The Conservative and Unionist Party Manifesto 2024

Conservatives

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We are restoring our economic stability after Covid and Ukraine. Inflation is down, real wages are up, growth has returned – and we are cutting taxes to give working people financial security. This did not happen by accident. The economy is turning a corner because we built strong economic foundations before the pandemic and we have stuck to our plan.

We must stick to this plan and take bold action to secure the future of our nation and society. In the next decade, we'll face challenges to our energy and national security from foreign conflicts; to our border from uncontrolled and illegal migration; to our economy from global shocks and to our society from those seeking to divide and disempower communities. Dealing with these challenges requires a clear plan and bold action.

We have that plan and the courage to take the bold steps necessary to build a secure future for you and your family.

A future where hard work and doing the right thing is always rewarded, not punished with higher taxes and hidden green levies, or discouraged with unconstrained welfare.

A future where aspiration and opportunity are celebrated and young people always get the skills they need to succeed.

A future where public services, like the NHS, serve citizens not vested interests, and every citizen upholds British values of decency, democracy and service.

A future, where national, border, energy and food security are put first, not taken for granted, and immigration is never allowed to run out of control.

A future where family is always supported and communities decide their own priorities, rather than having them imposed from above.

A future where we can have pride – in ourselves, in our communities and in our country.

There is only one way to secure that future – and that is to vote Conservative on 4 July.

We must stick with the plan – a plan that has given four million more people the security and purpose of a job, cut taxes for 29 million working people, protected pensioners with the Triple Lock, delivered more than 2.5 million homes, recruited record numbers of police officers to cut crime by more than 50%, recruited record numbers of teachers to help our children become the best readers in the West, delivered the largest sustained increase in defence spending since the end of the Cold War and got Brexit done.

The alternative is we go back to square one. To a fragile economy under Labour driven by unfunded spending, higher taxes on working families and debt piling up for future generations to pay off. And where immigration, crime and defence are not taken seriously.

On 4 July, choose lower immigration, lower taxes and protected pensions. Choose a secure future with the Conservatives.

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak
Prime Minister and
Leader of the Conservative and Unionist Party

Bold actions to deliver a secure future for our country and for your family

To support working people and secure a stronger economy

- **Cut tax for workers** by taking another 2p off employee National Insurance so that we will have halved it from 12% at the beginning of this year to 6% by April 2027, a total tax cut of £1,350 for the average worker on £35,000 – and the next step in our long-term ambition to end the double tax on work when financial conditions allow.
- Cut taxes to **support the self-employed** by abolishing the main rate of self-employed National Insurance entirely by the end of the Parliament.
- **Cut tax for pensioners** with the new Triple Lock Plus, guaranteeing that both the State Pension and the tax free allowance for pensioners always rise with the highest of inflation, earnings or 2.5% – so the new State Pension doesn't get dragged into income tax.
- Give working parents **30 hours of free childcare a week** from when their child is nine months old to when they start school, saving eligible families an average of £6,900 per year.
- **End the unfairness in Child Benefit** by moving to a household system, so families don't start losing Child Benefit until their combined income reaches £120,000 – saving the average family which benefits £1,500.
- Cut the cost of net zero for consumers by taking a more pragmatic approach, guaranteeing **no new green levies or charges** while accelerating the rollout of renewables.
- Seize the **benefits of Brexit** by signing further trade deals, speeding up infrastructure and unblocking 100,000 homes, cutting red tape for business, and creating new fishing opportunities.

To provide young people with a secure future

- Give young people the skills and opportunities they deserve by introducing **mandatory National Service** for all school leavers at 18, with the choice between a competitive placement in the military or civic service roles.
- Fund **100,000 high-quality apprenticeships** for young people, paid for by curbing the number of poor-quality university degrees that leave young people worse off.
- Protect children by requiring schools to **ban the use of mobile phones during the school day** and ensuring parents can see what their children are being taught, especially on sensitive matters like sex education.
- Transform 16-19 education by **introducing the Advanced British Standard**, enabling young people to receive a broader education and removing the artificial divide between academic and technical learning.

To safeguard our borders and national security

- **Boost defence spending** to our new NATO standard of 2.5% of GDP by 2030, so we can protect British interests at home and abroad in an increasingly hostile world.
- Introduce **a legal cap on migration to guarantee that numbers will fall every year,** so public services are protected while bringing in the skills our businesses and NHS needs.
- **Stop the boats** by removing illegal migrants to Rwanda.
- Work with other countries to **rewrite asylum treaties** to make them fit for the challenges we face.

To strengthen our communities

- **Increase NHS spending above inflation every year**, recruiting 92,000 more nurses and 28,000 more doctors, driving up productivity in the NHS and moving care closer to people's homes through Pharmacy First, new and modernised GP surgeries and more Community Diagnostic Centres.
- Protect female-only spaces and competitiveness in sport by **making clear that sex means biological sex** in the Equality Act.
- Deliver 1.6 million well-designed homes in the right places while protecting our countryside, permanently **abolish Stamp Duty for homes up to £425,000 for first time buyers** and introduce a new Help to Buy scheme.
- Recruit **8,000 more full-time, fully warranted police officers** to ensure a new police officer for every neighbourhood.
- **Cut anti-social behaviour** in town centres by rolling out Hotspot Policing, expanding community payback and legislating to evict social tenants who repeatedly disrupt their neighbours.
- **Invest £36 billion in local roads, rail and buses** to drive regional growth, including £8.3 billion to fill potholes and resurface roads, funded by cancelling the second phase of HS2.
- **Back drivers by stopping road pricing,** reversing the London Mayor's ULEZ expansion and applying local referendums to new 20mph zones and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.
- **Champion our rural communities** by backing farmers with a legal target and additional investment for food security, and protecting our best agricultural land from solar farms.
- Continue to **directly invest in communities across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland**, protect the UK's internal market and the integrity of our United Kingdom.

Our plan for a secure, dynamic and growing economy

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE

In 2010 we inherited an economy in tatters, with Labour admitting themselves there was 'no money'. We have faced three generational global economic challenges: the aftermath of the financial crisis; a global pandemic; and the biggest energy shock since the 1970s.

Against this backdrop, since 2010 the UK has had the third highest growth rate in the G7. We have created four million more jobs, cut taxes for working people and pensioners and repaired the public finances. The UK economy is now growing faster than Germany, France, Italy and the United States, real wages have been rising for nearly a year, inflation has fallen from 11.1% to 2.3%, lower than in Europe and the US, and debt as a share of GDP is forecast to start falling next year. The plan we set out last year, to halve inflation, grow the economy and reduce debt, is working.

Economic security is the bedrock of any future success, which is why we have a clear plan to take the bold action needed to build a strong economy.

- **reducing borrowing and debt;**
- **backing businesses to invest, innovate and trade;**
- **cutting taxes and reforming our welfare system;**
- **delivering world-class education; and**
- **delivering an affordable transition to domestic, sustainable energy.**

Reducing debt and borrowing

Sustainable public finances are essential for a strong economic plan. It was only because of the difficult decisions we took to repair the public finances after 2010, which saw the deficit fall from 10.3% under Labour to 2.1% on the eve of the pandemic, that we were able to provide almost £400 billion of support to families and businesses to get through Covid and the energy shock.

The only way to give people the peace of mind that government will be able to support them again when future shocks hit is to get borrowing and debt down. The alternative is to let borrowing get out of control, driving inflation and interest rates up, and leaving our children and grandchildren to pick up the bill.

In the next Parliament, we will continue to meet our fiscal rules of having public sector net debt falling and for public sector net borrowing to be below 3% of GDP in the fifth year of the forecast. **The measures in this manifesto are fully funded and would result in lower borrowing in 2029-30, which will be the target year for our fiscal rules in the first fiscal event of the new Parliament.**

Backing business to invest, innovate and trade

A competitive tax system

The Conservative Party will always be the party of business. It is the private sector which will unlock the investment, growth and opportunities of the future.

That is why a tax system that incentivises business to invest is at the heart of our economic plan. We introduced the biggest business tax cut in modern British history, which hundreds of business leaders have described as the 'single most transformational' measure for growth and investment. So more businesses can benefit, we will look to extend our 'full expensing' policy to leasing, once the fiscal conditions allow. And **we will not raise corporation tax**. For the very smallest businesses, the four million people who are self-employed, **we will abolish the main rate of National Insurance entirely** by the end of the next Parliament. We will back the risk

takers and entrepreneurs who help drive our economy.

Small and medium-sized businesses are the lifeblood of our economy and we are making the UK the best place in the world to start or grow a business. We have great foundations: world-class talent, an internationally envied legal system and a business-friendly regulatory environment.

We are supporting firms with a business rates support package worth £4.3 billion over the next five years to support small businesses and the high street. We want small businesses to get a bigger share of public contracts and have improved the public sector procurement system to that end. We have made it easier and cheaper for small businesses to hire an apprentice. And we have taken 28,000 small businesses out of paying VAT altogether by raising the VAT registration threshold to £90,000. In the next Parliament, we will deliver a ten point plan to support SMEs:

1. Continue to ease the burden of business rates for high street, leisure and hospitality businesses by increasing the multiplier on distribution warehouses that support online shopping over time.

2. Keep the VAT threshold under review and explore options to smooth the cliff edge at £90,000.

3. Improve access to finance for SMEs including through expanding Open Finance and by exploring the creation of Regional Mutual Banks.

4. Take more companies out of the scope of burdensome reporting requirements. Making use of freedoms granted by Brexit, we will lift the employee threshold allowing more companies to be considered medium-sized. This is expected to save small businesses at least one million hours of admin per year.

5. Retain key tax incentives that encourage small businesses to grow, including the Enterprise Investment Scheme, Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme, Venture Capital Trusts, Business Asset Disposal Relief, Agricultural Property Relief and Business Relief. We will not increase Capital Gains Tax.

6. Promote digital invoicing and improve enforcement of the Prompt Payment Code to support small businesses with the perennial challenge of cashflow, building on our creation of the Small Business Commissioner with powers to tackle unfavourable payment practices.

7. Ensure that Basel III capital requirements do not inhibit lending to SMEs.

8. Continue our world leading programmes including the Invest in Women Task Force and the Lilac Review to encourage more female and disabled entrepreneurs.

9. Work with the British Business Bank and private sector fund managers to secure a £250 million Invest In Women Fund to support female entrepreneurs.

10. Work with public sector organisations including local authorities and NHS trusts and companies benefitting from government contracts **to ensure that procurement opportunities are focused on SMEs in their local economies where possible and practical.**

Investing in infrastructure

A Conservative Government will continue to invest in the digital, transport and energy infrastructure needed for businesses to grow.

We have transformed our digital infrastructure by **rolling out gigabit broadband** to over a million hard to reach premises, helping to deliver high-speed internet to over 80% of the country. We are set to achieve at least 85% gigabit coverage of the UK by 2025 and nationwide coverage by 2030. Our ambition is for all populated areas to be covered by 'standalone' 5G mobile connectivity and to keep the UK at the forefront of adopting and developing 6G.

We will spend £36 billion of HS2 savings on transport projects that will benefit more people, in more places, more quickly. Every penny saved in the North or Midlands will be spent there. Savings from our new plan for Euston,

which will see 10,000 new homes built, have freed up £6.5 billion for transport across the rest of the country.

Labour has no plan. They neither support the second phase of HS2 nor our alternative package of investment, meaning they won't back schemes their own local leaders say will transform their areas. We will:

- **Invest £4.7 billion for smaller cities, towns and rural areas in the North and Midlands** to spend on their transport priorities. This will cut congestion and upgrade local bus and train stations.
- Invest a record **£8.3 billion of investment to fill potholes and resurface roads**. We will bring forward funding into this financial year and the next.
- **Back our city regions with an additional £8.55 billion** to spend on their local priorities. We will scrap rules that stop Mayors investing in strategic roads.
- **Deliver our plan for Northern Powerhouse Rail bringing more frequent trains, more capacity and faster journeys**. We have committed £12 billion on top of our HS2 savings to deliver the section of Northern Powerhouse Rail between Manchester and Liverpool. Savings from HS2 enable us to fund electrification to Hull and build a new station in Bradford.
- Boost **rail connectivity in the Midlands, with £1.75 billion to fund the Midlands Rail Hub in full**. This will improve journey times and deliver more frequent rail services at 50 stations, benefiting over seven million people. We will upgrade the line between Newark and Nottingham to halve journey times between Nottingham and Leeds.
- Provide an additional **£1 billion to support hundreds of new bus routes** across the North and Midlands.
- **Improve accessibility at 100 train stations**, starting with the 50 stations announced in May.
- **Deliver upgrades to railways** in the South West, including the line through Dawlish, the Energy Coast Line in Cumbria and the Ely Junction scheme in East Anglia.
- **Electrify the North Wales Main Line** with £1 billion of investment and **alleviate pinch points on the A75** between Gretna and Stranraer.
- **Reopen Beeching lines and stations to reconnect communities around the country**, building on the success of the Dartmoor Line in the South West. We are committed to all the schemes set out in the Network North Command Paper.

This comes on top of £44 billion of funding for Network Rail over the next five years and our investment in the Transpennine Route Upgrade, laying the foundations for Northern Powerhouse Rail. We will complete HS2 between London Euston and the West Midlands and support the growth of the rail freight sector.

We have invested £40 billion in England's strategic roads between 2015 and 2025, with further investment to come in the next Road Investment Strategy, ensuring we can deliver major roads including the Lower Thames Crossing and the A303. This is alongside the road schemes set out in our Network North plan, including the A1 between Morpeth and Ellingham.

Automated vehicles will be on British roads in the next Parliament, thanks to our new world-leading legislation. We will support people to choose electric cars by ensuring our charging infrastructure is truly nationwide, including rapid charging and delivering the Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate to support manufacturers to safeguard skilled British jobs.

We will support the growth and decarbonisation of our aviation sector. We will back British Sustainable Aviation Fuel through our SAF

mandate, an industry-backed revenue support mechanism and investment in future aviation technology. We will support domestic flights including through Public Service Obligations, protecting vital routes within the UK, including to islands and remote areas.

We will back our maritime sector, including shipping and ports, as it decarbonises. Recognising the current challenges with cross-Solent transport, we will establish a review to explore all options to provide more choice and drive down fares. We will foster our science and innovation expertise in the space industry.

Speeding up infrastructure delivery

We can only achieve our infrastructure ambitions if we continue to simplify the planning system to make it easier to build, faster. **We will speed up the average time it takes to sign off major infrastructure projects from four years to one.** We will:

- Introduce reforms to outdated EU red tape to better protect nature while enabling the building of new homes, new prisons and new energy schemes. Along with the reforms to the EU's bureaucratic environmental impact assessment regime that we have already started, these changes will speed up local and national infrastructure planning systems.
- Ensure any requirements to offset the impact of new infrastructure and homes on an area are proportionate, without compromising environmental outcomes.
- Reduce the cost of infrastructure by allowing quicker changes to consented projects.
- Ensure National Policy Statements are regularly updated.
- Focus the role of statutory consultees in the planning system on improving projects in line with clearer objectives, rather than piecemeal requirements that add delays.
- End frivolous legal challenges that frustrate infrastructure delivery by amending the law so judicial reviews that don't have merit do not waste court time.

Securing the UK's position as a world leader in innovation

Artificial intelligence (AI) will accelerate human progress in the 21st century, just as the steam engine and electricity did in the 19th century.

The UK is well positioned to spearhead this transformation and is already leading global work on AI safety. Over the last 14 years, the Conservatives have turned the UK into a science and innovation superpower. The UK now has the highest level of direct government funding and tax support for business research and development (R&D) of any country in the OECD. We pioneered the fastest development and deployment of the Covid vaccine. The UK has Europe's leading tech ecosystem. We have secured improved financial terms to join Horizon.

In the next Parliament, we will:

- **Increase public spending on R&D to £22 billion a year**, up from £20 billion this year.
- **Maintain our R&D tax reliefs.** Recent changes worth £280 million a year have simplified and improved R&D tax reliefs, including by bringing more SMEs into scope of the relief.
- **Continue investing over £1.5 billion in large-scale compute clusters**, assembling the raw processing power so we can take advantage of the potential of AI and support research into its safe and responsible use.
- **Push forward with our Advanced Manufacturing Plan**, providing a £4.5 billion commitment to secure strategic manufacturing sectors including automotive, aerospace, life sciences and clean energy.
- **Build on the success of our nine specialist Catapults**, which support innovation and de-risk the transition from research and

delivery, distributing £1.6 billion of funding across the country by 2028.

We are proud to be the leading market for starting and growing a FinTech firm – part of our world-leading financial and professional services which supports the employment of almost 2.5 million people. We will build on the policies set out in the Edinburgh Reforms **so that the UK continues to be the world's most innovative and competitive global financial centre**. We will support the City of London's position as the leading global market through the implementation of the Mansion House reforms and measures such as a retail sale of NatWest shares. We will maintain the highest standards of consumer protection and prudential regulation to ensure there can never be a repeat of the banking crisis under the last Labour Government.

The UK car industry is the jewel of our manufacturing crown. Last year the UK built over a million vehicles and secured £23.7 billion of private and public investment. We secured a £4 billion investment in a new battery gigafactory to be built in Somerset, safeguarding the future of the Jaguar Land Rover plant in the West Midlands for decades to come. Contrary to dire warnings that Brexit would lead to major brands leaving our shores. Nissan is delivering up to £2 billion of new investment to produce two new electric vehicle models in Sunderland and BMW made a £600 million investment to produce iconic all-electric Mini Coopers in Oxfordshire.

We will always back our world-leading automotive industry, which faces unprecedented competition from China in the electric vehicles market. We stand ready to support domestic car manufacturers if there is evidence other countries are breaking global trade rules.

Building new trade links to help British businesses thrive

The UK is a global exporting superpower and is now the **fourth biggest exporter in the world**, having overtaken France, the Netherlands, and Japan.

Having left the EU, we have seized the opportunity to negotiate trade deals that suit the UK, boosting our exports and creating jobs at home. UK exports are growing, reaching £850 billion last year and service exports are at an all-time high. We have secured trade deals with 73 countries plus the EU and last year we removed £1 million of trade barriers every single hour.

Last year we signed a deal to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), a modern and ambitious trade deal spanning economies across Asia and the Pacific. With the UK as a member, it will account for 15% of global GDP and in time is expected to boost UK GDP by around £2 billion a year.

We will complete free trade agreements with India and with the Gulf Cooperation Council, home to some of the world's biggest investors. And we will continue to pursue free trade agreements with countries such as Israel and Switzerland.

Our Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) is the most comprehensive FTA the EU has ever agreed. We will build on it, but will not agree to anything in the forthcoming review of the TCA that would infringe our legal sovereignty or involve submission to the CJEU or dynamic alignment. We will take a tough approach on ensuring that the EU are meeting their commitments under the TCA and not discriminating against our exporters.

We have always been clear the NHS and the services it provides are not on the table in trade negotiations. All food and drink products imported into the UK, including those from countries we have trade agreements with, must comply with the UK's high standards. We will

always stand up for UK agriculture in our trade deals.

The US is our single largest trading partner. We have signed the Atlantic Declaration and deals with eight US states, including Florida and Texas, with a combined GDP of £5.7 trillion. And we will look to agree a free trade agreement with the US when they are ready to do so.

Using our Brexit freedoms to deliver regulatory reform

Conservatives believe in reducing the burden of regulation, freeing up businesses to thrive. We want small businesses free to innovate, balanced with proportionate protections for consumers and working people. We will never introduce Labour's package of French-style union rules, which are a threat to jobs, our competitiveness and our economy. We will go further to transform the UK regulatory landscape, making sure regulators deliver the best outcomes for business, consumers and the environment.

Thanks to Brexit, we have taken back control of our laws and freed British businesses from unnecessary burdens. We legislated to remove the principle of EU law supremacy and have undertaken a root-and-branch review of the more than 6,000 laws we had inherited from the EU.

We have already repealed or reformed over 2,000 EU laws and by July 2026 **we will have repealed or reformed over half of the entire stock of EU law we inherited**. Only the Conservatives will keep on removing EU laws from our statute book. Our Smarter Regulation approach has already saved 50 million hours of administrative time for business, saving them an estimated £1 billion.

We have also used post-Brexit tax freedoms, including introducing VAT-free installations of energy-efficient materials and replacing complex EU alcohol duty rates. And to protect our pubs we will **maintain our Brexit Pubs Guarantee** that means the duty on drinks on draught, such as beer and cider, will be less than in supermarkets.

Cutting government bureaucracy

We will make government more efficient, cut waste and attract the best and the brightest, by:

- **Returning the civil service to its pre-pandemic size to pay for our commitment to increase defence spending to 2.5% of GDP.**
- **Halving the amount of taxpayers' money spent on external consultants. We will introduce controls on all 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' initiatives and spending.**
- **Bring quango spending under control.**
- **Moving 25,000 more civil servants outside of London, building on successes like the Darlington Economic Campus and hubs in Stoke-on-Trent and Wolverhampton.**
- **Opening up civil service recruitment by requiring jobs to be advertised externally to identify the best candidates.**
- **Doubling digital and AI expertise in the civil service, to take advantage of the latest technologies to transform public services.**

These reforms will allow us to achieve a significant productivity boost in Whitehall. If we returned public sector productivity to pre-pandemic levels that would deliver up to £20 billion of annual savings. The NHS Productivity Plan shows that the public sector can set out detailed plans for achieving a step-change in productivity, so we will require all Departments to deliver plans for **2% annual productivity growth** at the next Spending Review.

To limit the impact of industrial action on public services and balance the ability of workers to strike with the rights of the public, we will continue implementing our Minimum Service Levels legislation.

Our plan to cut taxes and protect pensions

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE

As Conservatives, we believe in lower taxes because people, not governments, make the best decisions about how to spend their money. But we can only ever cut taxes responsibly when we have a way to fund it sustainably, consistent with getting debt and borrowing down and in a way which does not send inflation spiralling.

Because of the support we provided to families and businesses through Covid and the energy shock, we had to make difficult decisions to pay down our debts. But we were clear that once inflation was under control and the public finances were on a sustainable path, we would cut taxes. Because of the progress we have made, with inflation back to normal and debt on track to fall from next year, we have been able to afford to begin cutting taxes as part of our plan to reward work and grow the economy, all without increasing borrowing or cutting spending on public services.

Cutting tax for working people

In the first half of this year, we began cutting National Insurance. It is unfair that working people pay two taxes on their income – income tax and National Insurance – when other people only pay income tax.

Our long-term ambition, when it is affordable to do so, is to keep cutting National Insurance until it's gone, as part of our plan to make the tax system simpler and fairer. As the next step in that plan, **we will cut employee National Insurance to 6% by April 2027 – meaning that we will have halved it from 12% at the beginning of this year, a total tax cut of £1,350 for the average worker on £35,000**. This comes on top of the significant above inflation increase to the personal allowance we have delivered since 2010, nearly doubling it from £6,475 to £12,750.

This means the tax burden on workers is falling, with the average earner paying the lowest effective personal tax rate since 1975 – lower than in the US, France, Germany or any G7 country.

As a further downpayment on our long-term ambition to abolish National Insurance, there is one group for whom we will make that a reality in the next Parliament. Last year, the main rate of National Insurance for the self-employed stood at 9%. To recognise the unique contribution of these risk-takers and entrepreneurs to our economy and the insecurity they face without the rights and protections that employees enjoy, we will abolish it entirely by the end of the next Parliament. **The abolition of the main rate of Class 4 National Insurance contributions builds on our abolition of Class 2 contributions for self-employed people from April this year**. This will not affect their entitlement to the State Pension. This is a massive simplification of the tax system which means that 93% of self-employed people – four million of them – will no longer pay self-employed National Insurance.

As well as cutting National Insurance for 29 million people, we will also **not raise the rate of income tax or VAT**.

Increasing pay for working people

We introduced the National Living Wage in 2016 and this year achieved our ambition of raising it to two thirds of median earnings – increasing it to £11.44 per hour and extending it to cover all workers aged over 21. This ended low pay for those on the National Living Wage, with someone working full-time receiving a pay rise worth £1,800. **As a result of our personal tax cuts and increases in the minimum wage, the take-home pay of someone working full**

time on the National Living Wage has gone up by 35% in real terms since 2010.

We will maintain the National Living Wage in each year of the next Parliament at two-thirds of median earnings. On current forecasts, that would mean it rising to around £13 per hour, up from a minimum wage of £5.80 under Labour in 2010.

We will ensure the UK retains the flexible and dynamic labour market that gives businesses the confidence to create jobs and invest in their workforce. The number of payrolled employees is at a near record high, and there are around four million more people in work than when we came to office in 2010.

Cutting tax for pensioners

We believe that those who have worked hard during their lives should have dignity and security in their retirement. We came to power in 2010 after Labour had hit pensioners with a £118 billion pensions tax raid and a paltry 75p per week increase to the State Pension.

Since 2010, we have made it a priority to give people peace of mind in their retirement. We introduced the Triple Lock, which has seen the basic State Pension rise by £3,700 since 2010. This year, the new State Pension increased by £900.

We will continue to do everything we can to provide pensioners with dignity in retirement and ensure the new State Pension is not dragged into income tax for the first time in history by **introducing the new Triple Lock Plus**. This has two elements:

1. **Continuing to uprate the State Pension in line with the highest of prices, earnings or 2.5%.** On current forecasts, this will mean the new State Pension increases by a further £430 in April next year to £11,970; and increases by £1,685 a year to £13,200 by the end of the Parliament.
2. **Ensuring that from next year the tax-free personal allowance for pensioners also rises by the highest of prices, earnings or 2.5%, guaranteeing that the new State Pension is always below the tax-free threshold.** From April 2025, we will increase the personal allowance for pensioners by introducing a new age-related personal allowance. This is a tax cut of around £100 for eight million pensioners next year – rising to £275 a year by the end of the Parliament.

Under our new **Pensions Tax Guarantee**, the Conservatives will not introduce any new taxes on pensions. We will maintain the 25% tax free lump sum and maintain tax relief on pension contributions at their marginal rate. We will not extend National Insurance to employer pension contributions.

We will maintain all current pensioner benefits, including free bus passes, Winter Fuel Payments, free prescriptions and TV licences. We are carefully considering the Ombudsman report into WASPI women and will work with Parliament to provide an appropriate and swift response.

By opposing the Triple Lock Plus, Labour's Retirement Tax will mean millions of pensioners paying more tax. It will also mean that for the first time in history, someone whose only income is the new State Pension will be dragged into paying income tax, which alongside making them worse off means the administrative burden of going through a tax assessment.

Clamping down on tax avoidance

It is vital we make sure people and companies are paying the tax they owe. That's why, since 2010, Conservative Governments have introduced over 200 measures to tackle tax non-compliance. In total across all the fiscal events we have delivered since 2010, the OBR

has scored these measures as raising £95 billion across the forecasts it has produced – £6.7 billion for each year. Building on that, we **will raise at least a further £6 billion a year from tackling tax avoidance and evasion by the end of the Parliament.**

Our plan to support families

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE

The Conservatives have a plan to deliver a brighter future for the UK, one where families are supported and children are given the best chance to gain the skills they need to succeed. We are delivering the largest ever expansion of childcare in history:

- **Working parents of two-year-olds are now able to access 15 hours of free childcare, with over 200,000 two-year-olds already benefitting from the offer.**
- **From September 2024, eligible parents of children between nine months and two years old will also be able to access 15 hours free childcare.**
- **From September 2025, all eligible parents with children from nine months old to when they start school will be able to access 30 hours of free childcare a week.**
- **Once the roll out is completed, families will save an average of £6,900 per year.**

To help the childcare sector expand we have committed to increasing hourly funding rates over the next two years by an estimated £500 million and are helping the sector, including childminders, to hire more staff, create more places and spend less time on paperwork. And to give working parents more flexibility, we are investing £300 million so that all parents can access wraparound childcare before and after school by September 2026.

But families' needs don't stop when children start primary school, which is why Family Hubs support families all the way up until children reach adulthood. They back families in the early years, helping with things like breastfeeding support, antenatal care and early learning interventions, in addition to services like relationship support, stopping smoking services and youth services. Our plan has already delivered Family Hubs in over 75 local authorities. We will go further to **deliver a Family Hub in every local authority in England**.

We will improve the experiences of children in social care, because every child deserves to live in a safe and loving home. We will create **more places in children's homes** while prioritising keeping families together where that's best for the child through our Kinship Care Strategy and helping children grow up in loving adoptive families where that is a better option. We will also support those leaving care with housing, education and employment, in addition to expanding befriending and mentoring programmes for care leavers.

Cutting tax for families

In April, we raised the threshold at which individuals begin to lose Child Benefit from £50,000 to £60,000 and halved the rate at which it is withdrawn. This is the right thing for families and the right thing for the economy.

But it still isn't fair that single earner households can start losing their Child Benefit when a household with two working parents and a much higher total income can keep it in full. We will **end this unfairness by moving to a household rather than individual basis for Child Benefit**. So nobody is worse off than under the current system, we will set the combined household income at which a family will start losing Child Benefit at £120,000 and gradually remove it until household income reaches £160,000, above which families will no longer receive Child Benefit. This will benefit over 700,000 households, each gaining an average of £1,480 a year.

Protecting children online

Digital technology is a force for good. But as technology develops, we need to respond to the concerns many parents have.

Children are spending much more of their time using screens, often unsupervised, with research finding 63% of eight to 11-year-olds are now using social media. We also know that the number of children suffering from mental illness is rising dramatically and children spend less time playing, sleeping and socialising.

In the last decade, we have done more to protect children online than any other country. From next year, our Online Safety Act will make it a legal requirement for social media firms to protect children from illegal or harmful content online. This includes fining social media companies who shirk their responsibilities to keep children safe.

But we need to do more to protect young people and empower parents to make decisions in the best interests of their children.

We will put our guidance on **banning mobile phones in the school day on a statutory footing** which will require all schools to operate a ban, as the best schools already do. We will provide funding for schools to help them ban mobile phones where they need it.

We will urgently consult on introducing further parental controls over access to social media. We know this is a complex area and we need more effective age verification and parental controls. That's why we will consult widely to get this right, including developing the necessary technology, in partnership with other countries who are considering similar measures. We expect to build on the existing responsibilities set out for social media companies under the Online Safety Act.

Our plan to get more people into work and build a fairer welfare system

We believe in fairness and the value of hard work. Alongside a tax system that rewards work, we want a welfare system which supports everyone to fulfil their potential and live dignified and independent lives. There should always be a safety net for those who need it most; but those who can work to support themselves, should work, and they should be better off for doing so.

Since 2010, we have delivered transformational reforms to put work at the heart of our welfare system. We have rolled out Universal Credit and cut its taper rate by 10p in the pound to make work pay. We've brought discipline to the system through tougher sanctions and conditionality. We introduced the household benefit cap and the two-child limit to make the system fairer to the taxpayers who pay for it and ensure benefits are always a safety net, not a lifestyle choice.

All of this has delivered near record levels of employment and low unemployment, with around four million more people in work since we came to office.

At the same time, we have protected the most vulnerable, safeguarding millions of jobs through the pandemic and delivering unprecedented support to help households through the energy shock from Putin's war.

Since the pandemic, new challenges have emerged. The number of people who are economically inactive due to ill health has risen from 2 million to 2.8 million, with a significant increase in mental health conditions among younger people. As a result, **the number of working age people claiming benefits is projected to grow at an unsustainable rate**, with all the wasted human potential that entails.

We are now spending £69 billion a year on benefits for people of working age with a disability or health condition, a figure which has risen by two thirds since the pandemic. By the end of the decade, that spending is projected to increase to £90 billion. **It would be irresponsible not to take bold action to put the welfare system on a sustainable footing.**

So we will reform the system to make it fairer and more sustainable, unlocking the potential of millions of people and giving them the support they need to get into work.

This next generation of welfare reforms will build a system fit for the post-pandemic world. They will give everyone who can the best possible chance of returning to work, while providing the right support to those who need it. With fewer people moving onto welfare and more people in work fulfilling their potential, we will save taxpayers £12 billion a year. To deliver this, we will take a two-pronged approach.

First, to address the unsustainable rise in benefit claims for people of working age with a disability or health condition, we will:

- **Reform our disability benefits so they are better targeted and reflect people's genuine needs, while delivering a step-change in mental health provision.** We will improve PIP assessments to provide a more objective consideration of people's needs and stop the number of claims from rising unsustainably. While people suffering with mental health conditions face significant challenges, it is not clear that they always face the same additional living costs as people with physical disabilities. We will look at the best way to provide support, including whether treatment or services could be more appropriate for some people than a monthly cash payment, while also delivering a dramatic expansion in mental health support. At the same time, we will make the assessment process simpler and fairer for those with the most severe conditions.

- **Tighten up how the benefits system assesses capability for work.** People are now three times more likely to be assessed as not fit for any work and put on the highest tier of sickness benefits than they were a decade ago. We will change the assessments from September 2025 so that those with more moderate mental health issues or mobility problems who could potentially engage with the world of work are given tailored support, instead of being written off on benefits. The OBR has forecast that these reforms will reduce the number of people on these benefits by 424,000.
- **Overhaul the fit note process so that people are not being signed off sick as a default.** Currently, 94% of fit notes are being signed off as 'not fit for work'. We will design a new system which moves the responsibility for issuing fit notes away from our hard-pressed GPs towards specialist work and health professionals, and we will test integrating this with the new WorkWell service to provide tailored support to help people stay in or get back to work.

Second, to make sure that being on benefits remains a safety net, not a lifestyle choice, we will:

- **Introduce tougher sanctions rules so people who refuse to take up suitable jobs after 12 months on benefits can have their cases closed and their benefits removed entirely.** We will bring forward the new claimant review point for the long-term unemployed from 18 months to 12 months. At the claimant review, Work Coaches will set renewed conditions for claimants. If they fail to accept or comply with those conditions, such as refusing a suitable job or a mandatory work placement, their claim will be closed and their benefits will stop.
- **Accelerate the rollout of Universal Credit to ensure it always pays to work.** We will move all of those remaining on outdated legacy benefits onto Universal Credit, removing disincentives for them to work and ensuring they will always be better off in work.
- **Continue to clamp down on fraudsters.** Since 2019 we have delivered cumulative scored savings of £7.7 billion through measures we have taken to tackle fraud in the welfare system. Despite this, the level of welfare fraud remains far too high, having more than doubled during the pandemic. To deliver further savings, we will maintain our zero-tolerance approach to fraud. This will include a new Fraud Bill to give DWP powers similar to that of HMRC, so we can treat benefit fraud like we do tax fraud with new powers to identify, investigate and pursue fraudsters.

We hugely value the work that unpaid carers do supporting their loved ones. We have increased Carer's Allowance by almost £1,500 since 2010 and given employees who are also unpaid carers entitlement to a period of unpaid leave. We will continue to stand behind our carers.

The vast majority of parents work incredibly hard to give their children the best start in life, but sadly a small number shirk their responsibilities. We will **reform the Child Maintenance Service to prevent non-compliance and new laws to help crack down on non-payment**. We'll also look at how the Service can better support victims of domestic or economic abuse, building on recommendations from Dr Samantha Callan's 2023 Independent Review.

Our plan to give young people the opportunities and skills they need

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE

Education is the closest thing we have to a silver bullet, which is why since 2010 we have focused on driving up standards in education. English children are now the best readers in the Western world and are 11th in the world for maths, up from 27th when Labour left office in 2010. Children in England now far outperform their peers in Labour-run Wales and SNP-run Scotland. We will build on this success to make sure every child gets a world-class education and reaches their full potential.

Giving every child the chance to go to a great school

Today, 90% of schools are Good or Outstanding, up from 68% in 2010. School funding is at its highest ever level in real terms per pupil and there are record numbers of teachers, 27,000 more than 2010. The pupil premium, introduced by the Conservatives in 2011, will allocate almost £3 billion next year to support disadvantaged children to reach their full potential. Free school meals have been extended to more groups of children than under any other government over the past half a century. We will build on this progress in the next Parliament by **protecting day-to-day schools spending in real terms per pupil**.

None of this progress has been possible without our great teachers. We have hit our 2019 manifesto commitment to introduce starting salaries of £30,000 and are backing headteachers to manage behaviour and enforce discipline. We will require schools to follow our guidance on **banning the use of mobile phones during the school day,** which is proven to boost attainment, reduce bullying and support good behaviour in schools. We will attract more talented teachers by expanding our recruitment and retention premium and reducing workload. From this September, **new teachers in priority areas and key STEM and technical subjects will receive bonuses of up to £30,000 tax-free** over five years. We will extend the payments to eligible teachers in our further education colleges. We will always support and celebrate our further education colleges.

We will champion excellence in our classrooms. In primary schools, we will support teachers to use tried and tested techniques, including our world-leading phonics programme and our mastery approach to maths, enabling every child to master the basics before they start secondary school. We will support children in their transition to secondary school and ensure they continue to receive a broad and enriched education during and after-school, including via our multi-million pound Music Hubs.

We will **mandate two hours of PE every week in primary and secondary schools, supported by extending the PE and Sport Premium to secondary schools**. We will increase funding for School Games Organisers to get more competitive sport into and between schools and work with sporting bodies to create more UK-wide **school competitions like National Finals**, to identify the best sporting talents.

To keep pace with our global competitors we will **introduce the Advanced British Standard, a new approach to 16-19 education which will build on the best of A Levels and T Levels**. We will end the artificial and damaging divide between academic and technical education which has persisted for far too long. Every young person will spend more time in the classroom, learning more subjects, including English and maths to 18, as they do in most advanced economies around the world.

For children and young people to benefit from the bold reforms we have made to education, they must be in school. The legacy of Covid

has made this more difficult. We will continue to work with schools and local authorities to improve school attendance, including through more mental health support, building on our plan that is working – there were 440,000 fewer children persistently absent last year compared to the year before. And to ensure all children are getting a high-quality education, including those who are home schooled, we will **legislate to create a register of children not in school**.

We will work to strengthen the relationship between schools and parents, including by delivering new legislation which will make clear, beyond all doubt, that **parents have a right to see what their child is being taught in school** and schools must share all materials, especially on sensitive matters like relationships and sex education. This builds on the progress we have already made, having updated Relationships, Sex and Health Education Guidance to introduce **clear age-limits on what children can be taught** and guarantee the contested concept of gender identity is not taught to children.

We will **expand strong academy trusts**. This builds on our record to date, where half of all state-funded schools are now academies and over 700 free schools have been delivered, with more in the pipeline. We will further protect parents' choice on where to send their child to school, including preserving the rights of independent and grammar schools. We will lift the cap on faith schools, allowing them to offer more places to children based on faith and encouraging them to expand. We will back Ofsted to provide clear judgements to parents on the quality and safety of schools. We are rebuilding over 500 schools through the School Rebuilding Programme, including rebuilding or refurbishing every school identified to have RAAC.

We will transform education for children with special educational needs, ending the postcode lottery of support by delivering **60,000 more school places and a further 15 new free schools for children with special educational needs**. Instead of penalising independent special schools by taxing them, we will back them because we believe in the right of parents to choose the best education for their child.

A new model of modern National Service

We will **reinvent National Service for this century** to give young people valuable life skills and build a stronger national culture. National Service will be compulsory, so it becomes a rite of passage for every 18-year-old, but **young people will be given a choice**, between:

- **civic service**. The equivalent of one weekend a month (25 days a year) volunteering in the community, alongside work or study, for a year. Roles could include special constable, NHS responder or RNLI volunteer; or
- **military service**. A year-long full-time placement in the armed forces or cyber defence. This placement will be competitive and paid, so our armed forces recruit and train the brightest and the best.

We will establish a Royal Commission, the first in a quarter of a century, to design our modernised National Service. It will be backed by funding rising to £2.5 billion in the final year of the Parliament and a new National Service Act.

Facilitating training and skills at every stage of life

We believe in giving young people the best possible start to their adult lives and going to university is not the only route to success. The Conservatives have prioritised apprenticeships after they were neglected under Labour. Since 2010, we have delivered 5.8 million apprenticeships and have created apprenticeship routes into 70% of occupations, including through degree apprenticeships. We passed new laws requiring children to be taught about technical education opportunities, not just university routes, and have set up 21 Institutes of Technology. We will build on this by **creating 100,000 more apprenticeships**

in England every year by the end of next Parliament.

We will fund this by changing the law to **close university courses in England with the worst outcomes for their students**. Courses that have excessive drop-out rates or leave students worse off than had they not gone to university will be prevented from recruiting students by the universities regulator. This will protect students from being missold and the taxpayer from having to pay where the graduate can't.

We are committed to delivering the best value for students, so have already reformed student loans to make them fairer, meaning no one will pay back more than what they borrowed in real terms. And we will work with universities to ensure students get the contact hours they are promised and their exams get marked.

We will support the National Citizen Service to help young people build confidence and develop the skills they need to thrive.

We will deliver the Lifelong Learning Entitlement, giving adults the support they need to train, retrain and upskill flexibly throughout their working lives. From the 2025 academic year, adults will be able to apply for loans to cover new qualifications. We will also continue to expand our adult skills programmes, such as Skills Bootcamps which meet skills shortages.

Our plan to secure our nation from global uncertainty

The world is an increasingly dangerous place so we will take bold action to keep the British people safe and our homeland secure. Our prosperity depends on our ability to preserve international security. As our record proves, we will do so by deterring our adversaries and acting as a force for peace and stability in the world.

We will fully deliver our new pledge for the defence of the nation.

We will hit **2.5% of GDP on defence in 2030 with our fully funded plan**. This is the biggest strengthening of our defence since the Cold War, ensuring we remain the largest defence power in Europe. It will protect our security, cement our UK leadership in NATO and create more jobs in the UK.

If all NATO partners spent 2.5% of GDP on defence, our collective spending would increase by over £140 billion. Therefore, we will launch **a campaign to set a new baseline of 2.5% for all NATO allies by 2030**.

We will invest in the vital capabilities of the future, to give our Armed Forces the best equipment to do their job.

Taking pride in our record

- We have led the world in support of Ukraine against Putin's aggression, as the first European country to mobilise lethal aid and to send Western tanks and long-range missiles. Russia's attempts to destroy Ukraine are an assault on European security.
- We will always be steadfast in our support for our Trident nuclear deterrent and have invested in its modernisation, including a nuclear skills package worth up to £763 million by 2030.
- We have taken action to prevent Iran and its proxies from attacking the UK and its partners.
- We have toughened our cyber defences and national security laws to protect the nation from terrorists and hostile state actors.
- We have chased dirty money out of the UK with new measures to protect our economic security.
- We have ripped out Huawei from key parts of our telecommunications system and reduced Chinese influence in our critical national infrastructure and sensitive technological sectors.
- Due to our post-Brexit freedoms, we have introduced a new independent sanctions regime that we have used to stand up for human rights around the world in countries such as Russia, Belarus and Iran.
- We have agreed new trade and security deals across the world including in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the Indo-Pacific.
- We have delivered major new investment. The Integrated Review was supported by an additional £24 billion and the Integrated Review Refresh by an additional £5 billion to invest in stockpiles and our nuclear enterprise. We have pledged over £12 billion to date on support to Ukraine.
- We have created new defence industrial partnerships, including AUKUS to create the world's most advanced nuclear-powered, conventionally and continually armed, submarines and the Global Combat Air Programme to create a new fighter jet with Italy and Japan.
- We will always stand up for British values and interests and will never be afraid to act when it is necessary. We have been part of a coalition that protected maritime security from Houthi attacks and helped police the airspace of our partners in the Middle East.

Our strategic defence priorities

We will adapt to the lessons from the war in Ukraine which showed us it is vital to be able to replenish equipment quickly and that the acceleration of disruptive technologies is changing the character of warfare. Our strategic priorities will be:

- **Boosting the UK defence industrial base** by giving industry the multi-year certainty it requires to produce the equipment we need when we need it, with at least £10 billion of investment in munitions production, the majority of which will be spent in the UK over the next decade. We will do this in the areas in which we have the most pressing priorities, building on UK expertise. We will build long-term strategic partnerships with our industrial partners and invest in high quality British defence industry jobs across the UK.
- **Accelerating the modernisation of our Armed Forces and investing in technology** that is advantageous on the modern battlefield. Through our new Defence Innovation Agency, we will scale R&D funding to a minimum of 5% of the defence budget, together with an additional 2% to exploit that R&D, accelerating investments in new weapon systems.
- **Guaranteeing Ukraine the support it needs for the long haul**, assuring current levels of support for as long as they are required. We will secure additional military supplies for Ukraine and build international agreement to use immobilised Russian assets to support Ukraine.

We will deliver a National Defence and Resilience Plan for our security, preparedness and resilience as a nation. This will be based on the latest assessment of threats and risks, bringing together defence and civilian planning to reflect our increasingly interdependent world, and sit alongside work to build on learnings from Covid to improve the country's preparedness for risks on the National Risk Register.

We will improve Service Family Accommodation, improving quality and ensuring military families get the support they deserve.

Our pledge to Veterans

We are proud to have created the United Kingdom's first Office for Veterans Affairs, run by a dedicated Minister who attends Cabinet, transforming what it feels like to be a Veteran in the United Kingdom.

- We will maintain the Office for Veterans Affairs in its current position in the Cabinet Office, with a **dedicated Minister for Veterans Affairs in Cabinet**.
- We will **maintain the base operating budget of the Office for Veterans Affairs at £10 million throughout the next Parliament**. We will retain the National Insurance holiday for those who employ veterans and we will bring forward measures so that War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme awards are not counted as income for the purpose of benefits and pensions.
- We will **extend the visa fees waiver introduced to cover Commonwealth personnel**, to include their direct dependants. We will fully implement the findings of the independent review into Veterans UK. We will bring forward measures to ensure public bodies record whether someone has served in the UK's Armed Forces.
- We will **cut the cost of the Veterans Railcard so that it costs the same as the HM Forces Railcard**.
- We will **pass the UK's first ever Veterans' Bill** to enshrine Veterans' rights in law. Ensuring qualifications from Service are correctly recognised in civilian life, creating a legal duty on government to look after our Veterans and widening the scope of the Armed Forces Covenant in law to include the UK Government and devolved administrations.
- We will change the law to ensure **Veterans ID cards are valid identification in all future elections**.

Improving efficiency and investing across the United Kingdom

Defence already contributes significantly to our economic prosperity, supporting over 400,000 jobs in the UK. As part of our new investment in defence, we will **prioritise growth in UK industries and supporting communities across the United Kingdom**.

We will make sure new investment is spent more effectively than before. By delivering our new **Integrated Procurement Model**, we will make defence procurement faster, smarter and more joined up, boost private sector investment by confirming that ESG considerations are entirely consistent with investment in our vital defence industry and transform innovation.

We will ensure we achieve value for money from this investment in defence alongside our procurement reforms. We will improve productivity, along with a new **target to become the largest defence exporter in Europe by 2030**.

Leadership in the world

Since the 2019 election, the Conservative Government has delivered on our promise to make Britain a force for good in the world.

We are proud of our record in defence and diplomacy in an increasingly contested and dangerous world and we celebrate the professionalism of our Armed Forces, diplomats, development experts and intelligence agencies.

Our highest priority remains protecting the British homeland, Crown dependencies and Overseas Territories from risks and threats. As part of that, we continue to ensure the democratic rights of people in Gibraltar, the Falklands and all our Overseas Territories are protected.

We believe that the United Kingdom needs to be **outward-looking and global in perspective**, seizing opportunities to deepen its economic ties and bolster its prosperity in the most dynamic parts of the world.

We have a record in standing up to those who threaten our security and values, and we are taking new action to protect ourselves, our democracy and our economy at home.

We must be **prepared to tackle the axis of authoritarian states and hostile actors** who are working together to threaten international security. That is why we will include Russia, Iran and China within the enhanced tier of the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme.

- We will **strengthen our relationships with like-minded partners** around the world. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the UK has a responsibility to stand up for international peace and security. We will keep investing in our collective security through groups like the G7, Five Eyes and NATO.
- We will **maintain our special relationship with the United States**, building on the closer trading and national security ties we have built in recent years.
- We will seek to **strengthen the Commonwealth**, as an organisation that accounts for over a quarter of the membership of the UN and a champion of values. We will deepen cooperation with Commonwealth partners and institutions to enhance the benefits of membership, strengthen intra-Commonwealth trade, support members facing challenges in attracting inward investment and strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable members to climate change, nature loss and environmental degradation.
- We will build on our post-Brexit relationships in Europe, including through the **Joint Expeditionary Force and new**

defensive treaties with Germany and Poland, to match the treaty we have with France under Lancaster House.

- In relation to China, we will strengthen our national security protections, align and cooperate with our partners, and engage where it is consistent with our interests. China has disregarded universal human rights and its international commitments, from Tibet and Xinjiang to Hong Kong. We will continue to raise our grave concerns at the UN and other fora and use asset freezes and travel bans on those involved under our human rights sanctions regime.
- We will maintain our close ties in the Indo-Pacific, following our accession to CPTPP, our AUKUS partnership with Australia and ASEAN dialogue partner status. We will bolster the Hiroshima Accord with Japan and expand trade and security ties with South Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam and Singapore. We will finalise **a free trade agreement with India**, alongside a deeper strategic partnership on technology and defence.
- We will continue to seek closer ties with partners in the Gulf and Middle East based on an appreciation of regional perspectives and shared interests.
- We will sign partnership agreements with each of the British Overseas Territories, ensuring we are working together to deliver for their residents and identifying areas for greater cooperation on defence, trade and investment.

To ensure our world-class diplomacy and development expertise is brought together we will **maintain the merger of the Foreign Office and former Department for International Development** – and use this advantage to the maximum benefit in every post overseas.

The UK will remain one of the largest development donors in the world. We will return to spending 0.7% of GNI when fiscal circumstances allow. We will assess every penny of this money with a **strict national interest test**.

- We will continue to ensure that aid and development supports our strategic objectives, with a focus on fragile states. We will work with our partners to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals and tackle poverty, as set out in the International Development White Paper.
- We will use our influence to ensure Multilateral Development Banks get more money to the countries who need it and work to deliver debt relief.
- We will expand our international campaigns on girls' education, women's rights and reproductive health. We will stand up for those persecuted for their faith and put the existing role of **Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief on a statutory footing**. We will promote international media freedom and work to end human trafficking and modern slavery.
- We will support marginalised communities in the developing world and protect those persecuted for their ethnicity, political views, faith or sexuality. We will continue our campaigns against child marriage and FGM.
- We will scale up high impact, cost effective global health interventions, including maternal nutrition and antimicrobial resistance, for benefit at home and overseas. We will continue our longstanding support for GAVI and the Global Fund - organisations that have saved millions of lives in the fight against disease.

We will **maintain the leadership on climate change** we achieved at COP26 and our efforts to tackle global warming and biodiversity loss.

We will continue to ring-fence our commitment to International Climate Finance.

We will work with Small Island Development States, including our Commonwealth friends in the Caribbean and the Pacific, to access finance for climate change adaptation and resilience.

We will be confident in spreading British values around the world, publishing a **new Soft Power Strategy** to support the role of our embassies and the British Council overseas. We will support the BBC World Service, **expand the use of the English language worldwide** and champion English learning around the globe.

We will not apologise for standing up for our values and we will work against the global rollback on people's rights and freedoms. We will use all the tools available to us, including travel bans and sanctions, on individuals and entities that warrant it.

We have delivered on our manifesto pledge to introduce 'votes for life' for British citizens living overseas. We will appoint **a Minister for British Citizens Overseas** to represent them across government.

The UK has a strong record of providing world-leading consular support to our citizens overseas and we will ensure British nationals abroad get help when they need it. We will introduce a new model for complex detention cases, with **new Family Advocates** to help provide specialist assistance and give greater confidence to families.

We are proud to be a **problem-solving and burden-sharing nation**. We will use our diplomatic efforts to keep pushing for reconciliation and stability in parts of the world where there is conflict or unresolved territorial disputes.

We staunchly stand behind Israel's right to defend itself and to live with security. We will continue to support access to aid for those affected by the conflict. We will push for a two-state solution in the Middle East - our long-standing position has been that we will recognise a Palestinian State at a time that is most conducive to the peace process. We will redouble our efforts to help achieve diplomatic breakthroughs in Cyprus, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Myanmar.

We will bring back our Bill to ban public bodies from imposing their own boycott or divestment campaigns against foreign countries and territories.

We will intensify our fight to stop money laundering and dirty money and ensure all British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies adopt open registers of beneficial ownership.

Our plan to control immigration and stop illegal immigration

Illegal migration is unfair. It is unfair for people to jump the queue in front of people who play by the rules. It is unfair for taxpayers to pay for the hotels and public services. And it is unfair for illegal migrants themselves who risk their lives in the hands of people smugglers.

The Conservatives are the only party with a plan to stop the boats and reduce the strain that illegal migration places on our communities and public services. Labour have no plan and would grant an amnesty to thousands of illegal migrants.

We have made progress. Last year, small boat arrivals to the UK fell by a third. Our work with international partners prevented more than 26,000 crossings last year. Our Albania deal shows that deterrence works, with numbers down 90%.

But the only way to stop the boats entirely is to remove the incentive to come – by making clear that if you come here illegally, you will not be allowed to stay. Only then will the boats stop coming and people stop dying in the Channel. We will:

- **Establish a deterrent.** We will run a relentless, continual process of permanently removing illegal migrants to Rwanda with a regular rhythm of flights every month, starting this July, until the boats are stopped. If we are forced to choose between our security and the jurisdiction of a foreign court, including the ECtHR, we will always choose our security.
- **End the legal merry-go-round**. We will stop illegal migrants from bringing spurious challenges to block their removal by bringing our Illegal Migration Act into force and clearing the asylum backlog, with all claims processed in six months and the use of hotels ended.
- **Crack down on organised immigration crime**, including through the National Crime Agency and our intelligence services, to disrupt supply chains and tackle people smugglers.
- **Reform asylum rules**, holding an international summit and working with other countries to reform international laws to make them fit for an age of mass migration. We will restrict visa access from countries that don't work with us on our national priorities, like illegal migration.
- **Return people with no right to be here to their own country**. We will sign further returns deals like the one we have already agreed with Albania.
- With control of our borders, we can **do more to help refugees fleeing persecution**. In addition to maintaining visa schemes for people fleeing Hong Kong, Ukraine and our Afghan settlement schemes, we will give parliament control of how many places we offer on safe and legal routes to support those in genuine need from around the world, with a cap based on the capacity of local areas.

Delivering sustainable levels of high-skilled migration

Immigration is too high. We want to attract the **brightest and best** skilled migrants to the UK to contribute to our businesses and public services. We must bring migration numbers down to sustainable levels to reduce the impacts on public services and housing and to restore public confidence in the system.

We have already implemented changes which mean that 300,000 people who were eligible to come the UK last year now couldn't. We have:

- **Ended the ability of almost all international students and all care workers to bring dependants.**
- Scrapped cut-price shortage labour from overseas, by **abolishing the 20% going rate salary discount** for shortage occupations.
- Stopped immigration from undercutting British workers, by **increasing the salary threshold for Skilled Worker visas** by 48% to £38,700.
- Ensured those sponsoring dependants can support them financially, by **raising the minimum income for family visas** to £38,700.

Going forward, we will **raise the Skilled Worker threshold and Family income requirement with inflation automatically** to make sure they don't undercut UK workers.

We have taken steps to ensure those coming to the UK do not place a burden on the NHS, by requiring them to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge and increasing this to £1,035. We will go further, in line with other countries, by **requiring migrants to undergo a health check** in advance of travel and increasing their Immigration Health Surcharge or requiring them to buy health insurance if they are likely to be a burden on the NHS.

We will increase all visa fees and remove the student discount to the Immigration Health Surcharge to raise more money for public services.

We will continue to attract the **brightest and best** students to study in our world class institutions. We will ensure those who come here are able to integrate into communities and participate in the economy. We want to make sure our immigration system is fair and will continue delivering the **Windrush Compensation Scheme**. We are committed to the EU Settled Status Scheme and the rights it has guaranteed for EU citizens.

Our plan to cut migration

We need to control numbers and give the public confidence they will come down significantly.

- We will **introduce a binding, legal cap on migration,** set on work and family visas so public services are protected whilst we bring the skills our businesses and the NHS needs.
- Our cap will be set at a level that explicitly takes into account **the costs and the benefits of migration**.
- The cap will **fall every year of the next Parliament** and cannot be breached.
- We will give parliament **an annual vote on the level of the cap** so that the British people can have confidence that immigration numbers will be controlled.
- Unlike Labour, we won't allow any form of free movement to return.

Our plan to deliver better health and social care

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE

Since 2010, we have invested more in the NHS than at any other point in its history. We will continue to increase NHS spending above inflation in each year of the next Parliament.

During Covid, we saw the NHS at its finest, with extraordinary acts of service and sacrifice from health and care professionals. Throughout the pandemic, the Conservative Government acted to save lives, protect the NHS and deliver a world leading vaccine programme. But dealing with a once-in-a-generation pandemic put a strain on our health and social care system and it has taken time to recover.

Thanks to record funding, we now have more doctors and nurses than ever before, delivering record numbers of appointments. We are committed to accelerating the NHS's recovery from the pandemic, delivering safe and effective services and ongoing improvements in waiting times for primary, elective, cancer and emergency care. We will return performance to the levels set out in the NHS Constitution by the end of the next Parliament.

We will invest in and modernise the NHS. We have taken the long-term decision to train the staff the NHS needs, by backing the NHS's first ever Long-Term Workforce Plan. By the end of the next Parliament, there will be **92,000 more nurses and 28,000 more doctors in the NHS than in 2023**. We are also delivering record increases in training places for other clinicians, such as midwives and paramedics and we are boosting training places for dentists and other dental care professionals by 40%. We will improve working conditions for all NHS staff.

We are committed to supporting a **high-quality and sustainable social care system, building on our additional investment of up to £8.6 billion over the last two years**. At the next Spending Review, we will give local authorities a multi-year funding settlement to support social care and will take forward the reforms in our 'People at the Heart of Care' White Paper.

Bringing health and care closer to patients

The NHS Long-Term Workforce Plan will help shift care away from hospitals and into local communities. To support this, we will:

- **Expand Pharmacy First**, including for menopause support, contraception and treatment for chest infections, freeing up 20 million GP appointments a year.
- **Build or modernise 250 GP surgeries**, focused on areas of new housing growth.
- **Build 50 more Community Diagnostic Centres**, including in underserved areas, resulting in an additional 2.5 million checks a year.

We will attract and retain a high-quality care workforce, make reforms to shape the market for older people's housing and support unpaid carers. We will implement our planned reforms to cap social care costs from October 2025.

We will invest in more and better facilities, **continuing to deliver 40 new hospitals by 2030 and investing proportionately more in out-of-hospital services over time**. We will modernise NHS primary care services and bring health and care closer to patients.

Our Dental Recovery Plan will unlock 2.5 million more NHS dental appointments, through a patient premium to encourage dentists to take on new NHS patients. We will make further reforms to the dental contract to ensure its future sustainability and we will ensure newly qualified dentists have to work in the NHS for a number of years or pay back their training costs. We will promote good oral health through our 'Smile for Life' programme. Rural and coastal communities will be better served through 'golden hellos' to encourage dentists to work in these areas, and through new dental vans.

We will further improve access to NHS services across England by training more staff in rural and coastal areas. For the first time the NHS Constitution will reflect the bespoke healthcare needs of rural and coastal communities and the need for the NHS to tailor services accordingly.

We will protect and promote patients' right to choose the NHS service that is right for them. We will grow opportunities for all types of providers - NHS, charity or independent sector - to offer services free of charge to NHS patients, where these meet NHS costs and standards. We will extend patients' right to choose to more NHS community services over time, including diagnostics, talking therapies and other mental health services. We will fully roll out Martha's Rule, giving patients the right to a second opinion.

We will support our world-leading life sciences sector, embracing the opportunities provided by Brexit to pursue nimble and agile regulation, supported by a well-equipped MHRA. We will support research into new treatments, including for Parkinson's and motor neurone disease and secure more commercial clinical trials. We will remove bureaucratic obstacles to the use of new medicines, such as the NHS Budget Impact Test and will align NHS England's cost-effectiveness thresholds for new medicines indications with those used by NICE. We will implement a new medtech pathway so that cost-effective medtech, including AI, is rapidly adopted throughout the NHS.

We will cut waste and bureaucracy in the NHS, reducing the number of managers by 5,500, releasing £550 million for frontline services and simplifying and streamlining oversight and accountability. We will carefully consider the implications of the review of the whistleblowing framework for the NHS and we will consult on a disbarring regime for NHS managers.

We know that, for most people, poor health comes from living with one or more of six major health conditions: cancer, heart disease, musculoskeletal disorders, mental ill-health, dementia and respiratory disease. **We will publish and implement a Major Conditions Strategy to prevent these conditions from occurring and ensure those living with them receive the best possible care**. We will also take forward our Rare Diseases Action Plan. We will continue to modernise autism and learning disability services.

We will bring forward our landmark **Tobacco and Vapes Bill** in our first King's Speech. We will continue to tackle childhood and adult obesity and will legislate to restrict the advertising of products high in fat, salt and sugar. We will gather new evidence on the impact of ultra-processed food to support people to make healthier choices.

We will roll out new digital health checks to 250,000 more people every year, helping to prevent hundreds of strokes and heart attacks. We will take forward the NHS Vaccination Strategy.

We are implementing the HIV Action Plan, which will end new HIV transmissions by 2030. Subject to evaluation, we will expand HIV opt-out testing in emergency departments in England.

Transforming NHS technology and productivity

We will invest £3.4 billion in new technology to transform the NHS for staff and for patients. The NHS Productivity Plan will see NHS productivity grow by 1.9% a year from 2025-26 – unlocking £35 billion of cumulative savings by the end of the decade. We will:

- Make the NHS App the single front door for NHS services. Patients will use the App to access their medical records, order prescriptions, book vaccine appointments, access a digital red book and manage their hospital appointments.
- Use AI to free up doctors' and nurses' time for frontline patient care.
- Replace tens of thousands of outdated computers, slashing the 13 million hours in doctors' and nurses' time lost to IT issues every year and digitise NHS processes through the Federated Data Platform.
- Fund technology to help clinicians read MRI and CT scans more quickly and accurately, speeding up results for 130,000 patients every year.
- Create new incentives for improved performance, rewarding the best performing providers of care.

We will **prioritise women's health**, following publication of the first ever Women's Health Strategy in 2022. To support women further, we will:

- **Bring forward a comprehensive national strategy for maternity care as recommended by the APPG on Birth Trauma's inquiry.**
- **Deliver additional funding for maternal safety and improve access to mental health services for new mums, improve perinatal pelvic health services to prevent and support women with birth injuries and postnatal appointments dedicated to checking mums, not just their babies.**
- **Expand women's health hubs so that every integrated care system has at least one hub up and running.**
- **Roll out fracture liaison services to every region, reaching 100% coverage by 2030 as osteoporosis disproportionately impacts women.**
- **Support continued research into disparities in maternity care through the National Institute for Health and Care Research.**

We will complete the implementation of the Cass Review, protecting young people questioning their gender from ideologically-driven care and ensuring that NHS services follow evidence-based best practice. We have already stopped the routine use by the NHS of puberty blockers for gender dysphoria and will legislate to permanently prevent their private prescription and supply.

We will amend the NHS Constitution so that it recognises every patient's right to request single-sex accommodation and same-sex intimate care. We will not allow the word 'woman' to be erased by health services. Words such as 'breastfeeding' and 'mother' will not be replaced by 'chestfeeding' and 'birthing parent'.

We will introduce a new licensing scheme and age limits for non-surgical cosmetic procedures, ensuring services are administered by suitably qualified and trained professionals.

Improving mental health support

Mental health should have parity of esteem with physical health. To support children, young people and adults with their mental health, we will:

- Expand coverage of Mental Health Support Teams from 50% to **100% of schools and colleges in England by 2030**.
- Open **early support hubs for those aged 11-25 in every local community** by 2030.
- Increase the planned **expansion of NHS Talking Therapies by 50%, supporting people with anxiety, stress and depression.**
- Boost the capacity of **Individual Placement and Support for Severe Mental Illness** by 140,000 places.
- Pass a new law to provide **better treatment and support for severe mental health needs** in the first session of the next Parliament.

We will maintain the position that assisted dying is a matter of conscience and will respect the will of Parliament. Debates on assisted dying should never distract from the importance of delivering high-quality palliative care services and we will continue to support children's and adults' hospices.

We have made a wholehearted and unequivocal apology, on behalf of successive governments of all parties, for the infected blood scandal. As one of the last acts of Parliament, legislation was passed that brings the Infected Blood Compensation Authority into existence and we confirmed Sir Robert Francis as its Interim Chair. We will pay comprehensive compensation to those infected and those affected by this scandal, accepting the principles recommended by the Inquiry. **Whatever it costs to deliver the scheme, we will pay it**. We will also give a further £210,000 interim payment to living infected beneficiaries – those registered with existing infected blood support schemes as well as those who register with a support scheme before the final scheme becomes operational and the estates of those who pass away between now and payments being made. A scandal like this must never be allowed to happen again, so we will study the Inquiry's wide-ranging recommendations and provide a full response to the Inquiry.

Our plan for safer streets and justice for victims of crime

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE

The Conservatives will always back our brave police and security services with the powers and resources needed to keep our country safe and we will always work to deliver a justice system that is fair to victims and sees offenders repay their debt to society.

Under the Conservatives, violent crime has fallen by 44% since 2010 and neighbourhood crime is down 48%. Reoffending has fallen from over 30% in 2010 to 25%. We have recruited 20,000 police officers, delivered 6,000 prison places as part of the largest prison expansion since the Victorian era and deported over 18,000 foreign national offenders since 2019 alone. We will:

- **Give every neighbourhood an additional police officer by recruiting 8,000 more police** officers to patrol communities and catch criminals in every ward in the country. These full time, fully warranted officers will be dedicated to neighbourhood policing.
- **Back the police**, by giving officers new powers and tools to catch criminals, including technology like facial recognition and powers to seize knives and track down stolen property. We will always back the police in the lawful and professional use of force, alongside a fair and proportionate accountability system.
- **Restore public trust in policing**. We will license police officers for specialist roles, as we do already for firearms officers. We will legislate to ensure officers are appropriately vetted during their service and those who fail can be sacked.

We will foster greater collaboration between the National Crime Agency and Counter Terrorism Policing.

We will urgently **introduce Martyn's Law**, in tribute to Martyn Hett, who was tragically killed alongside 21 others in the Manchester Arena terrorist attack in 2017. This will ensure premises are better prepared for terrorist attacks by requiring them to take proportionate steps to mitigate risks.

We will toughen up community sentencing by **increasing the use of community payback and electronic tagging**, so criminals pay their debt to society and communities witness justice being served. We will **fund every police force to roll out Hotspot Policing**, which has cut anti-social behaviour by up to 50% in some areas.

We will keep turning the tide against fraudsters. In the last year we have reduced fraud by 13%, including through our new National Fraud Squad with 400 officers now in post. We will ban SIM farms, which are used to send bulk messages for fraudulent texts, and ban cold calls on financial products so fraudsters cannot dupe people into buying fake investments.

Tackling violence against women and girls

We have made violence against women and girls a strategic policing requirement for the first time, making clear to the police that these crimes are as significant as terrorism, serious and organised crime and child sexual abuse.

We have **strengthened the law to punish predators** with new offences for stalking, controlling or coercive behaviour, non-fatal strangulation and suffocation, sharing of intimate images or 'revenge porn', non-consensual taking of images of a woman breastfeeding, 'up skirting' and raised the maximum penalties for harassment. We will legislate to create new offences for spiking, the creation of sexualised deepfake images and taking intimate images without consent.

We will support victims of domestic abuse including through our **Domestic Abuse Act**, which created a statutory definition of domestic abuse and gave new powers to police and the courts.

We will toughen sentencing for murders that take place within the context of domestic abuse with new aggravating factors, such as if they involve coercive and controlling behaviour or gratuitous attacks. We will introduce **a 25-year prison term for domestic murders**, regardless of whether a weapon is used. Those who kill their domestic abusers will not face the same starting point. This will be accompanied by a **review of homicide sentencing**, looking to close loopholes that allow some killers to get off lightly.

We will introduce an **aggravating factor for murders that happen in the context of 'rough sex'**, so it is never used as an excuse to get a lighter sentence.

We have increased rape prosecutions by 56% since 2010 and we will ensure **rape victims get the justice and support they deserve**, with a new investigatory model for rape for police forces and prosecutors and pre-recorded cross-examination for victims in all Crown courts.

We will carefully consider the recommendations of Baroness Bertin's Independent Review of Pornography and ensure we have the right safeguards in place to protect against any harmful impacts of the industry.

A justice system that delivers for victims and the public

We will toughen sentencing for the worst offenders. We have already ended Labour's automatic halfway release for violent and serious sexual offenders. We will make **life imprisonment without parole mandatory for more of the most heinous murderers** and **require rapists and other serious sexual offenders to spend the whole of their sentences behind bars**.

We will **toughen sentences for knife crime, grooming gangs and assaults against retail workers** and combat the ability of serious organised crime gangs to use new technology to harm the public. We will prioritise further measures to crack down on hyper-prolific offenders.

We will empower judges to **require offenders to attend hearings** or face an increased sentence. We will stand firmly behind the legal doctrine of joint enterprise meaning that those who assist in crimes, from the getaway driver to the weapon supplier, can be held accountable.

We will **build four new prisons**, completing our programme of 20,000 new prison places by 2030. We will make it easier to build prisons in appropriate places by scrapping legacy EU rules and streamlining the planning system.

We will **remove more Foreign National Offenders** by increasing removals under the Early Removal Scheme and negotiating more Prisoner Transfer Agreements.

We will **maintain the ban on prisoners voting** from jail.

We will **turn criminals away from the cycle of reoffending**, investing in rehabilitative services such as drug treatment, education and employment. We will deliver our ten-year drugs plan to cut crime and help people rebuild their lives away from crime.

Our Victims and Prisoners Act ensures victims are protected and supported, including that those affected by major disasters such as Hillsborough, the Manchester Arena bombing and the Grenfell Tower fire can get the help they need, when they need it, through **a permanent Independent Public Advocate**. We will expand the provision of legal aid at inquests related to major incidents where the Independent Public Advocate is appointed or in the aftermath of terrorist incidents.

We will bring the **mandatory reporting provisions** of the Criminal Justice Bill into force as soon as possible. We will design a redress scheme for the victims of child sexual abuse in institutional settings that reflects their needs. We will ensure this includes the victims of

grooming gangs and make a national apology to grooming gang victims.

We will ensure sex offenders cannot evade justice or conceal their identity by **restricting sex offenders from changing their names**.

We will **cut the Covid court backlog** by keeping open Nightingale courtrooms, funding sitting days and investing in court maintenance. And we will continue to digitise court processes and expand the use of remote hearings. We will match **fund 100 criminal law pupillages** to speed up justice for victims and will continue to ensure access to justice through legal aid provision.

We will **expand our Pathfinder Courts pilot in family court** proceedings and continue mediation vouchers to help more families resolve private law child arrangements without an acrimonious court battle.

We will support our **world class legal services** sector, including through an Arbitration Bill. We will help individuals and small businesses bring cases against wealthier opponents with legislation to support third party funding of litigation.

A plan to counter extremism and to protect our streets

In recent months we have seen shocking increases in protests being used as a cover for extremist disruption and criminality. We cannot allow a small and vocal minority to destroy our democratic values. That is why we unveiled **a new extremism definition** under which certain groups that promote an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance will be blocked from government funding and meeting officials.

We have passed tough **new laws to curb disruptive protests**. Our Public Order Act 2023 gave the police new powers to intervene where protests cause serious disruption to communities, leading to the arrests of over 600 Just Stop Oil and Extinction Rebellion protestors in London alone. We will introduce further powers to **ban face coverings, pyrotechnics and climbing on war memorials**.

We will **strengthen police powers to prevent protests or marches that pose a risk of serious disorder**, by allowing police to take into account the cumulative impact of protests. We will **ban protests outside schools** to stop mobs from intimidating teachers and children. We will always support teachers to uphold and promote fundamental British values and ensure they are protected from accusations of blasphemy.

We will place **a duty on the police and prosecutors** to publish regular guidance on the statements, chants or symbols, for example, the swastika or the term ‘jihad’, that in the context of political protest may constitute an offence. We will explore ways for the police to recover some of the costs of policing disruptive protests from the groups that organise them.

We will also ensure our **elected representatives get the protection needed** to represent their constituents without fear.

Abuse or discrimination based on religion is unacceptable. **We will not tolerate antisemitic hatred in any form**. We have pledged £54 million for the Community Security Trust to give Jewish schools and synagogues the security measures they need and allocated additional funding to support schools and universities to understand, recognise and tackle antisemitism. We will get the UK Holocaust Memorial built.

We do not tolerate anti-Muslim hatred and will seek to stamp it out wherever it occurs. We have committed to provide £117 million over four years for the Protective Security for Mosques scheme and are proud to support and help fund Tell MAMA’s vital work.

Our plan for an affordable and pragmatic transition to net zero

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE

In the last few years, we have faced the greatest shock to our energy security since the 1970s. Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine sent energy prices spiralling. Because of the decisions we had taken to boost domestic energy production and invest in renewables, Britain had little reliance on Russian fuel when the invasion began, unlike some of our European neighbours. But when global energy prices spiked, the Government stepped in to pay around half the typical household bill at the peak, saving families £1,500 on average. Bills are now coming down, and in July will fall to the lowest level in over two years. But the shock has reminded us of the importance of securing our long-term energy supply.

We are proud of our record and remain committed to delivering net zero by 2050. Today the UK is home to the five largest offshore wind farms in the world. Half of our electricity comes from renewables, compared to just 7% when Labour were last in office. We have reduced emissions further and faster than any of our competitors and the UK is the first major economy to get halfway to net zero. And we have done this while growing our economy by 80%, demonstrating to other countries that there is a positive economic path to tackling climate change.

Delivering energy security

We will boost our energy independence in an increasingly unstable world. We will legislate to ensure **annual licensing rounds for oil and gas production from our own North Sea** to provide energy to homes and businesses across the country and protect high-skilled and well-paid jobs in the industry.

Labour are committed to shutting down the North Sea, rejecting any new licenses. That would put 200,000 jobs and billions of pounds of tax receipts at risk. It would leave the UK more dependent on foreign powers and mean higher emissions from imported liquefied gas.

We introduced a windfall tax on oil and gas companies in 2022 to ensure they pay their fair share of tax from extraordinary profits while prices remain abnormally high. We will keep this in place until 2028-29, unless prices fall back to normal sooner. In total, this is expected to raise over £26 billion. We will maintain the investment allowances that provide incentives to invest in our North Sea, which Labour have said they would remove.

We will back up renewables and prevent the prospect of blackouts with **new gas power stations** to maintain a safe and reliable energy source for days when the weather doesn't power up renewables. Conservatives know that if we are forced to choose between clean energy and keeping citizens safe and warm, we will choose to keep the lights on.

We are delivering record investment into UK renewables. But we need to go further, unlocking more investment to secure our energy supply in the future. In the next Parliament we will:

- **Treble our offshore wind capacity**, to deliver low-cost, home-grown energy and support the development of vibrant industrial clusters in places like the North East of England, Scotland and Wales.
- Build **the first two carbon capture and storage clusters**, based across North Wales and, the North West of England and Teesside and the Humber, cutting carbon and creating tens of thousands of jobs in these regions, and progress the second tranche of projects in Aberdeenshire and the Humber.

- Invest **£1.1 billion into the Green Industries Growth Accelerator** to support British manufacturing capabilities, boost supply chains and ensure **our energy transition is made in Britain**.
- Scale up nuclear power, building on our work establishing Great British Nuclear. Within the first 100 days of the next Parliament, we will approve **two new fleets of Small Modular Reactors** to rapidly expand nuclear power, create well-paid, high-skilled jobs and deliver cheaper, cleaner and more secure energy. We will **halve the time it takes for new nuclear reactors to be approved**, by allowing regulators to assess projects while designs are being finalised, improving join-up with overseas regulators assessing the same technology and speeding up planning and environmental approvals.
- Deliver **a new gigawatt power plant at Wylfa** in North Wales and work with industry to deliver existing projects at Hinkley Point and Sizewell.

This will help **the UK to become a net exporter of electricity**. And by building more electricity links with neighbouring countries, we can increase exports, make our energy system more efficient and bring additional revenue to the UK. We will ensure offshore cables help reduce the amount of onshore infrastructure, such as substations, that we need to build.

As we achieve this transition to net zero, we will take steps to ensure the technology and infrastructure is made here in the UK. We will provide a bonus, on top of contract payments that support offshore wind, to **reward energy firms that invest in manufacturing in the most disadvantaged places in the UK** or invest in more sustainable supply chains, creating more good jobs as we get more energy from renewables.

We are strong supporters of domestic steel production and have introduced effective safeguards against steel that is heavily subsidised by foreign governments and helped public projects procure more UK-made steel. We agreed a £500 million grant as part of a £1.25 billion commitment by Tata Steel to transform and secure a sustainable future at their Port Talbot works. We will continue working to support production in Scunthorpe and the North East of England, **securing the future of steelmaking across the UK**.

We will **implement a new import carbon pricing mechanism by 2027** to ensure that imports of iron, steel, aluminium, ceramics and cement from countries with a lower or no carbon price will face a comparable carbon price to those goods produced in the UK. This will reduce the risk of industry being displaced to other countries which aren't taking action on climate change.

A pragmatic and proportionate approach to net zero

The UK has led the world on tackling climate change, having cut our emissions more than any other major economy. We will get to net zero on the fairest possible path and in a way that brings people with us.

We will seize the opportunities created by the transition, opening up whole new sectors and creating hundreds of thousands of good jobs in all corners of the country. Our approach leverages the innovation and investment of the private sector to unleash technologies that cut costs for households. This has enabled us to overachieve on our targets, become a powerhouse in clean technologies, and continue to support households. We reject Labour's dogmatic, top-down approach that will burden households with higher bills.

We will **cut the cost of tackling climate change for households and business**, and deliver net zero by 2050, by:

- **Sticking to our pragmatic, proportionate and realistic approach that eases the burdens on working people. Ensuring that**

families are given time to make changes that affect their lives and never forcing people to rip out their existing boiler and replace it with a heat pump.

- Guaranteeing a vote in the next Parliament on the next stage of our pathway, with adoption of any new target accompanied by proper consideration of the plans and policies required to meet the target, to maintain democratic consent for the big decisions that net zero will mean for our country.
- **Ensuring that green levies on household bills are lower**. The cost of renewables such as wind and solar has fallen dramatically. We will ensure the annual policy costs and levies on household energy bills are lower in each year of the next Parliament than they were in 2023.
- Reforming the Climate Change Committee, giving it an explicit mandate to consider cost to households and UK energy security in its future climate advice.
- **Ruling out creating further green levies**, and alongside our commitment not to introduce road pricing schemes, we will also rule out any frequent flyer levy.

Energy bills are falling, down 63% since the peak. We will take further action to ensure they are low as possible for families, by:

- **Maintaining our energy price cap**, protecting millions of households from being overcharged by their supplier. As the energy market advances, the price cap will need to evolve and we will ensure the regulator has the necessary powers to continue protecting consumers.
- **Reviewing and reforming standing charges** to keep them as low as possible.
- **Delivering our Pumpwatch scheme** that will force petrol retailers to share live information on their prices, helping drivers to get a fair price at the pump.
- **Introducing more efficient local markets for electricity**, which expert analysis estimates would save £20 - £45 per household per year.
- Giving households the choice of smart energy tariffs, which can save them £900 a year.
- Implementing the recommendations of the Winser Review, ensuring networks are able to buy forward with confidence **and cutting waiting times to get a grid connection** to deliver an estimated saving of £15 - £25 per household per year out to 2035.
- Recognising technological developments over the last decade, we will undertake a rapid review into the advantages of alternative network technologies, compared to overhead pylons. The review will consider moving to a presumption in favour of undergrounding where cost competitive.

Almost half of homes in England are now energy efficiency Band C, up from just one in seven in 2010. We will invest £6 billion in energy efficiency over the next three years to make around a million homes warmer. And we will fund an energy efficiency voucher scheme, open to every household in England, to support the installation of energy efficiency measures and solar panels, helping families lower their bills.

We will **ensure democratic consent for onshore wind**, striking the right balance between energy security and the views of their local communities. Our updated National Planning Policy Framework seeks to ensure local areas that host onshore wind directly benefit, including potentially through energy bill discounts.

We will **support solar in the right places, not on our best agricultural land**. We have changed planning rules to protect the best agricultural land with a presumption that this is used for food production, while also making it easier for solar to be located on brownfield sites and on rooftops. Our new planning rules also prevent multiple solar farms being clustered in one area to help protect our rural landscapes. We will retain the current moratorium on fracking.

Our plan to build more houses in the right places

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE

We will deliver a secure future for communities by giving more people a better chance of living where they would like – near their family, friends and job. We have delivered over 2.5 million homes since 2010, including meeting our commitment to deliver one million homes in the last Parliament. Home ownership rates plummeted under the last Labour Government so we cannot afford to go back to square one. We will deliver **1.6 million homes** in England in the next Parliament by:

- **Abolishing the legacy EU 'nutrient neutrality' rules** to immediately unlock the building of 100,000 new homes with local consent, with developers required in law to pay a one-off mitigation fee so there is no net additional pollution.
- **Delivering a record number of homes each year on brownfield land in urban areas**. We will do this by providing a fast-track route through the planning system for new homes on previously developed land in the 20 largest cities. Strong design codes will ensure this enables the gentle densification of urban areas, with new family homes and mansion-blocks on tree-lined streets built in the local character. We will look at extending 'full expensing' to the delivery of brownfield housing.
- **Raising density levels in inner London to those of European cities like Paris and Barcelona**. We will ensure the London Plan delivers more family homes a year, forcing the Mayor to plan for more homes on brownfield sites, like underused industrial land. We will regenerate major sites like Euston, Old Oak Common and Thamesmead.
- **Unlocking new urban regeneration schemes**, by creating locally-led urban development corporations in partnership with the private sector and institutional investors. We will support the delivery of new quarters in Leeds, Liverpool and York alongside working with local leaders and the community to seize the opportunity of our ambitious Cambridge 2050 plan.
- **Supporting local and smaller builders** by requiring councils to set land aside for them and lifting Section 106 burdens on more smaller sites, while ruling out Labour's proposed 'community right to appeal' which would bring the planning system to its knees.
- **Making sure local authorities use the new Infrastructure Levy to deliver the GP surgeries, roads and other local infrastructure needed to support homes**. We will not allow these funds to be spent on community projects that bear no relation to support for new homes.
- **Renewing the Affordable Homes Programme** that will deliver homes of all tenures and focus on regenerating and improving housing estates.
- **Retaining our cast-iron commitment to protect the Green Belt** from uncontrolled development, while ensuring more homes get built where it makes sense, like in inner cities. Our national planning protections mean there is never any top-down requirement for councils to remove Green Belt protection and these will remain in place.

A plan to support first-time buyers onto the housing ladder and ensure fairness in our housing system

As well as building the homes we need, we will also take immediate steps to support more people onto the housing ladder. We will ensure the majority of first-time buyers pay no Stamp Duty at all, lowering the upfront costs of buying a first home. We will **make permanent the increase to the threshold at which first-time buyers pay Stamp Duty to £425,000 from £300,000**, which we introduced in 2022. We will also launch a **new and improved Help to Buy scheme** to provide first-time buyers with an equity loan of up to 20% towards the cost of a new build home. First-time buyers will be able to get onto the housing ladder with a 5% deposit on interest terms they can afford. The scheme will be part funded by contributions from house builders. We will also continue our Mortgage Guarantee Scheme, which has already helped over 40,000 households buy a home, while supporting more families to buy through shared ownership.

We will always prioritise giving those who work hard and contribute to our country a leg up in the housing market. We will legislate for **new 'Local Connection' and 'UK Connection' tests for social housing** in England, to ensure this valuable but limited resource is allocated fairly. And we will implement a 'three strikes and you're out' expectation of social housing landlords for anti-social behaviour. They will be expected to **evict tenants whose behaviour is disruptive to neighbours and the local community**.

We will protect family homes from higher tax. Under the **Family Home Tax Guarantee**, we will not increase the number of council tax bands, undertake an expensive council tax revaluation or cut council tax discounts, as Labour is currently doing in Wales. We will maintain Private Residence Relief so that people's homes are protected from Capital Gains Tax and we will not increase the rate or level of Stamp Duty to support homeowners.

To further support homeowners, we will introduce **a two-year temporary Capital Gains Tax relief for landlords who sell to their existing tenants**. We rule out Labour's anti-aspiration move to drastically reduce Right to Buy discounts to levels seen under the last Labour Government. We will protect the laws that ensure the discounts rise with inflation and fight any plan by local authorities to abolish the Right to Buy altogether.

We will **complete the process of leasehold reform, to improve the lives of over four million leaseholders**. We will cap ground rents at £250, reducing them to peppercorn over time. We will end the misuse of forfeiture so leaseholders don't lose their property and capital unfairly and make it easier to take up commonhold.

We will pass a Renters Reform Bill that will deliver fairness in the rental market for landlords and renters alike. We will deliver the court reforms necessary to fully abolish Section 21 and strengthen other grounds for landlords to evict private tenants guilty of anti-social behaviour.

We will continue with our plans to **end rough sleeping** and prevent people from ending up on the streets in the first place, after making significant progress over the last few years. We will deliver our commitments under the Local Authority Housing Fund and review the quality of temporary accommodation.

After delivering landmark new laws that freed leaseholders from cladding bills following on from the awful tragedy of Grenfell Tower, we will **continue our support for leaseholders affected by historic building safety problems** by requiring the continuation of developer-funded remediation programmes for mid- and high-rise buildings.

We will **ensure councils have the powers they need to manage the uncontrolled growth of holiday lets**, which can cause nuisance to local residents and a hollowing out of communities.

We will **support those who want to build or commission their own home** by making the planning process simpler, while also supporting more community housing schemes. We will encourage the building of different forms of housing, particularly housing for older people.

Building on our new powers for the police, we will further **speed up the use and enforcement of powers to remove illegal traveller sites**, while giving councils greater planning powers to prevent unauthorised development by travellers.

Our plan to strengthen communities

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE

Our commitment to levelling up means giving everyone the opportunity to stay local and go far. Conservatives are committed to delivering stronger communities and safer streets, unleashing the power of the private sector to unlock jobs and opportunity for all and boosting local pride. We have already allocated and will ensure we deliver over £15 billion in dedicated levelling up funding across the UK since 2019 and passed our landmark Levelling Up and Regeneration Act. We have saved more than 330 pubs, sports clubs, arts venues and other precious community spaces through our Community Ownership Fund and we have unlocked the promise of thousands of jobs with 12 Freeports. To further strengthen communities, we will:

- **Provide 105 towns in the UK with a £20 million endowment fund for local people to change their town's future.** This includes extending our plan to 30 more towns who will benefit from funding that they can use on their priorities such as reviving high streets or bringing new housing to town centres.
- **Extend our Community Ownership Fund** to help more communities across the UK take control of vital community assets like pubs, music venues, libraries, green spaces, leisure centres and more.
- **Extend the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for three years at the next Spending Review, before using this funding to support UK-wide National Service.** Both schemes will involve funding community groups focused on increasing life chances, instilling civic pride and boosting people's skills.
- **Create more Freeports and Business Rates Retention zones.** Freeports have already generated just under £3 billion in investment, which in turn will create thousands of jobs. We will extend this opportunity to more areas and set out an application round in the next Parliament. We want to replicate the example of Sunderland's Crown Works Studios elsewhere in the country. We will enable councils to retain all business rates growth within a defined zone for 25 years, which they can use to finance the delivery of new infrastructure and invest in supporting burgeoning local industries.
- **Continue backing Investment Zones across the country**, giving areas £160 million to catalyse local growth and investment.
- **Give our high streets a new lease of life and restore pride in place.** We will change planning laws to support places to bring back local market days and regenerate defunct shopping centres. We will continue to make industry pay for removing chewing-gum from streets and raise the fines utility firms must pay when they create 'street scars' by not properly restoring roads and pavements after their works are completed. We will make fly tipping an offence that carries penalty points against your driving licence.
- **Empower communities through devolution and new powers.** By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal. We will offer our 'level 4' devolution powers to areas in England with a devolution deal and a directly elected leader, starting with the Tees Valley.
- **Launch a Seaside Heritage Fund** to support enhancements to our seaside heritage, preserving and restoring our coastal assets.

We will ensure councils provide high quality and value for money services to local communities. As part of this, we will protect residents from excessive council tax rises by ensuring that local people have the final say on council tax; and we will ban the 'four-day working week' in local authorities. We will improve standards in councils by making their performance more transparent through the Office for Local Government. We will always stand behind councils and look to recognise the unique circumstances of coastal areas in the allocation of grant funding to local authorities, alongside providing fairer funding for rural areas through the Rural Services Delivery Grant.

Backing drivers

In our first King's Speech, we will go even further and **introduce a Backing Drivers Bill** that will:

- **Stop road pricing.** A Conservative Government will not introduce pay per mile road pricing and will ban Mayors and local councils from doing so.
- **Reverse Labour's unfair ULEZ expansion in London.** Sadiq Khan's ULEZ tax rise only has a 'moderate' or 'minor' effect on pollution. The expansion impacts thousands of people living around London who had no say in his election and can now no longer afford to get to hospital appointments or where they work or study. We will reverse it.
- **Rule out top-down blanket Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and 20mph zones.** While 20mph zones can help improve road safety in residential areas or outside schools, misuse undermines public trust and risks congestion and pollution. We are clear they must only be considered on a road-by-road basis and with the support of people who live there. We will require **any new schemes to be put to a referendum and introduce a 'right to challenge' existing Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and 20mph schemes.**

A plan to support the journeys people make every day

Reliable transport links are critical for thriving local communities. The £36 billion of savings from HS2 will transform local and regional transport, benefitting more people, in more places, more quickly. But we will also take immediate steps to help people now. Buses are overwhelmingly the most popular form of public transport, in both urban and rural areas. Our £2 bus fare has cut bus fares outside London by 6.2%. **We will extend the £2 bus fare cap in England for the entirety of the next Parliament**, benefitting young people and low-income households while pensioners continue to benefit from the free bus pass. The extension of the £2 fare cap will be funded by savings from reform of the railway which will save up to £1.5 billion annually.

Too often over the last few years, local Labour politicians have made the journeys on which people rely harder. We are determined to turn this situation around. Since 2010, the Conservative Government has consistently been on the side of drivers. We have prioritised freezes in Fuel Duty and recently published our 'Plan for Drivers' including reforms to make better use of bus lanes, introduce penalties for overrunning street works and implement a consistent approach to the enforcement of entering yellow box junctions. Following the recent consultation, we will allow motorcycles in all bus lanes and reform motorcycle licensing.

We will roll out the National Parking Platform this year to simplify paying for parking. Reflecting feedback from older and disabled people, we will also give councils the power to ban pavement parking, provided they engage with businesses and residents to ensure they are not adversely affected.

We remain steadfastly committed to road safety and, to that end, will **maintain our pledge to build no new smart motorways** and invest in improving the safety of existing ones.

2025 marks the 200th anniversary of the first passenger railway in the UK and we are the only party with a **credible plan for rail reform**. Labour's incoherent and ideological nationalisation plan would put the trade unions in charge, continuing to prolong unaffordable and unfair working practices which are unjustifiable to the public.

We will introduce a Rail Reform Bill in our first King's Speech to create Great British Railways (GBR), headquartered in Derby. GBR will usher in a revitalised private-public partnership, delivering a modern and innovative railway with reliable services, and simpler tickets. We will task GBR with growing the role of the private sector, including supporting the expansion of open access services to bring greater choice for passengers. We will also look to include measures to reform outdated working practices in the rail industry in the Rail Reform Bill.

Over the next Parliament, **we will also roll out mobile pay as you go contactless tickets nationwide**, bringing rail into line with how we pay for many goods and services.

We will work with **Active Travel England** to make it safer for people to walk or cycle, including projects like **ensuring safe walking routes to schools** and **measures to protect pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users**. Where new schemes are introduced, we will ensure they have local support first. While we back responsible cyclists, **we will bring penalties for the rare instances where dangerous cyclists kill or injure** into line with those for other road users.

Protecting our heritage and institutions

The Conservative Party will always **protect our national heritage** – including statues, monuments and memorials. We will keep our 'retain and explain' guidance under review to ensure it supports custodians in the preservation of our national history and heritage. We will continue to support museums and libraries across the country. Government has the power to leverage philanthropy for good causes and cultural institutions. We will work with individuals, businesses, charities and other networks to find opportunities to unleash this even further. We will complete the review of Gift Aid within the next Parliament.

We will **ensure Royal Mail continues to deliver the universal postal service** in a way which is affordable for customers as well as being efficient and financially sustainable. Saturday deliveries are important, particularly to businesses, which is why we are clear they will not be scrapped. Conservatives are clear we want a continued six-day service, which Labour and the trade unions would put at risk.

We have taken exceptional and unprecedented action, legislating to **quash the convictions of those affected by the Post Office Horizon scandal**, one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in our nation's history. We will ensure the new redress scheme is in place and ready to make payments to claimants by the end of July. We are clear that the Post Office should be a valuable social and economic asset for communities and businesses for years to come. That requires a change of culture at the top to deliver the scale of change needed across the organisation.

We have legislated to require banks and building societies considering closing a branch to consider the needs of all their customers and ensure they continue to have appropriate access to cash in their local community. We have already announced over 100 Banking Hubs which enable customers to access free to

use cash and everyday banking services.

We remain steadfast in our support for the **fundamental principles that underpin the UK's constitutional settlement**. We remain committed to the First Past the Post system for elections, maintaining the direct link with the local voter. We will not change the voting age from 18. We will maintain rules to tackle voting fraud, including the requirement to show ID.

Our plan for greater protections around sex and gender

Biological sex is a reality. The overwhelming majority of people in this country recognise that. It is right that we have in place provisions and protections for those whose sense of self does not match their biological sex. However, we will not allow the safety and privacy of women and girls to be undermined.

It has been more than a decade since the Equality Act was passed by a Labour Government. It has not kept pace with evolving interpretations and is not sufficiently clear on when it means sex and when it means gender. The next Conservative Government will **introduce primary legislation to clarify that the protected characteristic of sex in the Equality Act means biological sex**. This will guarantee that single sex services and single sex spaces can be provided, for example in healthcare and sports settings, to ensure women and girls are protected. We are clear that on fundamental matters of personal identity there should be one approach across the country, so we will also legislate so that **an individual can only have one sex in the eyes of the law in the United Kingdom**.

In recent years, an increasing number of children have started questioning their gender, the consequences of which are still unknown. This is why we will pass legislation to ensure schools must follow our **guidance for teachers on how best to support gender questioning students in schools and colleges**. Parents will have a right to know if their child wants to be treated as the opposite sex and schools will have to involve parents when it comes to decisions about their children.

We are clear that no one in this country should be harmed or harassed for who they are. That is why we are proud that the UK has one of the world's strongest legislative frameworks to prevent and tackle discrimination and harassment against those with particular protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender reassignment. Attempts at so-called 'conversion therapy' are abhorrent. But legislation around conversion practices is a very complex issue, with existing criminal law already offering robust protections. The challenges involved can be seen, for example, with the SNP re-consulting for views on their proposals in Scotland and Sweden recently concluding that they will not be pursuing a similar ban. In light of the Cass Review Final Report, it is right that we take more time before reaching a final judgement on additional legislation in this area.

Equality of opportunity

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity, not divisive identity politics. We value a society that is inclusive no matter what sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion a person is. **Our United Kingdom is a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-faith success story**. Our Inclusive Britain plan advances opportunity while tackling unfair ethnic disparities across education, employment, health and the justice system. We are seeing some of the most entrenched disparities in our society narrowing, for example in our justice system and our police forces, we now have the highest proportion of ethnic minority officers, judges and magistrates since records began.

Our ambition is to make this country **the most accessible place in the world** for people with disabilities to live, work and thrive. We are delivering on our Disability Action Plan to transform the everyday lives of people

with disabilities. We passed the British Sign Language Act to ensure all public services and information are accessible to Deaf people who use BSL. The Down Syndrome Act will improve access to services and the quality of life of people with Down's syndrome. In the next Parliament we will improve support for people who have guide or assistance dogs and explore bidding to host and deliver the 2031 Special Olympics World Summer Games.

We are proud of our record on **delivering for LGBT people** and will continue to do so. We passed the Same Sex Marriage Act to give same-sex couples the opportunity to enjoy the institution of marriage. We have delivered the largest national roll out of PrEP in Europe.

Our plan to back farmers and fisheries to grow our food security

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE

Our food and farming sectors generate over £120 billion for the UK economy every year. In the last Parliament, we maintained the farming budget to support our food security. In England, this has supported farmers with a range of options to choose what works best for them, from business advice to new equipment, soil and nutrient management and hedgerow planting. Labour's actions in Wales show that they will never be on the side of the farming community. Their blueprint involves top-down targets, fundamentally denying farmers the flexibility they need to achieve environmental goals in ways that work for them and making their primary job of keeping the nation fed harder. Conservatives will always be on the side of farmers.

To continue backing our farmers, we will:

- **Increase the UK-wide farming budget by £1 billion over the Parliament**, ensuring it rises by inflation in every year. **Farmers will be able to spend every extra penny on grants to boost domestic food production** on top of maintaining our approach to Environmental Land Management Schemes. In England, nearly half of all farmers have now signed up to schemes, choosing what works best for their business to invest in food security and sustainable agriculture. We will build on work to date to ensure our schemes work for all farmers, from tenants to the uplands and beyond.
- Continue to **ringfence agricultural funding so it is passed directly on to farming and rural communities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland** alongside a new UK-wide £20 million Farming Innovation Fund.
- **Introduce a legally binding target to enhance our food security**. The target will apply UK-wide alongside our UK Food Security Index, the first of its kind, helping us to determine where best to concentrate farming funds. This will also feed into the development of the Land Use Framework.
- **Improve public sector procurement** to deliver our goal that at least 50% of food expenditure is spent on food produced locally or to higher environmental production standards.
- **Reform our planning system to deliver fast track permissions for the building of infrastructure on farms**, such as glasshouses, slurry and grain stores, and small-scale reservoirs.
- **Use our significant investment in R&D to prioritise cutting-edge technology** in areas such as fertiliser and vertical farming.
- Stick to our plan to **support the agricultural sector with the labour it needs** to maintain our food security, while moving away from the reliance on seasonal migrant labour with a five-year visa tapered scheme, alongside clear investment in automation and promoting agri-food careers and skills.
- Always **stand up for farmers when negotiating new trade deals**. At the 2023 UK Farm to Fork Summit, an event which we will continue every year, we set out our commitments to ensure UK farming is at the heart of UK trade. We will always look for the right deal for farmers. We will continue to support UK agri-food and drink attachés in our embassies abroad, pioneering new markets and new opportunities for our domestic food and drink industry.

Championing our fishing sector

We have taken back control of our waters post-Brexit and will continue to back our fishing sector to feed the nation, build long term sustainability, and grow coastal businesses from Shetland to Cornwall. In 2024, we secured quotas worth over £970 million for UK fishermen. We will go further to seek additional opportunities for our inshore fleet in the 2026 negotiations, and ensure inshore voices are better heard by their representative bodies.

We will **replicate the £100 million UK Seafood Fund** to continue to support the sector to thrive. The fund could be used to invest in harbour and fish market upgrades, provide new equipment and technology for fish processing or to support our growing aquaculture sector. We will particularly concentrate funding on small and medium sized businesses and the inshore fishing fleet. Recognising competing pressure on marine space, we will also seek opportunities to back the inshore fleet when making marine planning decisions.

Our plan to support our rural way of life and enhance our environment

CLEAR PLAN
BOLD ACTION
SECURE FUTURE

Conservatives are committed to nurturing a thriving rural economy. Rural areas already contribute over £250 billion to the economy. We will build on this, supporting jobs, growth and education in rural communities.

Over 80% of properties across the country can now access high-speed broadband, up from just 7% in 2019, with a record £714 million committed to boosting rural broadband coverage in 2024. We will invest in **new technology to achieve our ambitious broadband targets for hard-to-reach areas**. On transport, the £2 fare cap has cut rural bus fares by over 11% and our commitment in our Backing Drivers Bill not to introduce pay per mile road pricing schemes will ensure people who rely on their cars in rural areas are protected.

We will do more to **boost the availability of affordable housing for local people in rural areas**. We will **ensure rural exception sites support local people into home ownership** and create a dedicated taskforce in Homes England to deliver on the mission set out in their Rural Housing Statement to invest in regeneration and building high quality homes. We will ensure councils have the powers they need to manage the uncontrolled growth of holiday lets, which can cause nuisance to residents and a broader 'hollowing out' of communities.

Conservatives will always seek to preserve and enhance the rural way of life. We will make no changes to the Hunting Act. Further, public arms-length bodies must be responsive to those they serve. Rural communities are clear that improvements must be made to the ways in which these bodies consult and make decisions, especially from Natural England and the Environment Agency. We will improve their accountability and give them clearer objectives to focus on. They must take balanced decisions and factor in the impact on the rural economy.

In recent years we have seen increasingly extreme wet weather, underlining the importance of building flood resilience. Since 2010, Government investment has better protected over 600,000 properties from flooding and coastal erosion, and since 2015, has protected over 900,000 acres of farmland. In 2020, we announced a doubling of capital funding into flood defences in England to a record £5.6 billion over 2021-2027. We will **maintain this record flooding funding to continue to protect homes, farms and businesses**. This will work alongside the Flood Recovery Framework and Farming Recovery Fund to directly support communities, businesses and farmers affected by flooding.

Enhancing nature and protecting our environment

Our beautiful countryside, coastline, woods and rivers are a crucial part of what makes our country so special. We are committed to leaving the environment in a better state for future generations. We introduced our landmark Environment Act including ambitious targets to halt nature's decline by 2030 and Biodiversity Net Gain, a world leading scheme to deliver greener new development. We led international efforts to protect our oceans and seas, building on the success of the Blue Belt programme which protects an area of ocean the size of India. We will **consult UK overseas territories on opportunities to expand it further**.

We will continue with our **moratorium on deep sea mining** and will **ratify the Global Oceans Treaty** early in the next Parliament. We have prioritised animal welfare, passing legislation to protect pets from harm whilst ensuring owners are responsible and cracking down on dangerous dogs such as XL Bullies. We remain committed to banning the import of hunting trophies and tackling puppy smuggling and livestock worrying.

Water supply interruptions to customers have decreased five-fold and leakage has been cut by one-third since privatisation. Last year 90% of our designated bathing waters were

classified as 'good' or 'excellent', up from 76% in 2010. But we must go further. That is why we set out an ambitious Plan for Water, bringing historic levels of transparency and investment, while keeping bill increases affordable for consumers. Our plan includes:

- **Working with the regulator to further hold companies to account**, including banning executive bonuses if a company has committed a serious criminal breach. This will build on our legislation for unlimited fines.
- **Extending the £50 water rebate for those in the South West across the Parliament**.
- **Using fines from water companies to invest in river restoration projects**, including linking up thriving habitats to multiply the benefits for wildlife and water quality. This will create a river recovery network, modelled on our nature recovery network, and create new destinations for people to enjoy across England. It will take a more local, tailored approach like the plan for the River Wye.

The next five years will see transformational investment and change in the water sector on a scale never seen before, thanks to the introduction of 100% monitoring – up from 7% under the last Labour Government – and targets on leaks and pollution. To deliver our ambitious plan for water beyond 2030, we will **reform the 'Price Review' regulatory process for water companies**. This will consider how we move to a more localised catchment-based and outcome-focussed approach, that better utilises nature-based solutions and further strengthens sanctions for water companies that fail to deliver for the public, coasts and rivers.

We are sticking to our ambitious plan to plant more trees. We will:

- **Deliver our tree planting and peatland commitments through our Nature for Climate funding**, and continuing our work to unlock private investment.
- **Launch a new design competition for urban greening**, focused on the new quarters we want to develop in Leeds, Cambridge and sites in inner London.
- **Cut red tape that holds back the planting of trees in the planning system**. This will identify particularly suitable areas for tree planting where processes and permits will be streamlined.
- Deliver our commitment at COP28 to **introduce forest risk commodities** legislation early in the next Parliament, tackling our impact on illegal deforestation internationally.

We know that spending time outdoors in nature can significantly benefit our health and wellbeing, especially for children. That is why we set an ambitious commitment for everyone to have access to nature within 15 minutes' walk of where they live. To deliver this, we will:

- Designate our 11th National Park alongside investing to **improve existing National Parks and protected landscapes**.
- Use future rounds of our Landscape Recovery Scheme to **support more local projects like the community-led schemes** near Hadrian's Wall as the area recovers from the vandalism at the Sycamore Gap.
- Continue to **support programmes that encourage disadvantaged children and young people** to access green spaces.
- **Deliver our commitments on National Trails** including the Coast to Coast Path and the King Charles III England Coast Path.
- **Continue to work with landowners, charities and others to open up more 'access to nature' routes.** We will not impose a universal Right to Roam.

We will take comprehensive action to crack down on organised waste crime, especially those who impact protected nature sites. We will deliver our enhanced penalties for

fly tipping, giving councils new tools to help tackle offenders. We will continue to develop a UK-wide Deposit Return Scheme, while working to minimise the impact on businesses and consumers. We will prevent new waste incinerators being built, including those with recent permit approvals, revoking those where substantial construction has not taken place. This recognises the impact on local communities and that increased recycling rates will reduce the need for incineration capacity in the longer term.

Our plan to support sport and the creative sector

At the core of our national and local identities is culture and sport.

We are proud of our investment in grassroots sports across the country, with over £320 million being delivered between 2021 and 2025 to build, renovate and maintain grass pitches and, multi-sport facilities. We will maintain this pace of investment over the next Parliament through the **continuation of the Multi-Sport Grassroots Facilities Programme**. We will look to expand the criteria to ensure more sports benefit from this investment. We will introduce laws to ensure our fans never again face the threat of clubs in England joining breakaway closed-shop competitions and giving them more of a voice through the Independent Football Regulator.

The Conservative Party stands up for women and girls in sport. We delivered equal access for grassroots sporting facilities for women and girls, the £30 million Lionesses Futures Fund, established the Board of Women's Sport and are implementing recommendations from the Carney Review of Women's Football. We will prioritise equal access for women and girls in our ongoing programme of investment in grassroots sports facilities.

Supporting our world-leading creative industries

We believe apprenticeships are a key pipeline of talent into our world-leading creative industries. We will work with industry to deliver a dedicated flexible coordination service so that everyone who wants to work in the film, TV, gaming and music sectors can work on live productions whilst benefiting from at least 12 months of secure training.

We will **ensure our creative sector tax incentives remain competitive**. The UK is now the second most popular place in the world to make films and high-end TV. That's a direct result of Conservatives taking action: there have been 1 million new jobs since 2010 and the economic value of the creative industries has doubled. We provided an unprecedented £1.57 billion support package during Covid. We will ensure creators are properly protected and remunerated for their work, whilst also making the most of the opportunities of AI and its applications for creativity in the future.

As well as standing behind the creative sector we have also stood behind our pubs and hospitality businesses, prioritising them for Business Rates relief and freezing alcohol duty. But, in parts of the country, hospitality and particularly our nighttime economy is in decline. In Wales, Labour have hiked taxes on business by axing tax relief. In London, despite the high profile hiring of a 'Night Czar' by the Labour Mayor, over 3,000 pubs, bars and nightclubs have closed in the capital since March 2020. We will turn this around by **launching a review of the nighttime economy in England, looking at how to reverse the decline in pubs and clubs and how to make our towns and cities great places to go out**.

The BBC should represent the perspectives of the entire nation with diversity of thought, accuracy and impartiality as its guiding principles. We will carefully consider the findings of the Funding Review ahead of the next Royal Charter and ensure it upholds these principles. We will introduce a new complaints process for the BBC so the BBC does not mark its own homework.

The Conservative Party is a strong defender of freedom of speech and freedom of the press. We oppose state regulation and control of the press, including any attempt to bring forward Leveson 2 or re-open the Royal Charter on self-regulation of the press. We were proud to deliver the Freedom of Speech Act to protect free speech and open debate in our universities.

Our plan to strengthen the United Kingdom

In recent years, each part of the UK has worked together to tackle shared challenges. The United Kingdom is a unique and uniquely successful Union, enabling each constituent part to grow and thrive. As the Conservative and Unionist Party, we are committed to supporting our Union and continuing to deliver for people across the UK.

During the 25th anniversary year of devolution, we celebrate the progress which has been made and the relationships which have been built. We are focused on working together to deliver for people across the UK, including maintaining meaningful intergovernmental relations. Since the initial devolution settlements, significant further powers have been devolved to Holyrood, Cardiff Bay and Stormont. We believe governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland now have the right balance of powers to deliver for people there.

As powers have been transferred, it has become more important than ever that the devolved governments are held responsible for their performance. To support this, we will legislate to deliver comparable data across the UK so the performance of public services can be accurately compared.

We support greater accountability within the devolved parliaments and centralisation within Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure decisions are made as close to the communities they serve as possible. Devolved governments should be focused on utilising the powers they have to deliver on people's priorities and we will continue to oppose attempts to distract from these with constitutional wrangling.

We will relentlessly protect the UK's internal market, securing Northern Ireland's place in it and protecting consumers and businesses from unnecessary trade barriers. Intra-UK trade is worth £190 billion, and to boost this, we have legislated to guarantee unfettered access for goods from Northern Ireland to the rest of the UK and will establish a new Intertrade UK body to promote trade within the United Kingdom. The UK Internal Market Act ensures businesses can sell goods and provide services freely across the UK.

Levelling up across the UK

Delivering for people right across the country requires joint working between the UK and devolved governments as well as local partners. Our focus on delivery and working with local partners to do so, has paid dividends in recent years, providing:

- **over £3 billion of investment in levelling up in Scotland;**
- **over £2.5 billion to level up Wales; and**
- **over £1 billion for levelling up projects in Northern Ireland.**

The UK Government has a duty to citizens right across the country. Over the course of the last Parliament we have been building stronger relationships with local authorities and community groups in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to help us deliver for people there. We are committed to continuing to fund projects across the UK directly and will:

- **Extend the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for another three years**, delivering a further £540 million a year for communities across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- **Expand the Long-Term Plan for Towns**, supporting a further nine towns in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland with £20 million endowments to make long-term improvements over 10 years.
- **Maintain the Community Ownership Fund for another three years**, enabling community groups across Scotland, Wales

and Northern Ireland to continue accessing funding to save community assets which are at risk of being lost.

- **Continue the Multi-Sport Grassroots Facilities Programme** throughout the next Parliament so sports facilities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can access vital investment.

These schemes improve communities and support infrastructure as well as sports and cultural activities across the UK, sitting alongside our backing for events such as the Hay Festival, the Edinburgh Festival and Fringe and the UK and Ireland Euro 2028 tournament.

We will support Freeports and investment zones in Scotland and Wales, delivering jobs and investment from the Cromarty Firth to Port Talbot, and establish an Enhanced Investment Zone in Northern Ireland.

We will pursue the extension of the Enhanced Investment Zone to cover Stranraer and Cairnryan on the west coast of Scotland, recognising this vital route between Northern Ireland and Scotland and the opportunities for trade and economic growth.

Our Islands Forum will also continue to bring together island communities from across the UK to consider and identify solutions to their unique needs.

Scotland

Ten years on from the 2014 independence referendum, the SNP remain focused on the constitution while Scotland has moved on. They are distracted from the day job, with falling educational standards, rising drug deaths and long-delayed ferries. The Conservatives and Unionists will continue to oppose this – the 2014 vote was decisive.

Instead, we will focus on what really matters to people.

We will **cut taxes for working people again**, benefitting 2.4 million Scots. We are also boosting Scotland's economy through mechanisms such as our City and Growth Deals, dedicated British Business Bank fund and support for Scottish exports. Our new Intertrade UK body will promote trade within the United Kingdom, with 61% of Scotland's exports going to the rest of the UK in 2021.

We will press for the permanent removal of tariffs on Scotch whisky with the US Government and work to achieve a significant tariff reduction in India through free trade agreement discussions. Scottish businesses will also continue to benefit from measures including tax reliefs for creative industries, support for small businesses and entrepreneurs and the Global Britian Investment Fund.

We will **prioritise our energy security**. We have already put the Energy Security Investment Mechanism into legislation, ensuring the energy profits levy will end when oil and gas prices fall below a threshold. We will bring legislate to require annual oil and gas licensing rounds and maintain investment allowances for the oil and gas sector while supporting renewable technologies.

We will continue backing the North Sea Transition Deal and Aberdeen City Region Deal, with Aberdeen's Investment Zone bringing £160 million of support to the area over the next ten years. We will focus on supporting Scotland's workforce transition to new industries such

as carbon capture, offshore wind, hydrogen and tidal, including by providing £15 million to support the Energy Transition Zone's skills programmes. We will continue laying the groundwork for nuclear projects to be taken forward in Scotland to deliver cheaper, cleaner and more secure energy.

We will **support Scotland's fishing and farming industries**. We have extended the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme until 2029, introduced a new UK-wide Food Security Index and will increase the UK-wide farming budget by £1 billion over the next Parliament, ensuring the ringfenced amount provided to the Scottish Government rises by inflation each year. We will use powers in the Scotland Act to require the Scottish Government to provide annual reports on how this funding is being utilised and work with them to put a UK-wide food security target into law.

We will **establish a UK Farming Innovation Fund** to deliver grants for innovative agricultural projects directly to farmers in Scotland, promoting economic development in rural areas. Only the Conservatives and Unionists will support Scotland's fishing communities, with a further £100 million for the UK Seafood Fund to support small businesses and inshore fleets and a steadfast commitment to taking back control of our waters, negotiating the best quotas possible and remaining out of the hated Common Fisheries Policy.

We will **improve connectivity across Scotland with support for road and rail improvements and ferry services**, including guaranteed investment to improve pinch points on the A75, providing £5 million for the evaluation of proposals to extend the current Borders Railway from Tweedbank through Hawick and on to Carlisle, updating the East Coast Main Line timetable to provide faster rail journeys between Edinburgh and London and providing funding for the UK Islands Forum Connectivity Project.

Wales

The Labour Welsh Government have let standards slide across crucial public services while focusing on policies people in Wales do not want, from putting more politicians in the Senedd to implementing a blanket 20mph speed limit across Wales and banning new roadbuilding.

By contrast, the Conservatives and Unionists are delivering for Wales by cutting taxes again for 1.2 million working people in Wales and making investments in industry, local communities and infrastructure.

And we want to go further.

To **improve connectivity across Wales**, we'll provide match funding to the Welsh Government to reconsider the M4 relief road and third Menai crossing options as well as wider improvements to the A55 and the A483 around Wrexham. We will provide funding to Monmouthshire Council to develop plans for a Chepstow bypass and prioritise the Pant-Llanymynech bypass.

As a result of our decision to cancel the second phase of HS2 and invest the savings into local transport projects, we can commit £1 billion for the electrification of the North Wales Main Line and ensure Wales starts receiving Barnett consequentials for the projects funded from HS2 savings in England. We will fund rail upgrades at Padeswood to unlock the potential for wider improvements on the Borderlands Line and facilitate the electrification of the North Wales Main Line. We will prioritise development of the Pencoed level crossing and progressing work on the South Wales Main Line, to deliver new stations and services.

We will **expand our Backing Drivers' Bill to cover Wales**, reversing Labour's blanket 20mph speed limit by requiring local consent for 20mph zones and giving local communities the legal right to challenge existing zones.

To support Wales' key sectors and industrial heritage, Welsh farmers will benefit from a £1 billion increase to the UK-wide farming budget, ensuring the ringfenced amount directed to Welsh farmers increases by inflation throughout the next Parliament, as well as grants for innovative agricultural projects from the £20 million UK Farming Innovation Fund and the extension of the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Scheme.

We will also build on our new UK-wide food security index by putting a UK-wide food security target into law, adopt a consistent approach to biosecurity across Great Britain and require the Welsh Government to provide annual reports on how ringfenced agricultural funding from the UK Government is spent.

The £500 million we are investing to secure a sustainable future for steelmaking in Port Talbot is bolstered by the £80 million the UK Government is providing to support the area to transition. We remain committed to delivering the electric arc furnace and supporting Port Talbot to thrive, including through the new Celtic Freeport. Floating offshore wind is at the heart of these plans and we will continue to support its development in the Celtic Sea. We will deliver the UK's third mega-nuclear power station at Wylfa and support Wales' potential to host small modular reactors.

To strengthen Wales' public services, we will put an additional neighbourhood police officer in every community across Wales, restore trust in policing and introduce tougher sentencing to make Wales safer.

Improving the comparability of data across the UK will ensure the current Labour Welsh Government are held to account for their performance running Wales' schools and hospitals. We will assess options to promote choice in NHS services across the UK, whether provided by the NHS or independent sector, and improve interoperability between the NHS in different parts of the UK, cross-border healthcare processes and joint working to tackle waiting lists.

We will continue working with the Welsh Government on the expansion of Levelling Up Partnerships to Wales and support the Welsh language, including by backing Welsh broadcasting and the equitable provision of UK Government services in Welsh.

We will bring forward legislation to reapply the entirety of the Trade Union Act 2016 to Wales. And a Welsh Conservative Government would reverse Labour's plans to expand the Senedd, redirecting the cost towards people's real priorities.

Northern Ireland

As Conservatives and Unionists, we continue to hugely value Northern Ireland's contribution to our Union. For us, the best future for Northern Ireland will always be as part of a strong, prosperous and dynamic United Kingdom. We will never be neutral in expressing our support for it.

At the same time, we respect those who seek a different constitutional outcome pursued by exclusively peaceful and democratic means. We will always govern in the interests of the whole community in Northern Ireland. Our aim is to build a Northern Ireland where politics works, the economy grows and society is stronger and more united.

Our commitment to the 1998 Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in all its parts remains unwavering. Fundamental to the Agreement is the consent principle – that there can be no change to the constitutional status of Northern Ireland without the support of a majority of those who live there. Conservatives will always uphold the democratic wishes of the people of Northern Ireland.

- **We are committed to supporting Northern Ireland's communities and economy to thrive.** At the last Spending Review, we provided the Northern Ireland Executive with a record £15 billion a year through the block grant. To underpin the restoration of devolution, we provided the incoming Executive with a £3.3 billion spending package and subsequently agreed an interim fiscal framework in May 2024. We are also delivering over £1 billion of levelling up funding, including £150 million to develop an Enhanced Investment Zone. We hosted an Investment Summit in Northern Ireland last year, showcasing its innovation and technological strengths. And cutting National Insurance again will benefit 800,000 working people in Northern Ireland.
- **The Windsor Framework and our Safeguarding the Union Command Paper have addressed the fundamental problems with the old Northern Ireland Protocol** and provide Northern Ireland with unique advantages, including guaranteed unfettered access to the UK internal market and privileged access to the EU Single Market for goods. Through our UK internal market system, we have ensured that goods moving from Great Britain to Northern Ireland that will only ever stay in the United Kingdom are subject to no checks, save for those conducted by UK authorities as part of a risk-based or intelligence-led approach to tackle criminality, abuse of the scheme, smuggling and disease risks. In addition, through the Stormont Brake we have addressed the democratic deficit in the old Protocol. A Conservative Government will faithfully implement all its commitments in the Windsor Framework and the Command Paper, including those measures to strengthen Northern Ireland's place in the Union.
- Through the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 **we have established the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery** with £250 million of funding to ensure victims and survivors can recover more information about what happened to their loved ones than has been available through established mechanisms. We will continue to implement this legacy legislation and support the Commission with the aim of providing more answers to those that want them and helping society to move forward.
- While the security situation has been transformed for most people in Northern Ireland over the past three decades, there remains a very real threat from dissident republicans who retain both a capability and intent to cause harm. We will always give our fullest possible support to the Police Service of Northern Ireland and other agencies for the vital work they do to keep people safe and secure. **We will continue our efforts to end all forms of paramilitary activity for good.**

Conservatives

The Conservative and Unionist Party Manifesto 2024

Promoted by Alan Mabbutt on behalf of the Conservative and Unionist Party, both at 4 Matthew Parker Street, London, SW1H 9HQ.
Printed by Paragon, Park House, Lower Ground Floor, 16-18 Finsbury Circus, London, EC2M 7EB.

ISBN 978-1-9163145-8-0