

# STRONGER TOGETHER: A FAIRER, GREENER FUTURE



# CONTENTS

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Chapter 1:</b> <b>Stronger Together for a green and digital future</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Chapter 2:</b> <b>Stronger Together for better jobs and better work</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Chapter 3:</b> <b>Stronger Together for safe and secure communities</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Chapter 4:</b> <b>Stronger Together for public services that work from the start</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Chapter 5:</b> <b>Stronger Together for a future where families come first</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Chapter 6:</b> <b>Stronger Together for Britain in the world</b>	<b>39</b>



**“STRONGER TOGETHER IS  
OUR CHANCE TO TAKE ON  
THE CHALLENGES THE  
COUNTRY FACES AND  
DELIVER THE FAIRER,  
GREENER FUTURE THAT  
BRITAIN NEEDS.”**

Scan the QR codes to



**READ THE  
STRONGER  
TOGETHER  
REPORT**



**GIVE  
YOUR  
FEEDBACK**



**VISIT THE  
LABOUR  
WORKS  
WEBSITE**

# FOREWORD

When Stronger Together was launched in the summer of 2021, our country was still in the grip of the Covid-19 pandemic. Restrictions were still in place, the vaccine roll-out was still in its early stages, and Britain faced an uncertain future. Despite that uncertainty, Labour was optimistic and ambitious for our country. We wanted to build on the best of what we saw during the pandemic, when people united to look after their neighbours, volunteered to help our NHS and the vaccine effort, and supported local businesses as they adapted to new ways of working. Our friends in the trade union movement worked with business and government to design a furlough scheme that protected jobs through the crisis. And our Labour councils, Labour mayors, Labour Police and Crime Commissioners and the Labour government in Wales were right there in our communities, helping them get through the crisis. The way we responded showed that we are stronger, together.

Today the brilliance of our scientists, NHS and key workers has brought Covid-19 under control. Britain proved that we achieve incredible things when we come together, and our country should be looking forward to a brighter future. Instead, we are grappling with new and growing threats, and stuck with a Conservative Government that simply cannot get to grips with them. Under the Conservatives, Britain faces the worst cost of living crisis in a generation, with soaring energy and food bills squeezing family finances to the limit. Taxes on working people have risen to their highest level in decades. The key worker heroes who got us through the pandemic are being denied the fair deal they deserve. Britain boiled during the summer, but the Conservatives are failing to take the action needed to tackle the growing climate crisis. Our hospitals are at breaking point, our schools are crumbling, and rising crime has left our communities less safe and less secure. The Conservatives promised to level up Britain, but all they've done is created backlog Britain, leaving people struggling to get a GP appointment, apply for a passport or access essential services.

After twelve years of failure, the Conservatives are out of ideas, out of road – and out of time. Only Labour can deliver the fairer, greener future that Britain needs. That is what Stronger Together – our roadmap to develop key policies ahead of the next General Election – is all about. Covering six big challenges for our country, it shows how Labour can ensure Britain can be fit for the green and digital future, deliver better jobs and better work, provide safe and secure communities and world-class public services that work from the start, support a future where families come first, and create a leading role for Britain in the world. Stronger Together is our roadmap to a fairer, greener and more secure future for Britain, and this report – *Stronger Together: A fairer, greener future* – is the latest milestone in that journey. I am delighted to present it to Annual Conference 2022.

As we face the cost of living and climate crisis, we have to come together again like we did during the pandemic. That is why, over the last twelve months, we have used Stronger Together to engage with people across our movement, including our affiliated trade unions and hundreds of Labour Party members, to develop an ambitious policy agenda that focusses

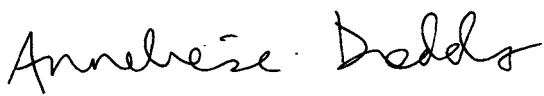
on the key issues facing Britain today. This work has built on the two reports that we presented to conference last year: *Labour Works*, which showcased inspiring examples of Labour delivering for people in every part of the country; and *Britain in 2030*, which contrasted the risk of ten more years of the Tories against Labour's vision for a better, more secure future. This year's report goes much further, setting out Labour's ambitious policy agenda for government and showing how we would take our country from where it is today to the vision set out in *Britain in 2030*.

Unlike the Conservatives, Labour has a plan to tackle the cost of living crisis and deliver the strong, secure, and fair growth our country needs. We will meet the climate crisis head on, with a landmark Climate Investment Pledge to develop the green industries of the future. We will get our economy firing on all cylinders and buy, make and sell more in Britain to deliver good jobs in every region of the country. We will address the insecurity that far too many people face in their daily lives, with our New Deal for Working People to deliver stronger workers' rights for everyone. And we will build public services that are equipped for modern challenges. Under Labour, mental health will finally be taken as seriously as physical health. We will give every child the best start in life we can, with our plans to ensure every child attends a good school and leave it ready for work and ready for life. And the next Labour Government will restore our nation's standing on the international stage by being a reliable partner and a resolute ally in an uncertain world.

At its heart, this report shows why Labour is stronger when we come together. It carries the weight of our Leader and his Shadow Cabinet behind it, drawing upon many long hours of consultation with our frontbench teams, our trade unions and hundreds of Labour Party members. I want to pass on my deepest thanks to every Labour Party member who took part in one of our Stronger Together events over recent months; to every member of the Shadow Cabinet and Parliamentary Labour Party who contributed, especially the political leads for each of the project's core themes; to our friends in the trade union movement; to the think tanks and socialist societies for their support; to the National Policy Forum members who play such a pivotal role in policy development; and to our amazing Labour Party staff, both for their help in compiling this report and for everything they do every day to work for a Labour Government.

Stronger Together is our chance to take on the challenges the country faces and deliver the fairer, greener future that Britain needs. Only Labour can unite our country, clean up our politics, and build a future that everyone in Britain can be proud of. We did it before by creating the NHS, introducing the first ever Climate Change Act and the national minimum wage, slashing child poverty, and bringing peace to Northern Ireland.

Together, we can do it again.



**Anneliese Dodds MP**  
**Chair of Stronger Together**



# **STRONGER TOGETHER**

for a green and digital future



## INTRODUCTION

Britain is a great country, with strong communities, world-class businesses, and an industrial heritage to be proud of. But for the last twelve years our economy has failed to deliver for working people and their families, creating a legacy of insecurity that sums up life in Britain in 2022. The Conservatives have run down our core industries and left our country less energy secure. They have stripped back our public services, leaving workers unprotected and unprepared when the pandemic hit. They have created a culture of insecure work and junked the industrial strategy that every economy needs to thrive. They have caused energy bills to soar and failed to tackle the climate crisis. Above all, they have weakened the foundations of our economy, leaving working people and their families exposed to the cost of living crisis engulfing Britain today.

This chapter will set out that record of Conservative failure to show how only a Labour Government can deliver security, prosperity and respect for the British people. After twelve years of the Conservatives – and fifteen years of the SNP in Scotland – Labour will get our economy back on track with a project of transformation to help decarbonise our economy, boost British industries and create good, unionised jobs throughout our country. That means rebuilding our industrial strength and winning the global race for future industries, including securing the future of steel and automotive production in the UK. It means safeguarding existing industries and harnessing new ones through our landmark Climate Investment Pledge for good jobs in every community. It means buying, making and selling more in Britain so that the economic benefits of decarbonisation are felt here at home – with good, unionised jobs spread fairly across the country. It means building more resilient national infrastructure by, for example, driving forward the development of home-grown British renewables and nuclear power so we are less dependent on energy imports and have far greater energy independence. It means investing in both mitigating the climate crisis but also in adapting to the effects of a warming world, for example by rapidly improving flood defences, the resilience of our national infrastructure to extreme weather, and other measures. It means supporting lifelong learning and harnessing new digital technologies, from artificial intelligence to online shopping to digital working, so that workers have the skills they need to get on and businesses the digital capacity and infrastructure they need to grow. In these turbulent times it is security that people most need – and this chapter will explain how the next Labour Government will deliver it.



## TWELVE YEARS OF CONSERVATIVE FAILURE

Today's unprecedented cost of living crisis shows the Conservatives have created a weak, dysfunctional and fundamentally insecure economy for workers and businesses alike. Over the past decade the Conservatives have failed to deliver strong economic and wage growth, which has led to higher taxes on working people and weakened public services. They have failed to secure our energy supply, which has left us uniquely exposed to global energy shocks. And they have failed to get a grip on the cost of living crisis, which has undermined business and consumer confidence – the engines of our economy.

For too long, the Conservatives have also failed to ensure investment in the backbone of a modern economy: the infrastructure of public transport; housing; communications and energy systems; and in our domestic manufacturing industries. They do not recognise the need to correct substantial market failures, promote investment or plan for the future, sitting idly by as customers are being hit hard by soaring bills in sectors such as childcare, water, energy, rail, mail and broadband. They have allowed our traditional industries to fall into decline, with the loss of many well-paid, unionised jobs as a result. They have broken our public transport system through a chronic lack of investment and a failure to deliver new transport infrastructure, creating a high-cost, low-reliability transport network that is keeping both travel costs and emissions high. They have launched a hammerblow to the UK's world leading film and TV by promising to privatise Channel 4 and end the BBC as we know it. And they have missed all their targets on broadband rollout, creating gaping regional and economic inequalities at a time when the pandemic has demonstrated the need for everyone, everywhere to have access to a fast, reliable internet connection. The Conservatives also have no plan to ensure that discrimination against women, disabled people and those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds is tackled and that workers acquire the skills they need to thrive in the economy of the future.

The invasion of Ukraine has exposed just how insecure our energy system has become under the Conservatives, with the Prime Minister going cap in hand to Saudi Arabia in response to Putin's threats to turn off the gas taps to Europe. Yet there is still no impetus from the Conservative Government to deliver the green energy sprint our country needs to drive forward homegrown forms of wind, solar, tidal, hydrogen and nuclear power to secure Britain's energy supplies for the long term. Foreign governments are investing and profiting from our energy transition, but the Conservative Government has failed to show sufficient leadership, leaving customers struggling to pay their bills while the energy transmission and distribution industry has enjoyed some of the highest private returns of any sector in the UK. The Conservatives are also failing to invest in energy efficiency, putting thousands more well-paid, unionised jobs at risk. They refuse to support decarbonisation in a way that protects and adapts jobs in existing industries, tearing up their industrial strategy and ducking decisions on investment in nuclear and renewables and energy storage. A lack of preparation for 5G has also left the UK dependent on Chinese telecoms company Huawei for huge swathes of our critical national infrastructure, further risking our national security.

In Scotland, the SNP has also let people down. After fifteen years in Holyrood, they have failed to address the challenges facing the Scottish people. Instead, they have created a high tax, low growth economy – much like the Conservatives. Scottish industry has been left to wither, with the closure of vital plants like BiFab in Burntisland, while the SNP and the Conservatives squabble over constitutional politics. Government projects like ScotWind, which could be used to boost Scottish industry, are instead sold off to foreign buyers.

## A STRONGER GREEN AND DIGITAL FUTURE WITH LABOUR

The Conservatives and SNP have failed to take the bold decisions necessary to grasp the opportunities of the green and digital future. But Labour has a plan to build a stronger, more secure economy which will get the cost of living under control, make our country more resilient, and lay the foundations we need for a thriving, dynamic economy in the future.

### *Industrial strategy*

Labour recognises that building an economy that rewards work and innovation will require meaningful partnership with unions, businesses and devolved governments to deliver a new focus on long-term sustained investment. That is what the next Labour Government will deliver – and it starts with an industrial strategy. Unlike the Conservatives, Labour believes in the need for a modern industrial strategy to build long-term planning into our economy for the benefit of workers and businesses alike. And unlike the Conservatives, Labour believes in the power that an active state can play in our economy, not just by co-ordinating policy but also in securing the industries of the future and encouraging private investment for the benefit of our country. That is why, in partnership with workers and businesses, Labour will produce a modern industrial strategy that puts good, unionised jobs first, capitalises on the opportunities of net zero, addresses the risks associated with new technologies, and provides good, fulfilling jobs for all. Part of building an economy that rewards work and innovation means changing the way corporate governance works to build in a long-term view. Labour will work in partnership with business and workers to make the long-term success of the company a primary focus. Co-operatives are a great example of how businesses can work for the benefit of both the company, workers and the community. Labour will aim to double the size of the co-operative sector in the UK.

Labour's industrial strategy would cover every core part of our economy, including often overlooked sectors in the everyday economy such as retail and social care, while recognising that the role of the state will vary between those sectors. At the heart of our strategy is our New Deal for Working People, increasing security, prosperity and respect for millions of people.

For sectors which have been privatised, Labour is pragmatic about public ownership where privatisation is not working. For too long, Conservative governments have been ideologically committed to privatisation regardless of the consequences for consumers and employment standards. Our aim will always be to consider how we can improve these services to work better for those who use them and improve conditions for those who work in them.

Labour will assess the options for improving these sectors on a case-by-case basis including drawing on experiences of those using and working in these services. We will assess how we can reform regulation and consider what role public ownership plays, provided it offers value for money; is consistent with the fiscal rules Labour announced at the last party conference; and is in the interests of our country to prioritise.

### *Energy*

Labour will take urgent, unprecedented action to fight the climate emergency and deal with its impacts. Labour's approach is simple: to deliver security for working people by cutting bills; to protect well-paid, unionised jobs and support the creation of new ones in the green industries of the future; and to rebuild our industrial strength across the country to drive our economy forward.

Our Climate Investment Pledge will transform our economy and follow the example set by the Labour Government in Wales by investing £28 billion of capital into the green economy for each and every year over this decade, with strategic public investment attracting private sector investment, bringing good, sustainable jobs to all parts of the country and protecting existing jobs as industries evolve and decarbonise. We will go further and faster on the green energy transition to bring down energy bills and deliver long-term energy security by taking on Conservative failures to build a strong renewable industry. We will invest in home-grown forms of power, upgrade the energy efficiency of every home and end the rip off in our energy system. We will set ambitious targets on delivering clean, homegrown onshore, offshore, solar, tidal, nuclear and hydrogen so that we can get to net zero quicker and end our reliance on fossil fuel dictators around the world. We will also rapidly deploy technologies that will be essential to reaching net zero, for example Carbon Capture Usage and Storage. We will deliver good public transport in every city, town and village to cut travel costs and emissions. We will end the decade of drift on nuclear power, which must form an essential part of the UK's low-carbon future. We will harness Scotland's renewables industry to boost the transition to net zero, help it grow and boost supply chains in Scotland and across Britain.

By rebuilding our energy system with home-grown British renewable and nuclear power, Labour would cut energy bills so that we will never again be reliant on foreign dictators. Our plan includes an industrial strategy, working hand-in-hand with trade unions, businesses and devolved governments, that will help British businesses lead the world in growing high-tech industries. It includes Labour's landmark Climate Investment Pledge, which will also attract private sector investment, and rebuild Britain with well-paid, unionised jobs available in all our communities and for everyone in them, from steel manufacturing to the automotive sector, small tech businesses to public transport. And it includes buying, making and selling more in Britain, so that by 2030 we have more British electric cars rolling off production lines in Sunderland and the Midlands, more British homes powered by British-made wind turbines off the coasts of Scotland and Teesside, and more British entrepreneurs driving the next generation of digital tech. We want British hospitals, schools and railways built with clean steel manufactured in places such as Lincolnshire, Yorkshire and Wales. We want an affordable, green public transport network, with Britain's railways back in public hands. And we want rising productivity levels to create the high-skilled, high-wage economy of the future.

Insulating homes is the best way to bring down energy bills, which is why the next Labour Government would commit £6 billion per year capital investment from our Climate Investment Pledge to a ten-year project to upgrade the energy efficiency of every home that needs it. Going street by street, our locally-delivered programmes will bring down bills for households, and do so in a way that creates well-paid jobs in every region of our country. Our fragmented energy supply system has been appallingly regulated and does not serve the public or deliver the jobs and skills the transition needs. Labour will fundamentally reform our system of supply, generation and transmission and distribution so that it delivers cheaper bills, clean energy, and energy security. Building a resilient, green energy system is a national mission, which needs to be properly co-ordinated with a clear plan and to provide a dividend to the British people. In line with our general approach on public ownership, set out above, over the months ahead, Labour will assess how better regulation can make these markets work better, as well as what role public ownership could play in parts of the energy system, provided it offers value for money; is consistent with the fiscal rules Labour announced at the last party conference; and is in the interests of our country to prioritise.

Labour's Climate Investment Pledge will allow us to buy, make and sell more in Britain to develop the green industries of the future and their supply chains here in the UK, delivering good jobs in every region of our country. We will bring good jobs back to Britain, working in partnership with trade unions, businesses and other industrial partners by using public investment to bring in private investment, strengthening our national energy security, and supporting hundreds of thousands of good jobs across the country. By building and owning home-grown, clean energy we can reap the benefits of green transition and make Britain's industrial towns and cities world leaders in decarbonisation and the green industries of the future.

### *Digital*

The digital revolution has already transformed almost every aspect of our lives, but a lack of connectivity is holding Britain back from delivering digital jobs and empowering businesses everywhere to grow. This failure is on the Conservatives and the SNP, who are out of ideas and out of excuses. Labour is committed to a digital future that transforms our economy and society. We will work to use new technologies and innovations to benefit as many people as possible, unleash Britain's creative talents, and support people to live connected lives.

The next Labour Government will take action to ensure that affordable broadband is available and fix the rollout so that universal access is a reality for people in the UK as soon as possible. Rather than worsening the digital divide between rural and urban, and between lower and higher income households, we will work to bridge it. This will secure high-quality, unionised jobs in every part of the country and ensure people on low incomes and older people are not excluded from the online world, breaking down barriers and building respect. Labour will also use the strength of Britain's innovation and creativity to equip people with the infrastructure and skills needed to build the British companies of the future, no matter where they live. Our New Deal for Working People will also ensure that the benefits of flexibility are felt by workers, not just by companies. We will ensure that workers have new rights and protections to keep pace with the changing nature of work and technological advancements.

Digital innovation has allowed music to be more accessible than ever before. But the move to streaming has had a damaging effect on musicians, and the current model under which music streaming operates is unequal, unfair and unjust. Labour would rebalance this relationship to ensure songwriters and musicians receive fair remuneration for their work.

Labour has long campaigned for stronger protections for children and the public online. We want to keep people safe, protect their money from scams and online fraud, secure our democracy, and ensure everyone is treated with decency and respect. We are committed to better regulation online so everyone can safely use the internet. Data and information underpin much of our everyday lives, and the use of personal data can support innovation both in the private and public sectors. During Covid, many people got used to scanning QR codes on their NHS app, and Labour acknowledges that better data sharing between public bodies can improve the quality of services. Greater use of data in public bodies needs to recognise privacy and accessibility concerns.

The UK's world-renowned creative industries will be key to our economic growth. Our iconic film, TV, music and culture depends on a delicate ecosystem, underpinned by public service broadcasters. Labour will oppose the sell-off of Channel 4, protect the BBC's universal service,

and ensure that opportunities are spread across the country, providing a much needed a pipeline of talent and investment across the nations and regions.

### *Royal Mail*

Labour believes that Royal Mail provides a vital service to the public and Royal Mail staff are essential workers. The pandemic highlighted the importance of having a robust, well-functioning and affordable delivery service that can reach all parts of the country. It also demonstrated the value of postal workers connecting communities and delivering vital services to those in need.

That is why Labour is committed to the Universal Service Obligation (USO) as the company's central mission. The next Labour Government will guarantee that the USO is secure for the future and will continue to be provided by Royal Mail in a way that is affordable and accessible to all users and financially sustainable for the long term. We will also strongly oppose any attempts by the Conservatives or by the leadership of Royal Mail Group to weaken or abandon the USO and we will support Royal Mail workers in their efforts to secure the long-term health and future of the service, by supporting mutually-agreed changes to modernise the service.

Labour will work with Royal Mail and unions to expand the role of postal workers- adding social value to our communities and innovative products and services that will support the growth of local and regional economies.

The Labour Party stands against the break-up of Royal Mail and will oppose any attempt through a takeover to turn this vital service to the public into a "gig economy" employer. Labour will review all aspects of the postal sector to ensure that the USO is continued and strengthened, including the delivery of parcels. This will include assessing the options for improving Royal Mail, taking into account Royal Mail's previously publicly-owned status, the CWU's research including relating to public ownership, the need to prevent hostile takeovers and the asset-stripping and reductions in pay, terms and conditions they can lead to.

Labour also wants to continue having open discussions to investigate how best to deliver services that can also contribute to our net zero ambitions, such as by assisting in the electrification of the Royal Mail fleet as well as other fleets where possible, and explore the utilisation of estates in energy production.

### *Transport*

Our vision for the green and digital future includes an efficient, integrated and affordable transport system that reduces carbon emissions and drives economic growth across our country. Under the Conservatives, we have a failed, fragmented system of public transport, including a rail network that is ripping off passengers and costing the taxpayer in expensive and wasteful delivery. Labour wants to put the interests of rail passengers first, providing better value for the travelling public and taxpayer alike. That is why the next Labour Government will bring our railways into public ownership as contracts with existing operators expire, consistent with our fiscal rules, putting passengers at the heart of our railways and investing in a world-class network to help cut travel costs and meet our net zero ambitions.

The Conservatives have betrayed the North and the Midlands by scaling back of Northern Powerhouse Rail and cancelling the HS2 eastern leg. Scrapping the link which planned to connect HS2 to communities north of Manchester with no plan to futureproof is yet another nail in the coffin for faster journey times and any future expansion of high speed rail.

Communities across our country will now pay the price for these broken promises, which would have created tens of thousands of jobs, connected 13 million people in major towns and cities in our industrial heartlands, and reduced road journeys. Labour will stand up for those communities, demanding the Conservatives deliver the rail investment promised across the North and the Midlands. If levelling-up is to mean anything, it should mean honouring these promises in full. The Conservatives promised Northern Powerhouse Rail and HS2 – and that is what Labour would be delivering. This is also about recognising the vital role rail freight plays in lowering carbon emissions as it produces 76% less CO2 than the equivalent road journey. The recent integrated rail plan demonstrates that the government do not understand the capacity constraints on the rail network. By buying, making and selling more in Britain, we will also drive growth and support jobs and businesses across the UK, while tackling the climate crisis. And Labour will ensure a rolling programme of electrification to improve services and decarbonise our transport system.

For too long the Conservatives have allowed local buses to decline and fares to rocket. Under Conservative plans, vast swathes of the country will not see a single penny of the funding promised to improve their shockingly bad bus services. They promised £3 billion to transform our bus services, but they have more than halved that. Instead, it is the Labour Government in Wales, Labour Metro Mayors and Labour local authorities across the country who are fighting to make buses cheaper, greener, faster and more reliable. Andy Burnham and Tracy Brabin are using their powers and influence to introduce £2 capped single bus fares, while Steve Rotheram and Oliver Coppard have plans to bring buses back under public control. Labour is turning the page on a decade of Conservative decline, but Mayors and local transport authorities still face countless hurdles and ideological barriers, including litigation from operators with a vested interest in the current failed model. Labour councils in Scotland have pledged to cap fares at £2 like Labour Mayors in England. The SNP has also dragged its heels in devolving greater control over transport to local authorities. Mayors and local authorities who want to roll back failed deregulation and privatisation should not be tied up in legal challenges that prevent the potential for strongly-performing municipal bus companies, and which even the government now recognises hampers that outcome. So a Labour Government would put the public back in control and make it simpler and easier to improve bus services and establish services of their own, including ensuring sufficient routes in rural and underserved areas.

## **CONCLUSION**

Labour will lead a government that takes on the climate crisis and seizes the opportunities of the digital revolution. We have to act now to decarbonise our economy and clean up our environment, but the Conservatives are dragging their feet. Labour would take the initiative with a Climate Investment Pledge that will transform our economy by investing £28 billion of capital each and every year over the decade, supporting British workers and businesses towards a fair and prosperous transition to net zero. We will ensure a transition that protects secure, well-paid, unionised new jobs in our existing industries and creates new ones in the industries of the future in every part of the country. The industrial revolution profoundly changed Britain in ways that still resonate today. Labour wants to own the green and digital revolutions – and make sure they work for everyone.



# STRONGER TOGETHER

for better jobs and better work



## INTRODUCTION

The last few years have been incredibly challenging for the British people. Just as the country emerged from the worst of Covid-19, the cost of living crisis began to bite. The invasion of Ukraine exacerbated inflationary pressures, but it is the long-term structural weakness of our economy under the Conservatives and SNP that has left British workers and their families uniquely exposed to rising energy, food and fuel prices. In these turbulent times, people are looking for positive solutions – and if there is one positive to take from the last few years, it is the way communities across Britain responded to the pandemic. During the Covid crisis, people across the country united to look after their neighbours, volunteered to help our NHS and the vaccine effort, and supported local businesses as they adapted to new ways of working. Trade unions worked with business and government to design a furlough scheme that protected jobs through the crisis. And our key workers kept the country going through thick and thin – a contribution recognised by the Conservative and SNP ministers who came out week after week to clap for our carers.

Yet these were the same Conservatives who have spent the last twelve years overlooking and undervaluing our key workers and the jobs they do. For many workers and employers, the pandemic also proved that flexible working is not only possible but also allows for a better work-life balance. Even before it hit, the way we work, the jobs we do and the businesses we work for were undergoing huge change. This should have offered opportunities for the Conservative Government to foster better jobs and better work. Instead, as this chapter will show, the Conservatives' poor policies and their refusal to address problems has made things worse, leaving working people trapped in a world of insecurity just as the worst cost of living crisis in a generation takes root.

That is why Labour believes Britain needs a New Deal for Working People. A New Deal that ensures work pays a wage that you can raise a family on. A New Deal that gives working people basic rights from day one on the job. A New Deal that empowers trade unions to play a key role in organising working people and puts an end to appalling practices like 'fire and rehire' that drive down standards, pay and conditions in a race to the bottom. Labour will deliver our New Deal for Working People, as set out in our Employment Rights Green Paper, within the first 100 days of the next Labour Government to help deliver an economy that works for all. This chapter will show that delivering better jobs and better work is central to Labour's vision of a strong economy that provides security, prosperity and respect for everyone. That vision includes a strong relationship with business – a relationship the Conservatives and SNP no longer seem to value. After twelve years of division and chaos under the Conservatives, only Labour can build a partnership with workers and their trade unions, and business, to deliver the stronger, more secure economy that Britain's workers need.

## TWELVE YEARS OF CONSERVATIVE FAILURE

Over the past twelve years, the Conservatives have eroded employment rights, weakened job security, hobbled pay negotiations and weakened workers' and trade union rights. They have broken the link between work and security and left working families worse off, with women, disabled people, and those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds hit particularly hard. The P&O Ferries scandal exposed the worst effect of these attacks on workers, with

Conservative Ministers feigning outrage that unionised British seafarers were marched off ferries while their employer's foreign-owned parent company cashed in on huge sums of money from government contracts. But the cynical calculations made by those running P&O Ferries have become common practice under the Conservatives, with bullying practices like 'fire and rehire' spreading like wildfire and the mere threat of it wielded above workers to keep them in check.

Thanks to the Conservatives, a fair day's work for too many people no longer means a decent day's pay, with soaring levels of insecure work and plummeting rates of real pay contributing a situation where two thirds of British children growing up in poverty now come from working households. The Conservatives have presided over the weakening of bargaining rights for workers in outsourced public services, allowing them to be passed from one employer to another under contracts subject to constant change. And they have ignored the lessons of the collapse of Carillion by continuing to rely heavily on outsourcing with little transparency or accountability. While the Welsh Labour government has introduced an ethical Code on Procurement in Supply Chains to protect workers' rights, in Scotland the SNP has failed to use its leverage with public procurement to improve workers' terms and conditions, despite pressure from Scottish Labour.

The pandemic showed the benefits of flexible working for many, with some workers able to enjoy a better work-life balance, less time commuting and more time with their family. Instead of embracing this change, the Conservatives spend their time fighting against legitimate homeworking and pushing a presenteeism agenda that fails to reflect many modern workplaces. At the same time, the Conservatives have done nothing to address the huge gulf between those who can work flexibly and those for whom flexibility is uniquely in the hands of their employer. Under the Conservatives, around 5 million people are now part of the 'gig economy' and agency working, with Black, Asian and minority ethnic workers more likely to be trapped in these low-paid insecure jobs and more likely to have lost their job during the pandemic. Many such workers do not have the same rights as regular employees, making it difficult to plan for the future. There are wider issues around the changing world of work that they are also failing to deal with. For example, digital working holds great potential, but some workers are subject to seemingly arbitrary decision making by algorithm with little transparency or accountability.

The Conservatives could have done something to tackle the explosion in insecure work over the last twelve years, and to deliver more security for working people. Instead, they have deliberately weakened trade union rights, failed to legislate to protect workers and shelved their plans for an Employment Bill. The Conservatives and SNP could have used their procurement powers to invest in jobs and strengthen standards that would improve the quality of work as well as help develop UK industries and supply chains, but both have done nothing. It is abundantly clear that they cannot be trusted to put the interests of working families first, take the action needed to build a more secure economy, and deliver better jobs and better work for the British people.

## **A STRONGER FUTURE FOR JOBS AND WORK WITH LABOUR**

The Conservatives have been undermining the link between work and security for over a decade, taking political choices to erode employment rights, degrade job security and reduce the value of wages. The next Labour Government will use all the tools at its disposal to tackle these failures and deliver better jobs and better work for everyone in Britain. That work will start



with our New Deal for Working People, which we will sign into law through an Employment Bill within the first 100 days of the next Labour Government to help deliver an economy built on fair pay, job security, dignity and equality at work.

### *A New Deal for Working People*

The Conservatives clapped for our key workers at the height of the pandemic, only to cut their pay and raise their taxes once the worst had passed. Labour's New Deal for Working People will give key workers the respect they deserve by empowering them to act collectively through Fair Pay Agreements across a number of sectors which will set a minimum floor, starting in social care. These will empower workers to act collectively and under a Labour Government will bring worker and employer representatives together to negotiate agreements that establish minimum terms and conditions. Labour will safeguard and maintain the existing collective bargaining arrangement for our fire services – the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services.

We will also give people fundamental employment rights from day one on the job, including the right to sick pay, protection from unfair dismissal and the right to flexible working. We will raise and strengthen Statutory Sick Pay and make it available to all workers, including the self-employed. We will also make parental leave and protection against unfair dismissal day one rights for all workers. More widely, Labour will also introduce statutory rights to trade union equality reps to ensure they have the time to contribute to positive changes in workplaces.

Labour recognises that structural inequalities are amplified by a lack of rights in the workplace. That is why we will bring in stronger family-friendly rights to protect and empower workers and address long-term structural workplace inequalities. We will act to close gender pay gaps, including for outsourced workers, with employers required to devise and implement plans to eradicate them. Disabled people's contribution to the world of work has been undervalued, while structural racial inequality is holding back Black, Asian and minority ethnic workers. We will introduce mandatory ethnicity and disability pay gap reporting for employers with more than 250 staff. We will permit equal pay comparisons across employers where men and women carry out comparable work, introduce paid family and carer's leave, extend statutory maternity and paternity leave, introduce the right to bereavement leave and make it unlawful to dismiss a new mother for six months after her return, except in specific circumstances. We will reform the flawed Parental Leave system, require employers to create and maintain workplaces free from harassment, including by third parties, and ensure rights are enforced and upheld.

Labour will also ensure that all workers have access to unions in their workplace and know their rights, including the increasing number of those working remotely in post-Covid Britain, and that those rights reflect the world of work as we find it today. We will therefore make trade union legislation fit for a modern economy, repeal anti-trade union legislation which removes workers' rights, including the Trade Union Act 2016, and remove unnecessary restrictions on trade unions. Labour will simplify the process of union recognition and establish a reasonable right of entry to organise in workplaces. We will also make it easier for workers to get what they deserve through the Employment Tribunal process by extending the time period for bringing claims, putting in place tougher penalties for those who break the law and removing caps on the amount of compensation that workers can receive. Labour will end 'one sided' flexibility for employers by banning zero-hour contracts and contracts without a minimum number of guaranteed hours, and also ensuring all workers get reasonable notice in changes in working hours. Labour also opposes Conservative plans to enable employers to break strikes with agency staff – a move that will put public safety at risk and empower bosses to follow the

example of P&O Ferries by reducing services and standards, damaging industrial relations and diminishing workers' wages and conditions. The next Labour Government will put this right by repealing and replacing the regulations imposed by the Conservative Government.

Being in work should be the best defence against the rising cost of living, yet 57 per cent of people living in poverty come from a working household. Labour will overhaul the punitive features that strip away dignity and trap people in a cycle of low pay, insecurity and poverty. We will provide a reliable safety net for people who lose their jobs or who cannot work due to ill health or disability, and will replace the current system of work capability assessments with a system that supports people to live with security. We will also fix out of work support so that it provides a path to good, secure and well-paid work that matches the skills and experience of workers, opening up opportunity and spreading prosperity fairly.

The Conservatives have used the power of public procurement to line the pockets of their cronies during the pandemic. The next Labour Government will use it to bring about change, to help regenerate local economies run down by the Conservatives, and to strengthen workers' rights – not just for public sector workers but for those employed by private businesses too. We will also commit to using public procurement as a force for good and to bring more workers onto the real living wage, denying businesses that have a record of failure, poor employment protections or inadequate standards further government contracts – something both the SNP and the Conservatives have resisted. Most businesses recognise the importance of a workforce to their success. Labour wants to reward good employers, not allow them to be undercut by those who treat their workforce badly. Under Labour there will be a race to the top on working conditions, not to the bottom as we have seen under the Conservatives.

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

Labour will learn from the lessons from the collapse of Carillion and the mistakes made by the Conservatives during their pandemic response, when countless millions were wasted on outsourced public services that failed users and taxpayers alike. Labour will not stand for a system that allows competing bidders to drive down standards for the workforce, which is neither good for workers nor the users of public services who rely upon them. A Labour Government will end the Tories' ideological drive to privatise our public services, and ensure all outsourced services are transparent, accountable for delivery and subject to the Freedom of Information Act, however they are delivered. The next Labour Government will also examine public services that have been outsourced as part of our drive to improve quality, design better services to meet changing needs, ensure greater stability and longer-term investment in the workforce, and deliver better value for money. In most cases, the best time to achieve the most value for money for publicly-run provision will be when existing contracts expire or are broken through a failure to deliver – something that we will monitor forensically. That is how we will bring about the biggest wave of insourcing of public services in a generation.

### *Buy, make and sell more in Britain*

Labour is committed to a positive agenda in government to buy, make and sell more in Britain. We will use public procurement and infrastructure strategies to ensure more British businesses can benefit from winning government contracts. In government, Labour will ask every public body to increase UK spending using social, environmental and labour clauses in contract design, making sure that trade union recognition and access is valued and considered as part of the

process of awarding public contracts, so that we have higher standards in these areas while also spending and making more in Britain. The SNP had the opportunity to do similarly for ScotWind, but chose not to.

We will also ensure the UK Infrastructure Bank helps to push this ambitious agenda with new criteria so that recipients of public money through the UK Infrastructure Bank must be committed to creating good jobs with decent conditions and set out a plan to achieving this, with sanctions to prevent any business from rowing back on commitments made. The Labour Government will ensure the Bank has workers' representatives on its board, publishes an annual report on the geographical spread and impact of its investments, and is given an additional objective to support supply chain resilience and our industrial strategy.

More widely, Labour will ensure that training and apprenticeships commitments are hard-wired into contracts of significant value, and we will introduce a law requiring public bodies to report on how much they are buying from the UK. Labour would lead a culture change with focus on how we can help industries grow locally and nationally – starting by reviewing all major infrastructure projects to explore how to increase domestic content. The next Labour Government will also ensure the Treasury and Cabinet Office better recognise the broader economic value of creating jobs and thriving businesses here in procurement frameworks. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of shorter supply chains and the problems of over-relying on countries such as China to provide the manufacture of vital PPE. We want to encourage more employers to re-shore more of their supply chains to the UK and will develop a strategy to achieve this.

## **CONCLUSION**

Working people have been short-changed for too long under the Conservatives, who have weakened the foundations of our economy, eroded security and dignity at work, and left Britain's workers at the mercy of the cost of living crisis. Labour wants to put the value of work at the heart of our vision to deliver security, prosperity and respect for the British people. We want an economy that works for working people, where working people can get decent, well-paid jobs no matter where they live. A country where people are treated with dignity and respect at work, with more control over their own lives and future. A country that rewards a proper day's work with a proper day's pay, and the pride that comes from a job well done. A country where we seize the opportunities of the future: where we provide a platform for good businesses to thrive and trade unions to support working people.

Our New Deal for Working People will start to achieve that within 100 days of the next Labour Government. By improving wages, job security, and trade union and employment rights, we will give workers real job security, prosperity with decent pay, and respect in their workplace. As the world of work continues to evolve, Labour will also ensure working people and their representatives are not left without the protections they need in a changing world. We will buy, make and sell more in Britain to bring growth back to our economy and improve standards. And we will unleash the biggest wave of insourcing of public services in a generation to deliver better value for money and give workers the security they crave. Our bold agenda for better jobs and better work will improve living standards and opportunities for millions of working people, strengthen our economic foundations and boost productivity so that Labour can build the stronger and more secure economy that working people so desperately need.



# STRONGERTOGETHER

for safe and secure communities



## **INTRODUCTION**

The way Britain responded to the pandemic showed how strong our communities are when they come together. As people stood side by side on their doorsteps to applaud our key workers, many felt a sense of community which had not been tangible before. People up and down the country united to support each other, working hand in hand with charities, local authorities and businesses and public services to keep people safe and secure. Our Labour councils, Labour mayors, Labour Police and Crime Commissioners and the Labour Government in Wales were right there in our communities too, helping them to get through the crisis. Today those communities face a new challenge, with the cost of living crisis putting local people, local authorities and our public services under extreme pressure. The incredible sense of local pride and togetherness we all felt during the pandemic has given way to deepening anxiety, and the Conservatives are doing nothing to help.

Instead, they have eroded the bonds of community, leaving families feeling less secure and less protected when a once in a generation cost of living crisis hit. Under the last Labour Government, being 'tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime' was more than a mantra – it was a mission. But the soft-on-crime Conservatives have unraveled that legacy by letting more criminals off the hook and by letting more victims down. This chapter will show how the next Labour Government will tackle their record of failure and make Britain the best place to grow up and grow old in again. We will put neighbourhood police in the heart of communities where they belong. We will take firm action across government to protect women and girls. We will bring criminals to justice, give victims stronger rights, and work continually to prevent crime. Above all, we will stand up for the rule of law after years of crime and disorder under the Conservatives. Everyone has the right to live in a safe and secure community – and only Labour has the vision and ambition to make that possible.

## **TWELVE YEARS OF CONSERVATIVE FAILURE**

Criminals have never had it so good under the soft-on-crime Conservatives. Total crime is soaring, but prosecutions, cautions and community penalties have all gone down. Recorded rape and sexual offences are at record highs, while rape convictions are at record lows. Anti-social behaviour is rife, but charge rates are at a record lows and cautions and other community penalties are falling too. Tens of thousands of cases are now awaiting trial after the Conservatives closed half of all courts in England and Wales between 2010-19, with delays in prosecutions hitting a record 708 days between reporting and a trial ending. Outside of criminal court delays, the wait for an employment tribunal has grown to its longest since 2013. Community payback hours delivered have also plummeted, falling by a quarter in the three years between 2017 and 2021.

Progress on preventing crime is needed to help tackle crime, but the Conservatives have also taken an axe to the vital services that are there to protect us all. They have cut tens of thousands of police officers, PCSOs and police staff since 2010, and there are now 7,000 fewer neighbourhood officers on our streets than there were in 2015. They have decimated the youth justice system and slashed the mental health, drug and alcohol services their own evidence shows is necessary to stop people turning to crime. The number of inmates accessing NHS alcohol and drug treatment programmes in prisons and secure settings has decreased by 12% at a time when drug finds in prison have more than doubled.

Too often, the Conservatives' failure to tackle crime hits those most at risk. People in the most deprived neighbourhoods are now seven times more likely to report high levels of anti-social behaviour than people in the least deprived neighbourhoods. The Conservatives have overseen an epidemic of violence against women and girls, with the number of women homicide victims at its highest level in fifteen years and only 1.3% of rapes in 2021 resulting in a charge. The overwhelming majority of rape cases never make it to court, never mind to conviction, with more than 40% of rape victims dropping out of the criminal justice process in 2021. Hate crimes against people with protected characteristics have also soared, with police-recorded anti-LGBT+ offences doubling in the last five years and those against disabled people up by 22% since 2010.

Labour left a network of children's and youth services to provide integrated care so that children got off to the best start in life and young people had the skills they needed to get on. But the shortsighted Conservatives have slashed those services, with many former Sure Start and youth centres now being used as community foodbanks instead. People in these communities already know that their streets, workplaces and homes are no longer as safe as they should be. They know the Conservatives have let our communities down, with no plan to tackle crime and its underlying causes.

## **A STRONGER FUTURE FOR OUR COMMUNITIES WITH LABOUR**

Labour wants this country to be the best place to grow up and the best place to grow old. That is not possible without making our communities, our streets, our workplaces and our homes the safest they can be – a task that simply beyond the Conservatives. Police, fire and rescue workers put their own safety on the line to protect us all, but too often our emergency service workers are not given the recognition they deserve by the Conservatives. Now these key workers and many others are faced with a cost of living crisis made worse because the Conservatives have spent twelve years running our public services down and weakening the foundations of our economy. Labour will ensure those working in the criminal justice system, police and fire

services are paid fairly for their service, and we will take action to help them deliver the safe and secure communities our country currently lacks under the Conservatives.

### *Tackling crime and the causes of crime*

After twelve years of Conservative failure, the next Labour Government will take urgent action to make our communities safe and secure again. That starts by restoring neighbourhood policing to our streets to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour at source. Following the successful example of Labour councils like Redbridge, we will create 'police hubs' in every area – Neighbourhood Prevention Teams of police staff, including police officers, Police Community Support Officers, as well as local authority staff and youth workers. Rooted in their communities, these hubs would restore visible, front-line policing to our streets and give local people, including victims of crime, an immediate point of contact when a crime occurs.

Probation services play a crucial role in reducing re-offending and protecting communities from harm. We will consider the most effective way for the probation service to be run so that probation officers can focus on rehabilitating offenders in their communities.

We will continue our strong track record of keeping people safe in their work, building on the labour movement's ongoing campaign to protect shop workers from violence at work. We also support the Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act which provides protection for our emergency service staff and will ensure it is properly enforced.

We will require employers to create and maintain workplaces and working conditions free from harassment, including by third parties and consider how they can keep employees safe when travelling to and from work. We will ensure that all those working in the justice system are safe at work including prison officers, who have been the subject of increasing numbers of assaults by inmates. We will ensure there are safe and robust levels of staffing for our emergency services.

We will work at a local and national level to prevent crime in communities by improving mental health services and addiction support, revitalising support for young people and prioritising early intervention to avoid criminal activity. And we will make ending violence against women and girls a key mission in government, with a new national register of serial domestic abusers and stalkers, specialist rape and sexual assault units in every police force area, and new minimum sentences for rape and stalking with new ministerial responsibilities across government. An approach focused on criminal justice alone will only act as a sticking plaster on an epidemic that is rooted in the prevalence of misogyny and inequality across our society. Labour would ensure a long-term, whole system response that provides justice and protection for survivors, as well as delivering effective prevention, and the tackling of the social attitudes, inequality and discrimination that underpins the abuse that women and girls face.

### *Rebuilding our criminal justice system*

Unlike the Conservatives, Labour will put victims at the heart of the criminal justice system. We will give them stronger rights from day one and work to make sure they feel supported to seek the justice they deserve. We will reduce the unprecedented Crown Court backlog which forces victims to wait years for their day in court, and too often denies them justice altogether. We will also take action to reduce the unacceptable 1,000-day delay between reporting a rape and a court case beginning. We will strengthen alternatives to custodial sentences by creating



Community and Victim Payback Boards to increase community and victim involvement in community sentences, get tough on antisocial behaviour and stop more serious reoffending at source. Labour will also look to reform the criminal justice system so that the legal profession represents modern Britain and anyone with the aptitude can become a criminal justice practitioner, irrespective of their background.

Labour believes that our rights and liberties are the foundations of our justice system, ensuring fair treatment no matter who we are or where we come from. While the Conservatives are pushing ahead with their divisive, dangerous, and unworkable plans to rip up the Human Rights Act, Labour will strengthen protections for the British people with an updated Act that gives them stronger safeguards to live free and fulfilling lives. We will also strengthen and equalise the law on hate crime and extend the aggravated offences regime to all five protected characteristics recognised in law. This will ensure that everyone who falls victim to hate is treated equally, including women subject to misogynistic hate crime, and that the perpetrators of anti-LGBT+ and disability hate can no longer be let off lightly.

### *Supporting communities*

We want people to have pride in their local communities, with opportunities and prospects, good local transport that connects them to family and friends, and the power to make decisions about the places where they live. Labour wants to spread good opportunities throughout the country, so young people have choices and chances and don't find themselves having to get out to get on. That is why our Welsh Labour Government, Labour mayors, Police and Crime Commissioners and councils are taking bold and radical steps to keep communities safe across our country, from funding Youth Navigators mentoring young people across the Northumbria force area to supporting sports diversion programmes to prevent reoffending in South Wales. A Labour Government will champion their work, learn from it, and apply it at a national level.

The Conservatives have cut 11,500 firefighter jobs and closed dozens of fire stations. Response times have got slower and lives have been put at risk. Unlike the Conservatives, Labour will deliver safe and robust levels of staffing to safeguard our Fire Services and protect the public. Police and fire services are very different and distinct services which each have vital, separate responsibilities to the public. Labour will ensure that governance arrangements respect those different and distinct roles and responsibilities.

A Labour Government will always stand up for the rule of law and challenge injustice wherever we find it. We support a full investigation into the events at Orgreave and Labour would release documents held by government relating to the Cammell Laird prosecutions and carry out a review into the jailing of striking workers. We are committed to implementing the full Hillsborough Law to give grieving families the fair and balanced justice system they need. Labour will look closely at the conclusions and recommendations of the Mittings Inquiry and consider the best ways to ensure vulnerable people involved in undercover police operations are protected. We will overhaul the Windrush Compensation Scheme and work tirelessly to ensure that every victim gets every penny of compensation they deserve. We will ensure that unlawful blacklisting of trade unionists is a practice never seen again in Britain with the law properly enforced. And we will fight for the commitments Labour made in the wake of the Grenfell fire to give all survivors the support they need, to bring those culpable to justice, to end the deregulation of building and fire safety and to prevent a fire like Grenfell ever happening again.

We will safeguard the right to peaceful protest and the right to picket in industrial disputes, which has won so many of our historic freedoms. We will also build a police force that reflects the communities it serves and earns their trust and confidence. That will include working hard to stamp out prejudice, discrimination and racism across society, including within policing and the criminal justice system. We will overhaul vetting processes, strengthen training, work to raise standards and improve anti-racism policies, and introduce a Race Equality Act in government to tackle structural inequality at source. We will also implement every recommendation of the Lammy Review on discrimination in the criminal justice system, including setting targets for a representative judiciary. We will ensure violence against women and girls is taken seriously by every police force and we will give police the regular and rigorous training they need to protect and support women. Labour will also ensure safe and healthy workplaces by introducing Fair Pay Agreements, and create a single enforcement body tasked with overhauling health and safety enforcement to support the wellbeing of workers.

## **CONCLUSION**

Labour believes in safe communities. We want to build a country where everyone feels safe and secure, whether you are walking home at night, working in our frontline services, or on your local high street. We will reverse Conservative attacks on those who keep our communities safe, tackle the Conservative legacy of soaring crime and anti-social behaviour, and rebuild our broken criminal justice system. Labour is appalled by the epidemic of violence against women and girls that the Conservatives have allowed to spread across our country. We will not rest until women and girls are safe at home, in the street, at school, college and university, in the workplace and online.

The Conservatives have squandered their chance to harness the spirit of togetherness shown during the Covid-19 crisis and keep it going into the future. So it is for Labour to build a country where people feel happy, safe and part of a close-knit community where everyone has a stake. A country where town centres and high streets are thriving and our parks and public spaces are safe for our kids to play. A country where people feel safe and secure in their neighbourhoods and homes, with low levels of crime and support for victims. A country that can genuinely claim to be the best place to grow old and grow old in.



# STRONGERTOGETHER

for public services that work from the start



## INTRODUCTION

Good public services are the cornerstone of a healthy society and underpin a strong economy, providing people with dignity and opportunity throughout life and supporting safe and secure communities. It should be the priority of every government to deliver high-quality, well-funded and easy to access public services. But over the last twelve years, the Conservatives have run down our public services and degraded our public spaces, choking off investment in communities and wasting public money. This is underpinned by their dismal growth record. Had they grown the economy at the same rate as under Labour, there would have been over £40 billion more in revenues that could have been invested without raising any tax on working people. Our public service workers rose admirably to the challenge of the pandemic, but the Covid crisis showed how a decade of Conservative neglect and underfunding had left our public services ill-prepared and overstretched, letting down the incredible efforts of the vital workers who staff them. After twelve years of the Conservatives, our public services are struggling to meet the challenges of the current decade, let alone the next.

Labour believes in Britain at its best: a fair and prosperous society with some of the best public services in the world. We want to work together with communities and local government to deliver innovative services that help everyone achieve their ambitions and live the life they choose. We want to design and equip our public services for prevention as well as treatment to rise to the challenges and opportunities of the future, whether that is in our NHS or in social care, in our children's and youth services or in the criminal justice system. And we want to put the people who use public services at the heart of our vision, extending our approach on public service design and drawing on the expertise of practitioners, including those who work in our public services, on what works and what is needed in their local area. Labour will also focus on the needs of the workforce and value their hard work, taking action to ensure all workers receive fair pay and conditions.

To build public trust to deliver on these promises, we will eliminate the wasteful practices of both the Conservative and SNP Governments, with their bloated contracts and hundreds of millions of pounds worth of failed procurement mistakes and costly privatisation. Labour will instead invest public money wisely and treat our public finances – and our public sector – with respect. Public services should shape lives for the better. If we get this right, we can make an enormous difference to people's lives.

## **TWELVE YEARS OF CONSERVATIVE FAILURE**

Under the Conservatives, our public services replicate the inequality and insecurity they have created across Britain. Over a decade of neglect has left our public services overstretched, fragmented, and all too often failing to meet the needs of the public or those who work within them. From the digital divide to regional disparities to unequal healthcare outcomes such as the Black maternal mortality gap, our public services are held back from delivering security, prosperity and respect for the British people.

Many health services across the world were under extreme pressure at the height of the Covid crisis. But a decade of Conservative underinvestment and mismanagement had left our NHS already on its knees when the pandemic hit, with record waiting lists, 100,000 staff shortages, and 17,000 fewer beds than in 2010. Hospitals were crumbling, public health funding had been cut and GP numbers were down. There are now a record 6.5 million people waiting for elective treatment, and they are waiting longer than ever before. Staff who have gone above and beyond for the past two years are exhausted, overstretched, and the service is struggling to retain them. While Covid-19 exposed existing cracks in social care, the reality is that our social care system was also under immense strain before the pandemic struck, with over a million older and disabled people not having their care needs met. Families are often left to pick up the pieces as a result, with up to 10.5 million unpaid carers (one in five adults), a disproportionate number of whom are women, now estimated to be caring for a loved one. There is a crisis in pay in the care sector, with three quarters of care staff paid at or near minimum wage and a third are on zero hours contracts. The Conservatives have created a situation where too few people are joining the profession and too many are leaving it, leaving too few staff to provide decent care.

The Conservative Government has also failed our children and young people. Child poverty has soared on its watch, and four in ten young people are leaving education without key qualifications and a widening attainment gap. Seven in ten teachers have thought about leaving the profession in the last year and the number of vacancies has more than doubled since 2011. School support staff, who make up the majority of those who work in schools, are low paid and underappreciated. Apprenticeship opportunities have been in freefall and the government's Skills and Post-16 Education Act was a missed opportunity to deliver a truly ambitious vision for vocational and technical education. Despite announcing in 2016 that Nicola Sturgeon wanted to be judged on her record of closing the attainment gap, the SNP has abandoned its targets after years of failure. The pandemic has exposed further inequalities, with the digital divide between better and worse-off families leading to dramatically different educational experiences. If we are going to create a high-skill, higher-wage economy, we need all our children and young people to have access to digital tools and the skills to use them effectively.

## **A STRONGER FUTURE FOR PUBLIC SERVICES WITH LABOUR**

A future Labour Government will seek to reduce inequality and make Britain a fairer and more prosperous society. To do that, we will need to invest, innovate and modernise our public services. But after twelve years of the Conservatives our public services in a dire state, and there is a huge challenge before us. Labour would ensure that people across the country can access world-class public services, that the voices of diverse communities are heard, and that the workforce is treated fairly.

The next Labour Government will bring about the biggest wave of insourcing of public services in a generation. We will examine public services that have been outsourced as part of our drive



to improve quality, design better services to meet changing needs, ensure greater stability and longer-term investment in the workforce, and deliver better value for money. The next Labour government will not repeat the costly failures of privatisation and we will ensure stronger public services as a result.

### *Building preventative public services*

A Labour Government will ensure our public services are forward-looking and delivered effectively for users and workers. In the NHS, recruitment and retention problems are increasing, leading to longer waiting lists. Labour will bring in measures to deliver the high-quality service that users deserve. For example, by introducing regular assessment of staffing needs in our NHS, we can retain staff by ensuring pay is fair, workload is manageable and staffing levels are appropriately maintained. Labour will ensure that our public services are staffed to a safe level. We will address the crisis in recruitment and retention affecting our public services by working to ensure there are clear avenues for training, development, and progression for staff. This will avoid the increasing and very costly reliance on agency workers to fill gaps in staffing. We will enact the socio-economic duty in the Equality Act to make government and the public sector focus on delivering better outcomes for those on lower incomes and make narrowing and eliminating inequality through public services a priority.

We value the great contribution of those working in our public services in good times and bad. It is only right that they are fairly rewarded for the work that they do. Inflation is skyrocketing but the Conservatives are still failing to ensure public sector workers are fairly and properly paid. Labour also recognises the detrimental impact of changes to public sector pensions made by this Conservative Government and the need to ensure that all pensioners have a good standard of living.

Under the Conservatives, public service workers' pay has been squeezed while workload has increased year on year. Recruitment and retention problems are rising, leading to longer waiting lists in the NHS and growing difficulties in other services. Labour believes that we cannot go on like this if we are to deliver the public services that a growing economy needs.

We will act to improve public service workers' living standards throughout the Parliament. Labour will also consider the case for looking more broadly at how public sector pay is set, without undermining existing collective bargaining arrangements that are supported by unions, and by looking at revising the remit of the public sector Pay Review Bodies to make sure our public services can recruit and retain the workers they need.

### *Health and social care*

We are committed to innovation and modernisation in the design of our public services, using the best of humanity's advancements to make them work at their best. In health and social care, we can learn from how the pandemic has accelerated the uptake of digital solutions to help make the NHS fit for the future, improving patient experience and access to care. Capitalising on the progress made during Covid, we will transform the front door of the NHS so patients can access care in the way that suits them, making the most of innovations like the NHS app as a way to book appointments, offer prescriptions electronically, and guarantee remote consultations for all who want them.

The Conservatives have allowed firms to profiteer from running care homes, while care workers are driven out of the profession because it does not pay them enough to live on. All providers

should demonstrate financial sustainability, responsibility in tax payment, value staff and deliver quality care for service users. Under Labour, money invested in social care will be spent on social care and a Labour Government will not tolerate poor quality, extractive providers that put private profit before quality care. The SNP has presided over a similar model in Scotland for years. Now they have accepted Labour's demands for a National Care Service, they are relying on highly paid private contractors to design the service while kicking proper reform down the road.

Labour will fix social care so those in need don't go without, with a ten-year plan of reform that will act as a roadmap to a world-class National Care Service that makes people as proud as the NHS does. This would be a needs-based, locally delivered system, where people are helped to stay in their homes and where carers are valued and supported. As a first step, as set out in our New Deal for Working People, our priority will be that care workers receive the pay, the conditions, and the training they need to provide great care for people.

Labour will back national partnership working in social care, bringing together employers, unions, and government to replicate the benefits this model has brought to other services. Under Fair Pay Agreements, national minimum standards on the pay and conditions of care workers will be implemented.

Labour will finally make sure that those who need access to mental health support get it, introducing a new NHS national target guaranteeing mental health support within a month for those who need it. This will ensure that patients start receiving appropriate treatment – not simply an initial assessment of needs – within a month of referral. Labour will fund the new measures by closing tax loopholes for private equity fund managers and removing the VAT exemption from private schools. We will also support our young people to lead healthy lives, with specialist mental health support in every school. We would ensure that every secondary school has access to the services of one additional full-time specialist staff member, while primary schools will have access to specialist staff time, shared between different local primary schools.

### *Education and skills*

Labour believes in the power of education to transform opportunities, grow our economy and provide a platform for a rewarding life. Labour will end the tax breaks currently provided to private schools to fund our vision for the education system.

Under our National Excellence Programme we will tackle the challenges of recruitment and retention across school support staff and teaching roles. Labour will recruit over 6,500 new teachers in England, filling vacancies, skills gaps and tackling the doubling up of roles which is seeing spiralling workloads and an exodus of staff. School support staff are crucial to helping all children, especially those with SEND and facing additional barriers, to achieve at school. We would give all school staff the ongoing training and support they need, helping to retain staff so every child has the support they need to thrive. Our Excellence in Leadership Programme will support new headteachers throughout their first years on the job to tackle the crisis in headteacher recruitment and retention.

A Labour Government will work to end poverty once and for all, with a comprehensive strategy to tackle both the root causes and the effects of poverty, including hunger and food insecurity. It is a damning indictment of twelve years of Conservative failure that an estimated eight children in every classroom are living in poverty. Children who are hungry cannot learn properly, and this

entrenches inequality. That is why Labour will take an ambitious, strategic approach to tackle the causes of poverty and to end the outrage of rising child poverty in modern Britain.

With families battling unprecedented financial uncertainty right now, and a totally inadequate government approach to financial security and children's education, it's more important than ever that nutritious free school meals are provided to support children. Labour would be ensuring, as we did in Wales, this happened over the school holidays too, as part of our Children's Recovery Plan. To ensure that children get the support they need, and to avoid the scandal of the unacceptable food parcels initially provided during government's policy of food vouchers, this support should be offered via direct cash transfers to parents as part of Labour's strategy to tackle the root causes of poverty.

Labour will make sure every child can achieve and thrive, and every adult can succeed and flourish, with opportunities within their communities and where they live. We will embed digital skills and life skills throughout the curriculum, with a modern careers advice and work experience system, so that every young person is ready for work and ready for life. Labour will maintain the laptops and tablets distributed throughout the pandemic so that no young person is left behind because of a lack of access to technology, either at school or at home. Working with unions, businesses and training providers, we will develop plans for a reformed apprenticeships levy. The Conservative Government vindictively cut the Union Learning Fund, taking away opportunities for upskilling and enhancing their working lives from 200,000 working people. The Union Learning Fund has created millions of opportunities for adults, especially those with lower skills, to train and retrain throughout their lives. Working with the Council of Skills Advisors and unions, Labour will build on this to ensure that all adults can get the skills they need to train and upskill. Together Labour's plans will equip our economy with the skills needed to face the challenges of the future.

## **CONCLUSION**

Labour wants a country with world-class education and health services for everyone. A country where access to high quality schools and hospitals is never about where you live or how much money you have. A country where modern public services – from the NHS to social care and children's services – are designed and equipped to prevent problems as well as treat them, and where we properly value the key workers that deliver them. A country where those services join up and work with one another so that everyone can get the best possible treatment straight away.

But Labour recognises that none of those ambitions can be achieved if we are not trusted with the public finances – a principle that is central to our programme for government. As we respond to over a decade of Conservative wastefulness, incompetence and neglect, we will build a Britain where public services, public spaces and local communities are protected, promoted and prioritised. Under Labour, public services will also deliver good value for money for the public purse, providing the strong foundations we need to create economic growth and prosperity across the country. And by building the stronger, more resilient economy that Britain needs, Labour will in turn generate the resources to fund our public services properly and ensure workers are paid fairly. After twelve long years of the Conservatives, Britain needs public services that work from the start – and only Labour has a plan to deliver them.



# STRONGER TOGETHER

for a future where families come first



## **INTRODUCTION**

Families are the bedrock of our communities – diverse, vibrant and ever-changing, they make Britain what it is. When the pandemic hit, the importance of our families hit home. But under the Conservatives, life has become harder for many families in Britain. Slow growth and stagnating wages squeezed family finances in the first decade of Conservative rule, weakening the foundations of our economy and leaving households exposed when Covid hit. Many families were already struggling to make ends meet even before the cost of living crisis arrived. Now millions are facing spiralling food, fuel and energy costs that the Conservatives have added to by hiking taxes and cutting social security for the families that need it most.

After twelve years of the Conservatives, Labour wants to build a future where families come first. A future where every child grows up as part of a strong, loving family which is supported by an inclusive local community. One where good jobs, secure housing, high-quality childcare and local support networks are available and accessible, helping families to flourish. One where parents and carers have time to enjoy with their families, supported by a good balance of work and family life. One where pensioners get the care and support they need to enjoy dignity in retirement. Where no one should feel forced to get out to get on, leaving their home and local community for the sake of opportunity. And where everyone feels part of a strong community which delivers for them, including those who live alone. We want an end to insecure housing, which repeatedly forces families to relocate and uproot their lives, and to enable local communities to insist that genuinely affordable and social homes are available to every family that needs them. A future where families can seize opportunities, get the support they need and flourish regardless of the colour of their skin, who they love or where they come from.

## **TWELVE YEARS OF CONSERVATIVE FAILURE**

Today the cost of living crisis is a constant worry for millions across the UK, with food prices, energy prices, the cost of childcare and rent outstripping wage growth. The Conservatives may be set to preside over the biggest fall in living standards ever recorded, but life was becoming more difficult for many families long before the cost of living crisis hit. Poverty in all forms rose dramatically in the first decade of Conservative rule, with soaring numbers of families living in insecure housing, becoming eligible for free school meals or facing personal debt problems. The Conservative Party claims to want to make work pay, but over half of people living in poverty today come from a working household. This is because wages have stagnated under the Conservatives and there are not enough well-paid jobs offering people a chance to get on. Our social security system traps families in poverty and failing to help people find well-paid good jobs, training or development. The Conservative approach to social security is especially failing children, who are too often the victims of cuts to welfare support. The SNP has failed to create a high-wage economy or effectively use the social security powers available to the Holyrood government, while a quarter of Scottish children grow up in poverty. The human cost of rising poverty is opportunity denied and talent never realised as children are held back from achieving their potential.

The Conservatives have also made it harder for many families to maintain a good balance between work and family life, with single parents hit particularly hard by rising bills and struggling to access work which fits around their caring responsibilities. Meanwhile, cuts to Universal Credit are pushing some of Britain's poorest families to the brink and inequalities among women, disabled people, LGBT+ people and Black, Asian and minority ethnic people are soaring. Women accounted for three fifths of the total rise in relative poverty in the first ten years of Conservative rule, leaving them brutally exposed to the cost of living crisis facing Britain today. The Conservatives have destroyed the dream of home ownership for many, standing by as the number of truly affordable homes plummeted by over 80%, and allowing 230,000 social homes to be lost. Homelessness has doubled under the Conservatives, and today over 100,000 children in the UK are homeless. The housing cladding scandal is a constant worry for thousands of home leaseholders, but the Conservatives and the SNP are completely failing to address it.

Many services that families rely on have also been dismantled under the Conservatives. Almost 1,300 children's centres have closed, youth services have collapsed and early intervention has been stripped back as budget cuts have forced councils to focus on statutory only provision. This is a false economy, storing up costly problems for the future rather than preventing them as they arise. The cost of an average full-time nursery place for a child under two has risen by approximately £1,500 over the last five years. The cost of afterschool care has risen faster than wages, with parents spending more on afterschool clubs than on the weekly food shop. Almost two thirds of parents report spending as much or more on childcare than on their rent or mortgage.

## **A STRONGER FUTURE FOR FAMILIES WITH LABOUR**

After twelve years of Conservative Government, life has got tougher for Britain's hard-working families. The next Labour Government will radically change this picture, because we are ambitious for every child and every family – and we know families cannot do everything alone. A Labour Government will celebrate and support families in all their diversity, not seek to pit them



against each other. By ensuring that all families have the support and services they need to thrive, we will make Britain the best place to grow up and the best place to grow old.

### *Childcare and early years*

That mission starts with helping every family to give every child the best start in life. The next Labour Government will extend statutory maternity leave and make sure that families are able to take advantage of it. We will also review the failed Shared Parental Leave system, with reforms to incentivise sharing of leave and tackle maternity and pregnancy discrimination. Labour's Children's Recovery Plan demonstrates our commitment to a childcare system that works from ages 1 – 11, with early learning and before- and afterschool activities for all coming out of the pandemic. Our plan would invest in early years, increasing the early years pupil premium more than four-fold to keep costs down and deliver high quality childcare to tackle the attainment gap which sees children eligible for free school meals arrive at school five months behind their peers in developmental terms. Through our plan, Labour wants all children to enjoy enriching experiences, from learning an instrument to playing in sports teams, and with breakfast and after-school clubs for every child, supporting parents with childcare around the school day.

The next Labour Government will back Britain's families with a plan to ensure all families have access to high quality, affordable and flexible childcare, which we know is vital to boosting women's participation in the labour market. Labour will work with parents, trade unions and providers to expand availability, bringing services to areas without sufficient childcare places and ensuring trained staff are available to deliver them. This will be our first steps towards an ambitious childcare offer supporting parents to work and enabling children to thrive, building a better future for families.

We understand that the early years and childcare profession must be better recognised and rewarded for the skilled work they are doing to deliver this ambition. That is why Labour will work with unions and providers to improve employment standards and support for those working throughout the sector to attract and retain staff. And we will learn from the legacy of early intervention through Sure Start, by working with local authorities and early years providers to identify and get help to the families who need extra support, to ensure every child gets the best start in life. Early intervention is also key to identifying families who are struggling and getting them the support they need to keep families together and ensure children are well looked after.

### *Housing*

Strong local communities are built on the back of families having a secure and stable home, not being forced to repeatedly uproot on the whims of landlords or due to escalating prices. That is why the next Labour Government will deliver a new housing settlement, rebalancing power between developers and communities, ensuring local councils can deliver the affordable housing their communities need. Labour will create a new definition of affordable homes pegged to local incomes, close the loopholes that let developers wriggle out of commitments and introduce tough new powers so councils can develop more land for affordable housing.

With one million families on the waiting list and growing, Labour is committed to ensuring that more council homes are built in every part of the country that provide secure, genuinely affordable tenancies and will further boost communities through the skills, apprenticeships and

jobs created to build these homes. Labour recognises the challenges councils face in delivering these vital services, and will work with them to address these.

Since 2010, one million more families have entered the private rented sector, with too many stuck in homes with insecure contracts, sub-standard conditions and facing unaffordable rent increases. Labour is calling for emergency legislation to end no fault evictions now and will look at further measures to support private tenants with unsustainable rent costs and give people more power in their own home.

### *Social security*

Under the Conservatives, our threadbare social security system is failing, deepening poverty and inequality and undermining our economic security. In-work poverty continues to increase, and existing inequalities have been magnified by deliberate Conservative political choices. Labour would overhaul this unfair and punitive system that leaves families struggling with housing costs and childcare costs, undermining any attempt to support them into employment. The Universal Credit system forces those in need to wait five weeks for an initial payment, wilfully pushing people into debt, while the two-child limit punishes children. The lack of fairness in supporting struggling families with housing and childcare costs undermines attempts to help people find employment.

Labour will avoid the mistakes of the Conservative Government and fundamentally reform the social security system to treat all people with dignity, care and respect. The last Labour Government lifted over a million pensioners and over a million children out of poverty. The next will tackle chronic low pay and build a social security system that tackles poverty, makes work pay and provides security, working in tandem with Labour's New Deal for Working People. And every child will matter in Labour's social security reforms as we lead an assault on child poverty. Labour will tackle the level of hunger and poverty that the Conservatives have overseen.

Rising child poverty is a chronic injustice that scars society. Under the Conservatives it is no accident – but a consequence of punitive decisions to cut social security and penalise families, and their failure to tackle insecure work and poverty pay. Today 3.9 million children are growing up in poverty and 500,000 children go to bed every night without an adequate bed to sleep in. The human cost of rising poverty is opportunity denied and talent never realised for far too many children.

The Conservatives have created a fragmented, disjointed system of employment support that is more focused on sanctions than support. Labour will create a reformed modern employment support system that is genuinely supportive to help people back into employment, overhauling the punitive features that strip away dignity and trap people in a cycle of low pay, insecurity and poverty. We will provide a reliable safety net for people who lose their jobs or who cannot work due to ill health or disability and will replace the current system of work capability assessments with a system that supports people to live with security. We will also fix out of work support so that it provides a path to good, secure and well-paid work that matches the skills and experience of workers, opening up opportunity and spreading prosperity fairly. And we will address ageism in the workplace, including the lack of flexibility and understanding of caring responsibilities and health conditions that has left 300,000 people aged 50-64 out of work and looking for a job.

A good pension should be considered a wage for retirement, but the Conservatives have broken their promise to pensioners by breaking the triple lock and imposing the biggest real terms cut



to the pension for fifty years. Labour will continue to fight the government to ensure they do not break the triple lock again. Labour believes that older people and retirees deserve security and dignity in retirement, so we will implement a strategy for ageing well, including covering those approaching pension age. We will do the right thing and return what is due back to miners after the Conservative Government's appalling refusal to act on its own promise and right an historic wrong on the Mineworkers Pension Scheme. We also want further partnership between employers and workers, based on shared responsibilities to make pensions contributions and plan for retirement, so that people can build up meaningful pension pots to provide financial security in retirement, including low earners who do not currently qualify, younger workers and the self-employed. This will be especially important for those younger working-age adults hit hard by the cost of living crisis, who are struggling to save enough for their retirement despite the success of the auto-enrolment scheme brought in by the last Labour Government.

### *Equalities*

Labour supports Britain's families in all their diversity. The last Labour Government did more to advance the cause of equality than any other in British history, and the next will build on that proud legacy to make Britain a more equal place for everyone. We will start by equality impact assessing every major fiscal event as part of a comprehensive approach to tackling inequality across government. We will protect and uphold the Equality Act and enact its socio-economic duty to make government and the public sector focus on delivering better outcomes for those on lower incomes and make narrowing and eliminating inequality a priority. We will make hatred against women a hate crime, tackle racism at source with a new Race Equality Act and produce policies in partnership with disabled people.

We will modernise the law on gender recognition while continuing to support the implementation of the Equality Act, including its provision for single-sex exemptions, and ending discrimination against trans people. We will ban all forms of conversion therapy outright and immediately, including trans conversion therapy. And in everything we do to build a more equal Britain, we will be guided in government by our experience that greater progress and equality comes from bringing people together, treating each other with respect, and understanding we have more in common than that which divides us.

## **CONCLUSION**

The way Britain's families responded to the pandemic showed they will move heaven and earth to support one another. But after twelve years of attacks on their finances from the Conservatives, many of Britain's hard-working families are at breaking point. They need a government that is on their side when things get tough, not one that pinches their pockets. They need a government that will build a future where families come first, in all of their wonderful diversity. A government that understands people want to spend more time with their families doing the things they love. A government determined to help them be happy in their homes, with a decent balance between work and family life, and confident that they will have the support they need at every stage of life. Our friends and family are what keep us going – they are our inspiration in the good times and our comfort in the bad. But currently too many families are struggling under the Conservatives. Only a Labour Government can change that.

# STRONGER TOGETHER

For Britain in the world



## INTRODUCTION

We are living in an age of authoritarians, where the values of freedom, equality and democracy that Britain stands for are under attack. After years of distraction and insularity under the Conservatives, only Labour can re-establish Britain's leadership, reaffirm the values we share, and restore our commitment to the international institutions that spread them. A Labour Government will rebuild Britain's relationships and restore our leadership on the global stage. We believe the UK is a greater force for good in the world when we work together with our allies and partners to tackle the global challenges we face. Acting with integrity, consistency and an ambitious vision for the future, we will deliver security and prosperity for the British public and make the world a better place.

With Britain increasingly isolated in an uncertain world, we will restore our nation's international standing by being a reliable partner and resolute ally. Strong defence through NATO is the cornerstone of our security, and Labour's commitment to NATO is unshakeable. We believe in multilateralism and will use our position in international institutions like the UN to keep Britain safe and make the world more secure and peaceful. We are proud of the men and women who serve in our Armed Forces, they are respected world-wide for their all-round excellence, and they will be at the heart of our defence plans. We are the party of sovereign defence capability: we see steel, shipbuilding, aerospace, materials, and new technologies as strategic national industries – and would seek to secure their future in the UK. We want to see, for the good of our country and our role in the world, more designed and built in Britain.

Labour will make Brexit work and ensure Britain flourishes outside the EU. That takes statecraft, diligence and graft – not the endless squabbles with our closest neighbours that we have seen from the Conservatives, or the threats of separation and game-playing from the SNP. Labour would negotiate a new pact on security with our European partners rooted in mutual respect, shared values and common interests. Labour will work with business to together carry out a transparent and honest analysis of all the holes in the Prime Minister's deal. We will work out how we can fill them fast, without the risk of trade wars during a cost of living crisis, without erecting further barriers to co-operation with our allies, and without the need for even more years of painful negotiations. We will seek to strike trade deals around the world that prioritise jobs, businesses and livelihoods. And we will promote Labour values around the world: human rights; workers' rights; trade union freedom; protecting our environment and the highest standards for consumers. Labour's progressive trade policy will deliver for all.

Britain's record on international development once gave hope to our allies and partners in the fight for a better world. With Labour in government, it will do so again. We will restore Britain's leadership in international development by recommitting to 0.7 per cent and restoring development expertise, with a focus on addressing the climate crisis, poverty, conflict and inequality. We will stand up for Britain's interests and defend our values, knowing that we can best serve the former by being true to the latter.

## TWELVE YEARS OF CONSERVATIVE FAILURE

Labour wants Britain to be a force for good in the world: effective, influential and respected internationally, so that we can tackle the global challenges we face, protect our security and promote our values. But twelve years of strategic errors and diplomatic blunders in British foreign policy by the Conservative Government have left the UK more isolated than ever at a time of great challenges for our country and for the world. The disastrous management of the withdrawal from Afghanistan was a shameful chapter that highlighted the Conservatives' incompetence, poor planning and negligence towards security, abandoning to the Taliban people that the UK was duty-bound to protect. No Conservative minister had the courage to take responsibility for their failings.

Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine is a turning point for Europe. It also demonstrates that many of the Conservatives' strategic assumptions about foreign policy were false. The Conservative Government's Integrated Review wrongly de-prioritised European security to focus on more distant regions around the world. The shocking images of war in our own continent demonstrate the importance of geography in our foreign policy and are a reminder of the centrality of NATO to our collective security. Today's war in Europe follows a decade of decline under the Conservatives that has weakened the foundations of our Armed Forces and our defence manufacturing base. The Army is its smallest size in 300 years, one in five ships have been cut from our surface fleet since 2010, and the RAF has had 200 planes taken out of service in the last five years. Ministers plan to cut a further 10,000 soldiers from the British Army over the next three years. Over £15 billion in taxpayers' money spent on defence has been wasted since 2010 and no major defence project is on time or on budget. Ministers are failing British troops and British taxpayers.

But while the Conservatives have been running down our Armed Forces, they have spent years cosyng up to Russian oligarchs, allowing their dirty money to pollute the UK economy, our politics and institutions. It is inexcusable that the government still has not acted in full on the recommendations of the Russia Report, or fixed Companies House which allows oligarchs to shield their ill-gotten gains. In addition, China's rise is increasingly reshaping global affairs and the world economy while new technologies continue to transform business, communications and trade. Instead of outlining a clear strategy to respond to the challenges this creates, Conservative ministers are divided, leading to an inconsistent approach and a government that has turned a blind eye to human rights and national security concerns.

When it comes to our near neighbours, Britain has left the EU and we will make Brexit work. But the Conservatives are still locked in confrontation with the EU, trying to unpick the deal they negotiated and unable to set a clear post-Brexit path for Britain so we can address the biggest challenges we face. The needlessly confrontational approach to leaving the EU has damaged the UK's standing with major European allies, straining relationships that must now be rebuilt. Britain's reputation has also been damaged by the government's willingness to break international law. Other countries may hesitate to sign deals with Britain if they don't think we can be trusted to keep our end of the bargain. Britain should be a country that keeps its word and under Labour it will.

The climate crisis is accelerating and represents the gravest long-term threat we face. There is an urgent need for greater international action in this crucial decade if we are to prevent the worst consequences of global heating, which could cause irreparable damage to ecosystems and more frequent and intense natural disasters, exacerbate inequality, create more climate refugees and drive new conflicts around the world. Yet instead of investing in homegrown



forms of wind, solar, tidal, hydrogen and nuclear power to secure Britain's energy supplies for the long term, the Conservatives have relied on fossil fuel dictators around the world.

The British state was woefully unprepared for the Covid-19 pandemic, which we are still emerging from. It has highlighted the need for greater pandemic preparedness in government to face future threats and leadership that is able to respond to urgent global crises. But the government has slashed the aid budget, abandoning its manifesto pledge to spend 0.7 per cent of GNI on development, hurting the poorest in the world, costing lives, and damaging the UK's reputation. Two years of disastrous cuts and the mismanaged merger of DFID and the Foreign Office has left the new FCDO less than the sum of its parts. Poverty and inequality remain widespread, and the world is facing a rapidly worsening food crisis. Now the Conservative Government is retreating from global cooperation when humanitarian need is soaring, prioritising narrow, short-sighted interests over long-term goals to eradicate poverty, tackle the climate crisis, strengthen global health and prevent conflict.

## **A STRONGER FUTURE FOR BRITAIN IN THE WORLD WITH LABOUR**

After years of Conservative failure, our country deserves a government that will deliver international policy to make the British people proud – not only because this will make the UK more prosperous and secure, but because it is the right course of action to take. A Labour Government will rebuild Britain's relationships and restore our leadership on the global stage to deliver security and prosperity for the British public and make the world a better place – and this is how we will do it.

### *Foreign policy*

Labour is and has always been an internationalist party. We know that to keep Britain safe, to tackle global challenges and build a more secure and sustainable world we need to work together with our international partners. Labour will make Brexit work – and part of this is having a foreign and defence policy driven by our internationalist traditions. This means forging alliances, rebuilding relationships and being a reliable and trustworthy ally to our friends in Europe, the United States and beyond. We will rebuild relationships damaged by Boris Johnson's clumsy diplomacy, seeking to deepen ties across Asia, and the Middle East, in support of human rights, democracy, and security.

We will invest in relationships across Africa, working together on global challenges like the climate crisis, economic development, health and education and ensuring respect for human rights.

China's rise is having a profound impact on world affairs. Labour will take a strong, clear-eyed and consistent approach to China. We are deeply concerned by the atrocities against the Uighur and the dismantling of democracy in Hong Kong. We will work with our allies and partners to stand firm in defence of human rights, freedom and security while seeking to engage where we can and it is in our interests to do so, in areas like climate change and global health.

India is an important partner and we would seek a partnership rooted in democratic values while building economic ties that place workers, jobs and wages at the centre. We remain committed to supporting human rights and a lasting settlement to the Kashmir conflict, which we believe will only be achieved by India and Pakistan working together, with the people of Kashmir.

On the subject of other critical global conflicts, Labour believes that there must be a negotiated, diplomatic settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on two states: a safe and secure



Israel, alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state, which a Labour Government would immediately recognise. There will not be a just and lasting peace until the occupation is brought to a permanent end, security threats are addressed, and both Palestinians and Israelis enjoy security, dignity and human rights.

Finally, the war in Ukraine is a reminder of the dangers of depending on autocrats for our energy security. We must sprint towards decarbonisation and end our dependence on fossil fuel imports. Under Labour, Britain would play a leading role in global climate diplomacy in this decisive decade, supporting vulnerable states, pressuring the biggest polluters and mobilising the private sector for action.

### *Defence*

Labour's commitment to NATO is unshakeable and we would give the highest priority to security in Europe, North Atlantic and the Arctic. We would secure Britain's place in the Alliance as the leading European nation to anticipate areas of future Russian aggression, to respond as the Arctic opens up, and to settle the Alliance's relationship with the EU.

Labour's support for our UK nuclear deterrent is also non-negotiable. It provides deterrent protection to our NATO allies, as well as the UK. As a P5 UN Security Council member, we want to see Britain doing more to lead efforts to secure strategic arms limitation; multilateral disarmament, including with new technologies; and new rules to govern conflict in space.

We believe that Britain should be leading the debate about the future of European security. A Labour Government would negotiate a new pact on security with our European partners rooted in mutual respect, shared values and common interests. We will be focused on new threats as well as traditional ones, ensuring we defend our democracy from foreign interference and do not allow our critical national infrastructure to be casually sold off to authoritarian governments.

Our Armed Forces in all their forms remain critical as we respond to different types of international instability. Ministers should halt cuts to the British Army and we would work to build an Armed Forces fit for a world with increasing and diversifying threats. We would back veterans by fully incorporating the Armed Forces Covenant into law, boosting mental health support and scrapping visa fees for non-UK veterans and their dependents who have served in our British Forces for four years.

Labour's determination to see British investment directed first to British industry is fundamental, not just to our thinking on defence industrial policy, but to our vision of the kind of society we want to build. When done well, and as the Party of working people and trade unions, we see spending on defence as a force for good and for job creation in our country. It strengthens our UK economy, sovereignty and security. We would adopt a 'British-built by default' approach to defence procurement, including for Fleet Solid Support Ships, intended to boost manufacturing within the UK supply chain. Labour would also make the Ministry of Defence the first department subject to its new Office for Value for Money's tough spending regime, and commission the NAO to conduct a comprehensive audit of Ministry of Defence waste.

### *International development*

Britain's record on international development once gave hope to our allies and partners in fighting for a better world. With Labour in government, it will do so again. We will restore international development expertise and recommit to the 0.7 per cent aid target. This will allow

the UK to once again play a leading role in tackling humanitarian crises, poverty, food insecurity, conflict, the climate crisis as well as promoting women's rights, workers' rights, decent work and the important role of public services in sustainable development. Labour will deliver an ambitious development strategy to meet the challenges and threats we face around the world. We will use the universal sustainable development goals as the basis for rebuilding partnerships of mutual respect in Africa and around the world. We will be strong supporters of multilateral organisations, particularly the UN. And Labour will also focus on achieving gender equality, by having the first international feminist development policy. Adopting the principle of 'leaving no-one behind', we will enact a development policy Britons can be proud of, sharing our values around the globe through our world-class institutions such as the BBC World Service and the British Council.

### *International trade*

Labour will support British exporters, and engage with businesses, trade unions, and civil society about their priorities in international trade. We will ensure unions are empowered to play an active role in future trade talks, using their ideas and expertise to improve the benefits that each deal delivers for jobs and growth across the UK. We will promote trade, build partnerships and strike deals that deliver jobs and opportunity at home and support prosperity and fairness around the world. Under a Labour we would prioritise safeguarding jobs in all trade deals, as part of our worker centred approach to trade. While also seek to advance the cause of workers' rights internationally.

We will put workers at the centre of our approach, championing labour standards in supply chains and securing commitments on action on the climate crisis. Labour will safeguard public services in all trade deals and under a Labour government our NHS will never be on the table.

Our exporters have faced greater challenges post-Brexit, but the Conservatives have done nothing to help them. This has led to added costs, and in some cases lost contracts and missed opportunities. Labour will make Brexit work and fix some of the holes in the government's deal with the European Union. For example, we will negotiate a bespoke Veterinary Agreement to reduce red tape for animal and agricultural products, provide more ability for our world-leading creative sectors to tour and perform and ensure mutual recognition of qualifications which is important for a number of exporting service sectors. We would aim to maintain Britain's data adequacy status to support trade in digital services. We would negotiate an improved long-term deal for UK hauliers to ease the supply chain problems that are holding us back. We would secure association to the Horizon funding programme, so we restore our leading role in scientific collaboration. Labour is committed to buy, make and sell more in Britain, and we will lead in the WTO to enable re-shoring of jobs and supply chains.

Labour will create a trade policy we can all be proud of, and a robust system of parliamentary scrutiny to assess it. We will introduce an Act of Parliament so companies have a duty to eliminate forced labour from supply chains and public services and block the products of modern slavery – from Xinjiang and elsewhere – reaching Britain's shelves. Finally, Labour has repeatedly highlighted the weaknesses in the UK's arms export regime that the government has failed to address. A Labour Government would establish a new arms export regime that is truly transparent, free from arbitrary political judgements and committed to upholding international law.

## **CONCLUSION**

After twelve years of the Conservatives, Labour wants our country to be self-confident on the global stage, acting with integrity, courage and consistency to deliver for the people of Britain while making our world safer. In an uncertain world, we must always be a reliable partner and resolute ally, working to keep Britain safe and make the world more secure. We need to strike trade deals and build partnerships that deliver jobs and opportunity at home and support prosperity and fairness around the world. We must be steadfast champions for democracy and human rights, and lead by example in tackling the climate crisis.

The courageous response of Ukraine and its formidable leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy to Vladimir Putin's illegal and barbaric invasion this year is an urgent reminder of the importance of preserving our democratic values. That is why the next Labour Government will reaffirm our commitment to human rights, democracy and the rule of law, strengthen the international institutions that spread them and give hope to our nations once again.







