been cut from care budgets.**
- **Over 300,000 Care Workers are on 'Zero Hours Contracts and studies estimate up to 220,000 are paid less than the National Minimum Wage.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

For too many vulnerable people the current health and care system feels like three fragmented services: physical health in the mainstream NHS, mental health on the fringes of the NHS, and social care in council run services. We will change that, bringing the services together around those needing care – with a single point of contact to organise your care and new homecare workers in the NHS to support people to stay in their home.

We will also end the acceptance of exploitation of the social care workforce, which harms the care people receive. We will stop zero hour contracts being used when care workers are in practice working regular hours, and fully enforce the minimum wage.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Integrate physical health, mental health and social care services so we can give people a personal care plan and single point of contact for those with the greatest needs.**
- **Train, recruit and pay new staff through a 'Time to Care' fund, including 5,000 new homecare workers in the NHS to support people to stay in their home.**
- **Create greater rights to care at home.**
- **Work with local authorities and care providers to end time-limited 15-minute visits.**
- **Tackle the exploitation of care workers, so that travel between appointments is not an excuse for paying below the minimum wage and ban exploitative zero hour contracts.**

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

Globally and domestically, safeguarding our environment for the long term and reducing carbon emissions, while adapting to climate change, are among the greatest challenges faced by humankind.

However, the current Government has set back the protection of Britain's natural environment and wildlife. In spite of David Cameron's promise to lead 'the greenest Government ever', he has attempted to sell off the nation's forests, threatened to repeal the hunting ban, and questioned the value of laws which give us better air quality, cleaner beaches and wildlife protection.

Communities affected by flooding have borne the human cost of the Government's failure to take environmental protection seriously, with flood defences cut and downgraded as a priority – leaving thousands of homes at risk.

KEY FACTS

- **One in six properties in England and Wales are at risk from flooding.**
- **Committee on Climate Change calculations show that current plans will put an additional 330,000 properties at serious risk from flooding by 2035.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

The last Labour Government led the world with the Climate Change Act and a range of domestic environmental protection measures. The next Labour Government will build on that proud record – putting sustainability back at the top of the agenda, protecting our natural environment and wildlife for future generations, and re-establishing Britain as a global leader on climate change.

We'll stick to ambitious, legally binding targets for carbon reduction – including the decarbonisation of our electricity supply by 2030, and full implementation of carbon budgets. Meanwhile, recognising that the effects of climate change are impacting on British families today, we will prioritise investment in flood prevention, and produce a new plan for climate change adaptation.

We will also build on our proud record on animal welfare – starting with an end to the Government's inhumane and ineffective badger cull, and a commitment to maintain the ban on hunting with dogs.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Set a target for decarbonisation of our electricity by 2030.**
- **Strengthen the Green Investment Bank with borrowing powers.**
- **Prioritise flood prevention and introduce a new climate change adaptation plan.**
- **End the badger cull and maintain the ban on hunting with dogs.**

RURAL COMMUNITIES

The cost-of-living crisis has often hit rural communities even harder than others, with wages falling and the cost of living rising more rapidly than in other parts of the country. For example, rural businesses and households have seen the same soaring energy bills as the rest of the country, but have an added burden as many have no grid access, forcing them to use more expensive alternatives for heating. And while many rural households pay more for transport, access to it is worse than in urban areas. Instead of standing up for hard pressed rural communities David Cameron has stood up for vested interests, failing to take action to tackle the cost of living crisis.

KEY FACTS

- **Households in rural areas are more likely to be in fuel poverty than those in urban areas.**
- **People living in rural communities find it more difficult to access key services such as schools, hospitals and shops.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

A One Nation Labour government will work for all of Britain – for those living in rural, coastal and market town communities as well as in cities. We will ensure that the challenges those communities face are understood in every department.

Through devolving powers to county regions, rather than just cities as the Government is doing, we will enable communities to better plan their own services. For example they will be able to set the right bus routes and fares. We will also work with employers to challenge low pay in rural economies following the abolition of the Agricultural Wages Board, and reduce the cost of doing business by freezing business rates and energy bills for small and medium enterprises.

To help tackle higher rural energy costs, Labour will pay Winter Fuel Payments earlier for pensioners using off-grid energy, protecting pensioners from excessive price spikes on off-grid energy at the onset of winter. And, for the first time, we will include off-grid energy within the remit of our new energy regulator.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Deliver Winter Fuel Payments early to pensioners using off-grid energy.**
- **Bring the off-grid energy sector under the remit of the regulator.**
- **Devolve billions of pounds and powers, including over public transport networks, to county regions.**
- **Tackle the cost of doing business in rural areas by freezing business rates and energy bills for small and medium enterprises.**

SOLVING THE HOUSING CRISIS

Britain is in the midst of the biggest housing crisis in a generation. The gap between the number of homes we build and the number of homes people need is unprecedented, at over 100,000 each year. If unchecked, the overall gap between housing supply and need is set to rise to two million by 2020.

The Tories have no plan to tackle the housing crisis. David Cameron has presided over the lowest levels of house building in peacetime since the 1920s and people across the country are priced out of home ownership which is now at its lowest point for 30 years. For many that means renting in the private sector where they have very little security and even families with children can be forced to move at short notice.

KEY FACTS

- **David Cameron has presided over the lowest level of homes built in peacetime since the 1920s.**
- **Over 1.3 million families with children are now part of "Generation Rent".**



LABOUR'S PLAN

Labour believes that everyone should be able to live in a home they can afford and in the communities where they have their roots. We also know that the housing crisis cannot be tackled unless we start building many more homes than are built now. Labour will give our communities the powers they need to get Britain building again, ensuring at least 200,000 new homes a year by 2020 – almost double the current level. We will tackle land banking so that developers with planning permission have to use it, and give local authorities powers to ensure that local first time buyers people are able to take advantage of new homes that are built in their area.

We will also create a fairer private rented sector, so that in future, renting is a more secure long term option for families and individuals who cannot or prefer not to buy. We will legislate for rights to longer term lets, with predictable rents, to provide affordability, stability and security. And we will end the injustice of prospective tenants being hit with hundreds of pounds of unfair charges by regulating letting agents and banning rip-off letting agent fees on tenants.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Get at least 200,000 homes built a year by 2020.**
- **Build more affordable homes by prioritising capital investment in housing.**
- **Give local first-time buyers priority on new homes in housing growth areas.**
- **Hand local communities new powers to get homes built where they want them.**
- **Get a fairer deal for private renters by guaranteeing longer term tenancies with predictable rents and banning rip-off letting agent fees on tenants.**
- **Give councils greater powers to reduce the number of empty homes.**

TACKLING CRIME AND SAFEGUARDING JUSTICE

The first duty of any government is to keep people safe, yet David Cameron has shown complacency on crime and justice. Frontline policing has been cut, and the shift to neighbourhood policing achieved under the last Labour government has been put at risk.

Offenders are escaping justice: the number of rape, domestic violence and child abuse cases reported to the police is going up, but the number of cases being put forward for prosecution is falling as the service is hollowed out. Meanwhile the Government is presiding over chaos, with suicides and riots up, criminals absconding regularly and the reckless sell-off of the probation service putting public safety at risk.



KEY FACTS

- Nearly 16,000 police officers have been lost under the Tory-led Government, putting the safety of our communities at risk.
- The number of rape, domestic violence, and child abuse cases reported to the police is going up, but the number of cases that they put forward for prosecution is plummeting.

LABOUR'S PLAN

We will protect frontline policing, ensuring the police force is rooted in our community. We will scrap Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in order to protect frontline policing, and raise professional standards while enabling communities to have a greater say over local policing priorities.

Tackling violence against women and girls is a priority for Labour, and we will publish the country's first ever Violence against Women and Girls Bill, establish a Commissioner on domestic and sexual violence, and protect women's refuges.

We will deal with the crisis in our prisons, professionalising the workforce, stamping out corruption and encouraging prisons to get more offenders in work or training, while reversing as much as we can of the Government's privatisation of the probation service.

We are also committed to new rights for victims of crime. We will introduce the country's first ever Victims' Law, with entitlements to minimum standards of service.

LABOUR WILL:

- Scrap Police and Crime Commissioners in order to protect frontline police numbers.
- Raise policing standards with a new inspection and standards body.
- Establish a Commissioner to set minimum standards in tackling domestic and sexual violence.
- Reform prisons, professionalising the workforce, stamping out corruption and holding prisons to account on re-offending.
- Enact Britain's first Victims' Law to put victims at the heart of justice system.

IMMIGRATION

Britain has benefited over many centuries from immigration. But it is because immigration is so important that it needs to be controlled and its impact properly managed.

The Tories have let people down on immigration. David Cameron promised to get net migration down to the tens of thousands, but rather than falling it has actually increased. Illegal immigration is also a growing problem. Fewer people are being stopped at the border, more people are absconding and fewer foreign criminals are being deported; yet the government still has no way of properly tracking who is coming into the country and who is leaving.

KEY FACTS

- **Net migration is up to 260,000 a year – despite David Cameron's promise to “reduce net migration to tens of thousands”.**
- **The Government is failing to enforce fair rules in our labour market, which means cheap migrant labour is being used to undercut workers' wages.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

Talking about immigration is not about pandering to the right. It is about establishing a set of rules that are fair to those that come, and above all, to those that are already here. Labour's new approach is about controlling immigration and its impacts on local communities.

A sense of fairness and community means ending the race to the bottom on pay and conditions, that entitlements should be earned, and that people should learn English and be part of our society.

There are three principles that will underpin our approach. First, we need strong borders in order to control the pace of change – so we will re-introduce exit checks and move towards counting people in and out. Second, we will reform our economy so that it is less reliant on low skilled migrant labour – with a crack down on exploitation and undercutting of workers' wages, with tougher enforcement of minimum wage laws. And third, we will introduce measures to ensure migrants integrate and play their part in our society, for example requiring all public sector workers in public-facing roles to speak English, and introduce longer waiting periods for out-of-work benefit; reform in-work benefits so that they aren't available until someone has contributed, and stop Child Benefit being sent abroad.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Control immigration, with 1,000 new border staff and people counted in and out.**
- **Tackle illegal immigration, reinstating fingerprint checks at Calais and closing down student visitor visa loopholes.**
- **Ban recruitment agencies that only hire from overseas.**
- **Ensure that EU migrants have to earn their entitlement to benefits.**
- **Require public sector workers in public facing roles to speak English.**

CHILDCARE AND THE EARLY YEARS

Too many families are faced with difficult choices about how they balance work and family life. Some parents who want to work are being prevented from doing so because the rising cost of childcare makes it unaffordable, while others increasingly struggle to find good before- and after-school placements.

Under the current Government, the problem is getting worse. Too many parents are struggling to cope as the cost of childcare soars and availability falls. And David Cameron has broken his promise to protect Sure Start, with 628 fewer Children's Centres since 2010.

KEY FACTS

- **Childcare costs are up 30 per cent and the number of places has fallen.**
- **There are 628 fewer Children's Centres than in 2010.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

More help with childcare is good for family life and good for the economy. We know many parents would like to work, but childcare makes it unaffordable. Making that choice a reality is why supporting families with childcare is a priority for Labour, and why we will tackle the issues that are putting family life under increasing pressure.

The next Labour Government will expand free childcare from 15 to 25 hours per week for working parents of three and four year-olds. To help give parents of primary-aged children the peace of mind that comes from knowing they can access childcare when they need it, Labour will also introduce a legal guarantee of access to wraparound care from 8am to 6pm through their local school. We will restore early intervention at the heart of our approach to supporting children and their parents, with Sure Start playing a key role.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Extend free childcare from 15 to 25 hours for working parents with three and four-year-olds, paid for with an increase in the bank levy.**
- **Introduce a legal guarantee that parents of primary-aged children can access childcare from 8am to 6pm through their local school.**
- **Reinvigorate Sure Start, reforming the way local services work together to shift from sticking-plaster services to radical early help.**

RAISING SCHOOL STANDARDS FOR ALL

Education standards have been undermined by the Tory-led Government. From scrapping the requirement that teachers must be qualified, to allowing underperformance in many schools to go unchallenged, the schools system has been badly mishandled. Rather than focusing on what really matters – the quality of teaching and learning in all of England’s classrooms – they have focused only on a small number of Free Schools and academies.

As a result, we have looming teacher shortages due to poor planning and teachers leaving the profession, a primary school places crisis made worse through money spent on opening Free Schools where they’re not needed, and over 1.5 million children in schools that require improvement. Meanwhile, the Government’s reforms have created a dangerous lack of local oversight and accountability in our schools system, meaning poor standards are going unnoticed for far too long.

KEY FACTS

- **There are now 17,100 unqualified teachers in state-funded schools.**
- **Nearly a third of Free Schools inspected have been judged inadequate or requiring improvement, compared to one in five for all state-funded schools.**



LABOUR’S PLAN

Every child needs a good school, and every parent deserves the security of knowing that their child is being taught by an excellent qualified teacher. Parents also want the reassurance that comes from schools being overseen locally and being accountable to their local community, to help guarantee standards stay high.

Driving up standards means focusing on improving the quality of teaching, not on what schools are called. So we will bring a relentless focus on the quality of teaching – starting with reversing the Tories’ decision to allow schools to employ unqualified teachers.

Funding for additional school places should be prioritised in areas where there are shortages, not for pet projects. So we will end the Tories’ flawed Free Schools programme and give local communities a greater say in where new schools are opened and in addressing underperforming schools.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Guarantee parents that all teachers in state schools will be qualified.**
- **Require teachers to continue building their skills and subject knowledge on the job, with more high quality training and new career paths.**
- **Ensure all schools are locally accountable with new local Directors of School Standards responsible for intervening in underperforming schools.**
- **End the flawed Free Schools programme and instead prioritise new schools in areas where there are shortages of school places.**

HANDING MORE POWER TO COMMUNITIES

Britain is too centralised, and too many decisions affecting local communities are made in Westminster. That means bad and often costly decisions, but it also means that too many people do not see how they can influence the things that matter to them – from their local high street, to local bus routes, to how training supports local businesses.

Part of the crisis in confidence in our political system and institutions is the distance people feel from the decisions that are taken on their behalf. The Tory-led government, far from empowering local government, has made sure that councils, especially those in the most deprived areas, have borne the brunt of funding reductions.

KEY FACTS

- **Between 2010-11 and 2015-16 the ten most deprived areas will have had their spending power cut by 16 times the amount of the ten least deprived areas.**
- **The number of payday loan firms on UK high streets rose by 20 per cent last year.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

When we look around our communities, we see that real and lasting change happens when people take control, especially when they come together and act with others. It's time that our political institutions stop holding such progress back. Labour will put power in the hands of local communities - empowering people to take more of their own decisions alongside greater responsibility for delivering in their local area, giving them freedom to address local priorities more efficiently and effectively.

We will also devolve billions in funding and business rates to England's powerhouse city and county regions, along with new powers including for regional transport, putting regions in charge of their economies.

And as we look at each area of policy we will ask whether it could best be addressed locally, and whether there is more we can do to give people control over the things that matter to them. For example we will give fans more control over their football clubs and communities more control over their high streets, with powers to stop the spread of payday lenders and to decide whether they want to limit the number of gambling or fast food outlets.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Give football fans a voice in every club boardroom and the right to buy a significant slice of their local football club if ownership changes hands.**
- **Give communities the power to limit the spread of payday lenders and prevent their high streets from becoming dominated by certain types of premises.**
- **Give local areas across England London-style powers to set bus routes and fares.**
- **Devolve to all parts of England, including the shires, not just the Tories limited plans for a handful of big cities.**

POLITICAL REFORM

In every community, there are people who may have the vision and capacity to change their neighbourhood, their country, even our whole economy or society, for the better. But many of them may never get the chance, or may never even cast a ballot. Too often all they have heard about mainstream politics makes them feel that it is not for someone like them.

When the Tory-led Government came to power in 2010, they promised a fresh start and a different kind of politics. Yet four years on, the reality is clear: instead of opening up politics, they have closed it down; instead of reaching out, they have appealed to narrow, sectional interests as they become more dependent on funding from hedge funds and a small number of rich donors. And whenever they have been given an opportunity to rebuild trust and restore faith in our democracy, they have taken the side of the powerful, rather than the people. Their use of a Lobbying Act to attempt to gag charities and campaigners, and smear trade unions, while letting powerful vested interests off the hook, shows where David Cameron's priorities lie.



KEY FACTS

- **7.5 million eligible voters are missing from the electoral register, with a further 5.5 million at risk of dropping off due to the reckless way the Government is implementing individual electoral registration.**
- **Less than 15 per cent of voters turned out for the 2012 Police and Crime Commissioner elections.**

LABOUR'S PLAN

Too many people are struggling with a country that often feels like it doesn't work for them, and too many no longer believe that politics is the answer to their problems. If we are not careful that will be the epitaph of our time – that people stopped believing that politics could change their lives for the better.

Ours is a mission to restore faith in our politics. We need to engage more young people in politics and civic life, while achieving greater diversity at all levels of governance. We aim to restore trust in Parliament and its members, and reform the institutions of our politics to bring people in not shut them out. And we will devolve power from Westminster down to our nations, city and county regions, and to local communities.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Give 16 and 17 year olds the vote.**
- **Repeal the Lobbying Act, and create a statutory register of lobbyists.**
- **Take the big money out of politics by capping individual donations to parties.**
- **Replace the House of Lords with a Senate of the Nations and Regions.**
- **Pass an English Devolution Act, handing £30 billion of resources, and powers over skills, transport, economic development to city and county regions.**
- **Implement the Smith Commission's package of further devolution to Scotland.**
- **Put devolution to Wales on a stronger statutory basis, as in Scotland.**
- **Reform the Commons to better hold the Government to account and strengthen the public's voice on legislation.**

EQUALITIES

Under this Government, hard-won progress on people's equalities is being rolled back. Women, ethnic minorities and disabled have been hit hardest by this Government, inequality in Britain is widening, and social mobility has stalled with these groups still too often locked out of positions of power.

A quarter of working women now earn less than the living wage and since the introduction of Tribunal Fees the number of sex discrimination claims has fallen by 91 per cent. The number of Black young people who've been out of work for more than a year has risen by 46 per cent under this Government.

KEY FACTS

- **Women are paid just 81p for every £1 earned by men, and represent just 8.5 per cent of Executive Directors on Boards.**
- **Two thirds of those hit by the bedroom tax are disabled or have a disabled family member.**
- **The number of young black people out of work for more than a year has risen by 46 per cent.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

The Labour Party has always led on challenging prejudice and championing equality of opportunity. The next Labour Government will carry on this proud tradition. Building a One Nation society means ensuring each of us has the means to realise our true potential and to live in dignity free from discrimination. Tackling low pay and eradicating exploitative zero-hour contracts will disproportionately benefit the women and ethnic minorities who dominate these jobs, and our Youth Jobs Guarantee will help address the scandal of BAME youth unemployment.

We will make delivering on the promise of gender equality a priority, supporting women to balance work with caring commitments, promoting flexible working and increasing pay transparency. We will put racial equality back on the political agenda with a comprehensive race equality strategy to challenge the barriers still faced by BAME communities, and champion greater diversity across public life – driving better representation across the police and judiciary, and in the company boardroom. And we will build on our history of championing LGBT rights, working with schools to tackle homophobic bullying and appointing the first international envoy for LGBT rights to champion gay and transgender rights internationally.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Require large companies to publish their gender pay gap.**
- **Strengthen the law against maternity discrimination.**
- **Legislate to strengthen the law on transphobic hate crime.**
- **Establish a new offence of disability hate crime.**
- **Appoint an International Envoy for LGBT rights.**
- **Develop and put in place a strategy for race equality at the heart of Government.**

LEADING IN THE WORLD

Globalisation has increased connectivity between countries and people, as global challenges increasingly demand global solutions.

Instead of building upon Britain's role in addressing global challenges, David Cameron has been content to watch from the sidelines. Time and again he has put his Party before his country – he is sleepwalking Britain towards exit from the European Union, trying to keep his Party in line while putting British jobs at risk.

Meanwhile, Britain's commitment to climate change, human rights and multilateral organisations has frequently fallen by the wayside, with a reliance on the private sector for the delivery of development assistance not being met with adequate levels of transparency and accountability.

KEY FACTS

- **Over three million British jobs are linked to trade with the European Union.**
- **Almost half of the UK's trade and foreign investment comes from the European Union.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

The next Labour Government will put Britain back at the heart of global affairs. We believe Britain must play a proactive role in tackling international issues and we won't shy away from the big challenges: working to eliminate extreme poverty, supporting countries transitioning to democracy, tackling terrorism and climate change.

With Labour, Britain will lead by example, working with our partners worldwide to promote our values and defend our national interests. Only by doing so can we hope to build a better, safer and more secure world.

And because Britain will be better off remaining at the heart of a reformed EU, Labour will make the hard-headed, patriotic case both for reform in Europe, not exit from Europe.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Work with our partners to reform the EU to make it work better for Britain, reforming free movement so that people coming to the UK have to wait longer to receive benefits and making it easier to deport those who commit crimes.**
- **Guarantee no powers will be transferred to Brussels without an in/out referendum.**
- **Ensure an outward-facing Britain, using our assets to amplify our influence worldwide.**
- **Lead by example on human rights, upholding them domestically through the Human Rights Act, and advocating them overseas.**
- **Put reducing inequality, climate change, and promoting universal health care at the heart of international development, pushing for an ambitious agreement in 2015.**

SECURITY, DEFENCE AND SUPPORTING OUR ARMED FORCES

We live in an insecure world, and inevitably face a complex range of threats. Today's threats differ from those we faced in the past. From fragile and conflict-affected states, to natural disasters and humanitarian crises, traditional military responses are no longer sufficient to counter the most difficult security challenges of today.

However, the Government's 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review was a missed opportunity. Instead of asking what could be done to meet our strategic security goals, it began by asking what could be cut, resulting in gaps in our military capacity and failing our armed forces. Meanwhile, David Cameron has diminished many of the European mechanisms which enable us to effectively fight cross-border crime.

KEY FACTS

- **Botched defence procurement under David Cameron's watch has cost the taxpayer tens of millions of pounds.**
- **The trained strength of the Army Reserve rose by only 20 between 2013 and 2014 despite the Government's costly recruitment campaign.**



LABOUR'S PLAN

In an uncertain landscape, our defence and security policies need to offer certainty and stability. In this economic climate we will have to be strategic with the defence budget and work closely with our allies if we are to achieve our aims. We want to see a strong, high-tech Armed Forces equipped for the challenges of the 21st Century with an ability to tackle emerging, interconnected threats.

At the core of Labour's defence policy is supporting our Forces, veterans and their families who have sacrificed so much to protect our country.

The next Labour Government will also strengthen cross-border collaboration on crime and justice. We believe cooperation with our friends on crime and intelligence is vital to making Britain's streets safer. We want to see a proper framework for police forces to work together across borders and we will continue to support the European Arrest Warrant which has brought so many criminals to justice.

LABOUR WILL:

- **Conduct a Strategic Defence and Security Review in 2015 to equip our Armed Forces to meet the most difficult modern security challenges.**
- **Further Britain's defence cooperation with NATO and European partners, particularly in training and procurement.**
- **Introduce legislation to outlaw the discrimination and abuse of members of the Armed Forces.**
- **Support the creation of an Armed Forces credit union, addressing the specific needs of Forces families.**
- **Support pan-European measures for cooperation on crime, including the European Arrest Warrant.**

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

The policy programme summarised in this document is the product of Agenda 2015 and Labour's Policy Review. To reach this point, we have spoken with many thousands of people – Party members, affiliates, businesses, charities and members of the public. We have listened in our communities, on the doorstep, in our workplaces, and through our policy development website, yourbritain.org.uk.

Our work is not yet finished, and as we begin to prepare our manifesto, we want to hear your views on our programme, what the challenges we face mean to you, and your hopes and expectations of the next Labour Government.

To join the conversation about our priorities for Britain, visit labour.org.uk/changingbritaintogether

This booklet represents a summary of some of the key policies developed through Labour's policy making process, Agenda 2015, and agreed as part of Labour's policy programme by the National Policy Forum and Annual Conference 2014. To read Labour's policy programme in full visit yourbritain.org.uk/agenda-2015/npf-annual-report-2014.



