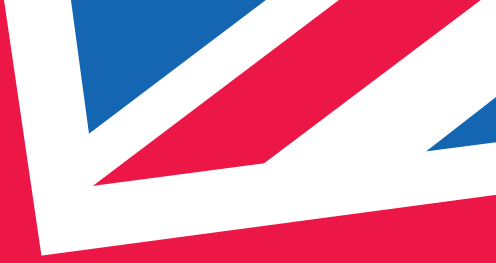


# POWER AND PARTNERSHIP: LABOUR'S PLAN TO POWER UP BRITAIN



# Foreword



The British people deserve an economy that works for the whole country, with control over the things that matter to them. It is obvious for anyone willing to look that regional inequality is hurting people in their pockets, holding our economy back and embedding insecurity into our way of life. It is no surprise that the Conservatives latched onto the desire to see regional inequalities addressed in 2019 with 'Levelling Up'.

But as soon as they counted their votes, the Tories turned their backs. No serious plan was ever pursued to address regional inequality and their economic incompetence threw Britain into a recession and a cost-of-living crisis, with working people forced to pick up the pieces. Today in Tory Britain, our country is more divided than ever, living standards are stagnating and the foundations of a good life are crumbling. The Tories' 'Levelling Up' facade has been exposed as a sham and a scam.

Turning the tide on the deep inequalities within our country was always going to be a tough task and the Tories are too distracted, too divided and too incompetent to take it on. But more fundamentally, this Conservative government has no interest in delivering for working people – they are in the business of servicing vested interests, whether buckling to their backbenchers' every will or doling contracts out to their friends and cronies.

So instead, the Tories went for a cheap fix. In England they have hoarded power at the centre, pitting towns and cities against each other, making them waste millions of pounds bidding for their own money back. This approach has failed. So-called 'shovel-ready' projects haven't even started, their planning reforms have blocked necessary infrastructure and are reducing housebuilding, and communities are left waiting

for the change they were promised. The Tories' sticking plaster politics has failed.

In relation to the devolved governments of Scotland and Wales, the Tories have chosen cheap political arguments over respect and partnership-building. They have ridden roughshod over devolution arrangements and conventions, weakened relations and harmed opportunities to cooperate on the common challenges we face. In the case of Northern Ireland they withheld fair funding. A Labour government would work with the devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as we all seek to improve public services and generate economic growth.

We grew up in different ends of the country and in different times, but we endured the same insecurity and hardship that so many working people face, whether that's coming home from school to a cold and crowded house, or having the phone cut off while struggling to make ends meet. Like millions of people up and down the country, both our families faced the constant pressure of not quite having enough to get by.

What did keep us afloat, was the bedrock of a secure roof over our heads and a strong sense of aspiration that we could get on, and that things would get better. That's stayed with us, and it's what drives us both in leading the Labour Party today.

But thanks to Tory austerity and economic vandalism, we have a low-growth, high-tax economy that no longer works for most people or most places. People are living to work, not working to live. The Conservatives have taken a sledgehammer to the foundations of a good life so that working hard and grafting no longer guarantees a decent income, a secure home,

or a good quality of life. Wealth and assets have ballooned for those at the very top, while wages for the average worker have stagnated.

Where you are born still dictates where you end up. People from Blackpool have a life expectancy of 10 years less than those in Westminster. Now, instead of breaking the link, the Tories have cemented it. The places and people that once built our great country have been pushed aside. They get nothing but the crumbs from the table – and are told to be grateful for it.

There is much to give us optimism. Over the past 14 years, despite the chaos and crisis in Westminster, there has been another Britain persisting in hope. A Britain of working people building a better future for their loved ones and communities. A Britain bursting with ambition and potential, full of high skilled workers, leading universities and world-class businesses. Now it's time to match their ambition and their potential with action.

We know that with real leadership this phase of insecurity, inequality and stagnation can pass. For more than a decade, the last Labour government offered stability in politics and delivered sustained economic growth. We pioneered the first wave of devolution and invested in our communities. That's the spirit in which our Labour leaders, mayors, and councils are delivering for their communities across the country right now: whether that's Steve Rotherham's hydrogen buses or Sadiq Khan's council homes.

Despite these successes, Conservative mismanagement in Westminster has left towns and cities outside of London and its surrounding areas adrift, and without all the tools they need to thrive. Their piecemeal, sticking plaster 'Levelling Up' is woefully inadequate for the scale of the task and is costing working people.

We are calling time on fourteen years of managed decline with a plan to tackle regional inequality and release Britain's untapped strengths. Our plan is built on three fundamental reforms to the way our economy works – that communities must be empowered to truly unlock their potential; that you need an active centre of government to reap the benefits of scale; and that this can only be achieved through strong partnership between Westminster, local leaders and the private sector.

These are not easy fixes. They require long-term vision and stability – something sorely lacking from the government's current approach. But the rewards of doing this are too great to ignore.

**Growth in every corner of the country**, so that every town, village and city has a role to play, and can reap the rewards of a decade of national renewal.

**More money in people's pockets**, improving living standards everywhere and helping working people keep more of the wealth that they create.

**And people taking back control of what matters to them** in their lives and their communities: from decent access to public services and thriving high streets to the basic promise that their children's opportunities will not be determined by where they grew up.

You can believe that Labour is committed to these aims because they are in our DNA. For over a century it has been a goal of every Labour Prime Minister to rebuild our economy hand in hand with local leaders, making sure working people aren't left behind in the process.

Our plan for power and partnership will turn a page on 14 years of Tory failure, drive growth everywhere, and make sure everyone – in every part of the country – is better off.



**Keir Starmer**,  
Leader of the  
Labour Party

**Angela Rayner**,  
Deputy Leader of the Labour  
Party and Shadow Secretary  
of State for Levelling Up,  
Housing and Communities

# The challenge we face

The country's economy is being held back by poor regional growth. The productivity of England's major towns and cities lag far behind London and its surrounding areas, and the gap is widening. Working people are paying the price through lower wages, stagnating living standards and higher taxes. We are failing to make use of the untapped strengths we see in towns and cities across the country.

In England, too much power remains hoarded in Westminster, while the centre of government does not have the structures it needs to play an active role in the economy and partner with local and sub-regional government. This has led to decades of missed opportunities, with government bouncing between 'place blind' policymaking and targeted interventions that all too often ignore high potential but lower productivity areas.

City regions across the Midlands and North, including the West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region or West Yorkshire already have the most important and hard to get ingredients – skilled workers, a strong business culture and cutting-edge universities – to become some of the richest places in Western Europe. It is a policy failure that, despite those untapped strengths, they are not.

Even places traditionally seen as winners like London and its surrounding areas are home to extremely high levels of deprivation and low pay. Wages, disposable incomes and living standards are held down by the exorbitant cost of living. It is not enough to redistribute from the winners of globalisation and give to everyone else.

But we know it doesn't have to be like this. Comparable countries that benefit from locally-led industrial policy and strong regional institutions have higher productivity. Smaller, highly productive cities power the German economy. Paris is just 26 per cent more productive than Lyon, whereas London is 41 per cent more productive than Manchester.<sup>1</sup>

By improving the productivity of our major towns and cities outside of London to the same levels as our international counterparts, we could grow the UK economy by between £38-55 billion<sup>2</sup>. To do this means tackling fundamental structural weaknesses in our economy.

It is no coincidence that Britain today has one of the most centralised political systems in the world and some of the highest levels of geographic inequality. **Westminster does not have – and cannot have – the local knowledge, capacity or flexibility needed to take advantage of every opportunity available in every place.** Different areas have different challenges, and that means local leaders like metro mayors are often best placed to make decisions over priorities and competing resources. And on many cases, it is local leaders like metro mayors who are best placed to be active and strategic players in their local economies, tailoring policies to need, integrating services, taking advantage of skills bases and plugging skills gaps, building strong partnerships across public and private sectors, and ultimately driving economic growth in their area.

However, overcentralisation is not the sole problem. **Despite hoarding the levers of power, our centre remains passive in the face of huge**

<sup>1</sup> Resolution Foundation, *Ending Stagnation*.

<sup>2</sup> House of Commons Library Research based on Labour Party assumptions; N Weinberg, D Turner, A Stansbury, E Elden, E Balls, *A Growth Policy to Close Britain's Regional Divides: What Needs to be Done*.

**national challenges.** National, local, and regional economies have been held back by the lack of any active UK industrial strategy to capitalise on our comparative advantages and provide long-term stability for local economies. A race to the bottom on working conditions has harmed security, pay and productivity throughout the UK. Our sclerotic planning system has left England unable to build the infrastructure and homes it needs; and endless Conservative chaos has undermined certainty and investment across the country.

**Finally, this government does not treat the partnership across and between layers of government, nor between the public and private sector, with the seriousness it deserves.**

They are paralysed by political instability, chronic short-termism and a culture that fundamentally doesn't believe devolved governments and local leaders should be in the driving seat. Westminster is at once too imposing and too isolated, while devolved and local leaders are disregarded and robbed of crucial stability.

England's Mayors often hear about new projects – or the cancellation of existing projects – at the last minute. We are currently not able to effectively integrate local, regional and national transport systems. Decisions on housing developments or commercial space chop and change at a moment's notice. And the lack of a consistent economic strategy has undermined business confidence and investment.

We know we cannot fix regional inequality overnight. Successive governments have identified it as a driver of instability and a drag on growth, but our government remains centralised, passive and uncooperative. All too often, power sits in the wrong place or government fails to work with partners to deliver growth everywhere. We are more unequal and worse-off for it.

# The Tories have failed

The Conservatives' answer to regional inequality – their 'Levelling Up' agenda – has delivered next to nothing. The last fourteen years have seen communities worse-off, high streets hollowed-out and public services on their knees. This is no surprise. To deliver for every corner of the country requires hard work and a strategic long-term plan, but the Tories can't even get their own house in order.

In England, the Conservatives have hoarded power in Westminster, only ceding control through piecemeal one-off deals and doling out pots of money through wasteful 'Dragon's Den' style competitions. This approach has failed, with major projects stalled and delayed, and money funnelled from deprived communities to the richest places in Britain. Remarkably, Parliament's spending watchdog said the government could not provide 'any compelling examples of what had been delivered' and that just over 10 per cent of the funding provided has been actually spent.<sup>3</sup>

At the same time, the government has abdicated responsibility and plunged us into chaos, leaving communities and working people to bear the brunt of the Tories' economic failure. They lacked any serious commitment to an industrial strategy, they have done nothing to tackle job insecurity, stagnating pay and poor workplace productivity and they've failed to grasp the opportunities that can come from partnering with local leaders to join up local and national economic planning.

As a result of having no plan and no desire to fundamentally reform the way the economy works to release the untapped strengths of our country, the UK is now experiencing the longest period of economic stagnation in GDP per capita since the 1950s.<sup>4</sup> People are on average £10,200 worse off than if the economy had grown as it had under the last Labour government.<sup>5</sup> People in some areas such as Burnley, Glasgow, Cambridge and Milton Keynes have been hit even harder and are more than £20,000 worse-off than they would have been if it were not for lower local growth.<sup>6</sup>

That failure hasn't only manifested itself in our economy. Low growth and high inequality are a toxic combination for living standards, health and life chances. Someone who grew up receiving free school meals earns just over half as much as their better-off peers by age 28.<sup>7</sup> The Resolution Foundation forecasts that child poverty will worsen,<sup>8</sup> and we have seen particular rises in poverty for children in the North East, Midlands and North West in recent years.<sup>9</sup>

Regional inequality is not a new phenomenon, but it is neither inevitable nor necessary at the scale we experience it. The Conservatives have let our country grow apart and their failed 'Levelling Up' approach has simply not delivered on its promise.

<sup>3</sup> Public Accounts Committee, *Levelling up funding to local government*.

<sup>4</sup> Resolution Foundation, *UK falls into recession, and a far deeper living standards downturn*.

<sup>5</sup> Centre for Cities, *Cities Outlook 2024*.

<sup>6</sup> Centre for Cities, *Cities Outlook 2024*.

<sup>7</sup> Labour Party, *Breaking down the barriers to opportunity*.

<sup>8</sup> Resolution Foundation, *Living Standards Outlook 2023*.

<sup>9</sup> Action for Children, *Where is child poverty increasing in the UK?*

# Labour's plan to power up Britain



Labour has a long-term plan to get Britain's future back and take advantage of the potential we see everywhere in the country. We believe that Mission Driven Government will provide the driving sense of purpose the country needs and is the best way to restoring a sense of pride, purpose and hope.

The first of Labour's five missions is to secure the highest sustained growth in the G7 – with good jobs and productivity growth in every part of the country making everyone, not just a few, better off. If we are going to achieve this we must tackle the country's stubborn gaps in regional productivity, so that prosperity is broadly created and broadly shared.

The key to Britain's success lies in 'clusters' – bringing together skills and infrastructure to attract and build strong, regionally based industries and take advantage of local specialisms.

Agglomeration economies are hugely significant for our success as a modern economy, with thriving high-value services and a strong industrial base. Agglomeration effects are a result of knowledge spillovers, strong customer-supplier links, and businesses and workers competing and cooperating, sharing ideas and learning from one another.

To gain the benefits of agglomeration requires business to have access to deep labour markets, which occur where areas host a pool of skilled workers who can take advantage of good homes, reliable transport links, strong public services, and have exciting cultural offers to share ideas and knowledge.

England's major cities have large populations and highly skilled workforces, with access to world-class universities, but are less dense, less well connected and less well equipped to take advantage of their

strengths and the benefits of agglomeration that make high-wage, modern economies function. They are also not sufficiently supported by coherent and joined up local and national industrial strategy aimed at cultivating local specialisms.

Outside of our major city regions, England's growth is constrained because other high-potential and high-productivity towns and cities are locked out of the frameworks they need to succeed. This problem is widespread – nine of England's 25 largest urban areas have no devolution settlement in place, with many more smaller towns and cities also left without the tools they need to grow.<sup>10</sup>

As a result, major cities like Leicester, Portsmouth and Stoke on Trent, and several of our most high productivity towns like Basildon, Milton Keynes and Swindon, do not yet have the institutional frameworks they need to take on new powers, tailor local labour market policies or work with their neighbouring local authorities to deliver sustainable growth and cement their economic strengths.

## 1. EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO POWER UP BRITAIN

If we want to turbocharge existing and emergent clusters in England's major cities, we cannot hold too many levers at the centre, where decision-makers are inevitably constrained by a lack of local knowledge and the time, focus and capacity to drive growth according to local industrial strengths.

Local and sub-regional decision-makers often possess better information about their local economies, and more developed capacity for working with local businesses and institutions. By giving local leaders a greater say, we can focus

<sup>10</sup> Institute for Government, *How should the next government complete the job of English devolution? Draft paper for discussion.*

policies at the scale at which people live and work and at which businesses specialise and form economic clusters.

We also should not make policy on a scale which is so local that it does not reflect people's working, commuting and social patterns – people often cross administrative borders every day as they go to work or head into their town centre. OECD research indicates that administrative fragmentation at a local level holds productivity back.<sup>11</sup>

By holding strategic decision-making over housing policy at a local authority level, for example, we are failing to seize the opportunity to build more homes in places where people need them to live and work.

We believe new combined authorities or devolution settlements should be tailored to functional economic areas. This is central to the economic promise of taking back control and will be necessary for local leaders to effectively deploy skills, transport, housing and other labour market policies and unlock new long-term, integrated funding settlements. By deepening devolution to city regions, we will make sure that the towns and cities that built the foundations of modern Britain are given the tools they need to thrive in the modern service and high-value manufacturing economy.

We will also reap the benefits of combining scale with local knowledge, joining up the power of an active state with the information available to local leaders. We will work to build up capacity in local and sub-regional government and we will deliver a new institutional framework for partnership working and joined-up decision-making.

## **2. AN ACTIVE CENTRE TO POWER UP BRITAIN**

National economic policymaking is necessary to reap the benefits of scale, like funding cutting edge research and development or delivering national infrastructure. It is also necessary to avoid a race to the bottom, such as over taxation policy or labour market regulation and to deliver the public services upon which good lives, fair societies and successful economies are built. With the right powers in the right places and an economic strategy that broadens the base and beneficiaries of growth, the centre of government can actively promote growth everywhere.

Labour's plan for growth includes action at a national scale to address the failures outlined in this document. This includes a plan to steam ahead in the industries of the future, with a modern UK

industrial strategy supported by tailored sector strategies and, in England, Local Growth Plans; strategic public investment via our National Wealth Fund across the United Kingdom; wholesale reform to England's system of planning for housing and infrastructure; and guaranteeing economic stability through our fiscal rules, fiscal lock and commitment to cap the headline rate of corporation tax.

Just as our plan will require local leaders to be active players, it will require a greater level of strategy and direction from national government. It will involve the reintroduction of mandatory local housing targets to get Britain building again, and the centre setting the strategic mandate for Great British Energy and it working alongside local leaders to deliver energy security everywhere in the country.

The proceeds of growth must be shared fairly with the working people that generate it. That is why our New Deal for Working People will make sure everyone across the United Kingdom can enjoy a decent wage and basic security. This will particularly benefit areas with a high proportion of workers in the everyday economy such as retail, hospitality, care, and other public services. These make up more than two thirds of all jobs in the North East, Yorkshire and the Humber and the South West.<sup>12</sup>

## **3. A PARTNERSHIP TO POWER UP BRITAIN**

Working in partnership – both with the private and civil society sectors, and also with local and devolved government – is at the heart of how we will deliver our five missions.

Labour will deepen co-operation with the devolved governments, because we can achieve more working in partnership across the country than ever we can on our own. Across the UK, people rightly expect their governments to work together and that is exactly the approach the next Labour government will take. We will work constructively with the devolved governments for the benefit of working people, developing new structures for intergovernmental working and deeper cooperation. We will work with the devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as we all seek to improve public services and generate economic growth.

Great British Energy will work with local and combined authorities to deliver our national clean energy mission. And we will work with combined authorities to integrate national, regional and local transport systems, helping to deepen and broaden

<sup>11</sup> R Ahrend, E Farchy, I Kaplanis and A Lembcke, *What Makes Cities More Productive? Evidence on the Role of Urban Governance from Five OECD Countries*.

<sup>12</sup> *New Economics Foundation, Closing the Divide*.



our skilled labour market clusters and promote economic growth.

As part of our commitment to partnership working, a Labour government will also look at ways of deepening and enhancing cross-combined authority working on areas like industrial strategy, transport and energy that span across borders and benefit from collaboration and scale.

The benefits of deep, highly skilled labour markets are not confined to our largest cities. Rising productivity across the West Midlands and the M62 corridor will lead to improved infrastructure, greater opportunities and higher wages in Dudley, Bolton and Dewsbury. And areas outside of our major cities will have access to the tools they need to cement and foster their labour market clusters, from boosting cutting-edge tradable services and high-value manufacturing to supporting workers in the everyday economy. Empowering communities to release Britain's untapped strengths.



# 1. Empowering communities to release Britain's untapped strengths

## ENGLISH DEVOLUTION

- ▶ Turbocharge mayors with access to new powers over transport, skills, housing, planning, employment support and energy, supported by long-term integrated funding settlements..
- ▶ Work to expand devolution further and faster, with local authorities coming together to take on new powers to boost their economies.
- ▶ Roll out new Local Growth Plans so towns and cities take advantage of their economic potential and foster clusters of well-paid jobs.

Labour will give local leaders new powers over transport, skills, housing, planning, employment support and energy. We'll make long-term integrated funding settlements available to more places, if they can show exemplary frameworks for managing public money. Our approach will put the right powers in the right places so that local leaders in every town and city in England have the tools to grow their local economies and take advantage of their potential.

Westminster has failed to improve productivity and living standards outside of London and its surrounding areas. They do not have the knowledge of local industries, specialisms, challenges and opportunities needed to make good policy for local labour markets, and they do not have the incentives or capacity to dedicate their attention to growth in every corner of the country.

Labour will entrust power with local leaders, who know their area best and have skin in the game.

Our landmark Take Back Control Act will help to establish a new, clearer framework for English devolution, structures for local and national leaders to work better in partnership, and a presumption towards pushing powers outside of Westminster and into the hands of those who know how to put them to the best use.

Low productivity in towns and cities outside of London and its surrounding areas is not a result of inefficient businesses or unproductive workers, but because national policy has not prioritised their growth and local leaders have not had all the tools they need to invest in transport, deliver bespoke skills programmes or collaborate on strategic housing delivery.

As a result, England's major towns and cities have not been able to take advantage of agglomeration effects and make the most of existing and emergent labour market clusters. Labour will put new powers in the hands of our existing combined authorities to turbocharge growth in every part of the country.

Empowered local leaders like Andy Burnham and Tracy Brabin demonstrate the value of having a powerful champion for local interests. We believe that everywhere should have a voice in national debate and no place should be left behind by the opportunity to take back control.

A Labour government will ask all councils outside of an existing or agreed combined authority or county devolution deal to begin preparatory work to join together on sensible economic geographies and take on a new suite of powers through our enhanced devolution framework to benefit their residents. We will provide them with support and guidance to do so through the leadership of the Secretary of State and the expertise of the Department.

By widening devolution to every town and city in England, we will give local leaders the opportunity to work with local economic actors to better connect commercial and industrial land with labour markets, or to pursue niches in skills provision that benefit local industry. By doing so, these high-potential towns and cities will be able to work better across their functional economic area so that administrative boundaries do not get in the way of effective labour market policy where local people support it.

We will create a statutory obligation on all combined authorities and counties with devolution deals to develop a Local Growth Plan based on those functional economic geographies which identifies economic clusters and sets out their plans to build on their local advantages, the key binding constraints of their local economies and how they will use the powers devolved from central government to support local growth.

Local Growth Plans will go with the grain of Labour's national industrial strategy, deliver for the everyday economy and mobilise local economic actors such as businesses, industry bodies, universities and colleges, and trade unions. A Labour government will base future industrial interventions on the contents of both national and local growth plans. By creating a new partnership between the local, sub-regional and national, Labour can deliver growth in every part of England.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Get councils back on their feet and doing the basics right with long-term funding and by ending wasteful competitive bidding.
- Create a new partnership between central and local government, providing capacity support to those that want it and cutting costs through prevention.
- Ensure good value for money by embedding transparency and high standards into our partnership, and fixing the broken audit system.

Any strategy to release Britain's untapped strengths rests on the foundations of local government. Councils are the building blocks of our communities, delivering the public services that give people control over their lives – from social care and children's services to housing and high streets.

Over the last fourteen years, councils of all political stripes have been left shelling out millions to plaster over the government's mismanagement. From the eye-watering cost of temporary accommodation to the millions of taxpayer's cash spent on asylum hotels, money is being haemorrhaged treating the symptoms of Tory incompetence. Rishi Sunak himself boasted of funnelling money away from communities in need to the wealthiest places in England.

We know that we will not be able to make good on our missions without strong local government, and we are under no illusions about the scale of the pressures local government are facing after 14 years of Tory failure. At the same time, the government ripped away any financial oversight of local council spending, scrapping the Audit Commission and pushing councils to borrow more and more. This reckless approach has left the government blind, with no early warning system in place to sound the alarm when a council is struggling.

With the council tax bill in England set to double since Labour was last in power, any blame for a rise in council tax lies squarely with this Conservative government. They are the biggest obstacle to resolving this crisis.

Labour will get local government back on its feet and doing the basics right. We will give communities the security they need and get councils doing what they do best – delivering for local people, not fighting fires of the government's making or becoming speculative investors.

We are under no illusions about the scale of this task. It will be a long, hard slog to rebuild local government from the ground up so they can deliver the services taxpayers deserve. A Labour government will ask a lot of councils. But in return, we will create a new partnership with local government, based on mutual respect, transparency and value for money. We will:

- **Provide longer-term funding settlements** for councils, giving them the certainty they need to deliver better value for money.
- **Review the timing of cross-government funding announcements**, so local leaders can join up local services and budget more effectively.
- **Make good on the government's stalled investment projects and then bring an end to wasteful competitive bidding** and a 'begging bowl culture' that has cost councils millions in failed bids alone.<sup>13</sup>

- **Use central government to cut costs for local authorities** and free up resources for prevention, for example by ending Section 21 ‘no fault evictions’ that create huge temporary accommodation pressures on councils.
- **Embed transparency and value for money at the heart of our partnership**, reforming our broken local audit system and ensuring high standards of conduct for all councillors.

## HIGH STREETS

- Support local businesses by stamping out late payments and replacing business rates with a better, fairer system.
- Give communities the power to revamp empty shops, pubs and community spaces with a strong new Community Right to Buy.
- Tackle the blight of crime and anti-social behaviour by getting 13,000 more neighbourhood police and PCSOs back on our streets.

Labour has a comprehensive and costed plan to grow every corner of our country and release Britain’s untapped strengths. A Labour government will deliver higher growth and more money in people’s pockets, but it will also give people a greater control over the things that matter to them. A successful local economy will help high streets thrive, and Labour will give communities the tools to make the most of these opportunities. Labour mayors are already at work – in recent years, Andy Burnham and Bev Craig have made huge progress revitalising Manchester’s city centre.

Town and city centres are an untapped strength of our economy. Our high streets once represented the melting pots of local communities, and provided growth, jobs and opportunities. Yet today the paint is peeling, the pavements are cracking, and people just aren’t getting what they want when they visit. No one is asking for a return to the past, but towns and cities should expect that a Labour government will work with business and local leaders to give them a brighter future.

That’s why Labour will support local businesses to revitalise high streets by stamping out the scourge of late payments and replacing business rates with a system of business property taxation that rebalances the burden and levels the playing field between local retailers and online giants. We will also roll out banking hubs to guarantee face-to-face banking in every community, boosting local high streets and shops.

We will give local people the power to revamp empty shops, pubs and community spaces with a strong new Community Right to Buy. People won’t visit high streets blighted by unsightly boarded up shops, or stand by as beloved community assets are gutted and sold off. Labour is committed to strengthening the power of community groups to act as custodians of our high streets, sporting institutions and local treasures.

People should feel safe when they go out to shop, eat or have fun on their local high street. Labour will tackle neighbourhood crime and antisocial behaviour by getting 13,000 more neighbourhood police and PCSOs back on our streets across England and Wales, and scrapping the Conservatives’ ridiculous £200 rule which stops shoplifting being investigated.



## 2. An active centre to power up Britain

### ECONOMIC STABILITY

- Stick to iron-clad fiscal rules to rebuild the bedrock of stability for family finances and business investment.
- Introduce a new fiscal lock to avoid a repeat of the Conservative's mini budget disaster which has left communities across the country worse-off.
- Ensure that every policy we have is fully costed and fully funded so that our plan to deliver growth everywhere is credible and deliverable.

For Labour, sound finances and economic stability are non-negotiable. We will never play fast and loose with the economy. Our plan to release Britain's untapped strengths, like all of our policies, is fully costed and fully funded. Stability is the most basic condition for economic security, international credibility and investment in all that the UK has to offer.

The mini budget showed the disastrous consequences of playing fast and loose with economic stability. The Conservatives crashed the economy, sending mortgage rates and the cost of borrowing soaring.

In January alone, almost 50,000 families in the North and over 30,000 in the Midlands came off fixed rate mortgages onto higher rates, paying a national average of £240 more every month.<sup>14</sup>

All but one of the top ten places most vulnerable to cost of living shocks are in the North and Midlands.<sup>15</sup>

Rising interest rates and the cost of living are also constraining regional economic policy. It has become significantly harder to get much needed capital investment into local areas due to rising costs.

The government cite high inflation as a reason that they have failed to deliver key investment projects, while local authorities have had to borrow 50-year capital loans at sky-high interest rates after the mini-budget.

The Conservatives have still not learned this lesson and are promising £46 billion of tax cuts – more than the mini budget – with no idea how they'll pay for them.

A Labour government will put an end to this continued risk to family finances, business investment and our regional economies. By sticking to tough fiscal rules and introducing a new fiscal lock, Labour will bring economic security back to family finances, bring stability to our national economy, avoid a repeat of the Conservatives' mini budget disaster and provide the stable foundations needed to rebalance and grow Britain's economy.

<sup>14</sup> Labour Party analysis of Financial Conduct Authority data.

<sup>15</sup> Centre for Progressive Policy, *Hard Up*.

## NEW DEAL FOR WORKING PEOPLE

- Make work pay by introducing a genuine living wage and strengthening sick pay, improving growth and living standards across the country.
- Create a broad base for growth which gives working people the security they need – including by banning exploitative zero hours contracts and ending fire and rehire.
- Give businesses stability and a level playing field by enforcing the law against unscrupulous companies undercutting good local employers.

Our New Deal for working people is a core part of our plan for growth and will ensure prosperity is built on a foundation of rising pay and better workplace security.

Even in areas of the UK that have forged ahead, too many jobs are in low-paid, insecure jobs that hit workers' health, their ability to plan ahead, and the time they are able to spend with loved ones.

As well as being bad for the workers, this is also bad for growth and productivity. There is now a wealth of evidence that greater in-work security, stronger rights, and more autonomy in the workplace can have substantial economic benefits.

### Labour is making work pay

Greater Manchester's Good Employment Charter introduced by Andy Burnham allows employers to be recognised for best practice in equality, fair pay, and giving employees a say in how their workplaces are run, and helps working people make informed choices about their workplace.

In London, Sadiq Khan has championed the London Living Wage, which has seen a sixfold increase in employers paying the London Living Wage with an hourly increase of 40 per cent since he took office.

A Labour government will deliver a New Deal for Working People, improving rights and protections in every corner of the country and supporting employers across the country to provide decent, stable and well-paid jobs.

Our current economic model also disincentivises investment in the workforce, results in low levels of

technology diffusion, and prevents and undermines the diversity of jobs, skills and roles needed to foster economic clusters.

Our New Deal will help move us away from an economy based on insecure, low paid jobs, to prosperity from good work, strong employment rights and high productivity.

Improved labour market enforcement will help local businesses, the backbone of regional growth, compete on a level playing field. This will support workers in the everyday economy, which makes up more than two thirds of jobs in the North East, Yorkshire and the Humber, and the South West.<sup>16</sup>

As the Resolution Foundation have argued, 'the missing ingredient is empowered workers, willing and able to take risks'.<sup>17</sup> Labour's changes will address this, with flexibility that works both ways – giving workers the security to change jobs and improving innovation in our economy.

## INNOVATION

- Long-term funding for research and development institutions and cut red tape for researchers and innovators.
- Maintain the current structure of R&D tax credits over the next parliament, to provide certainty.
- Create a Regulatory Innovation Office to end regulatory backlogs for innovations.

Labour will ensure our economy can capitalise on the UK's world-leading research base by supporting innovation and new technologies. This will support the emergence of innovation intensive clusters across the UK, including advanced manufacturing in the East Midlands, life sciences around Manchester and cyber security in Wales.

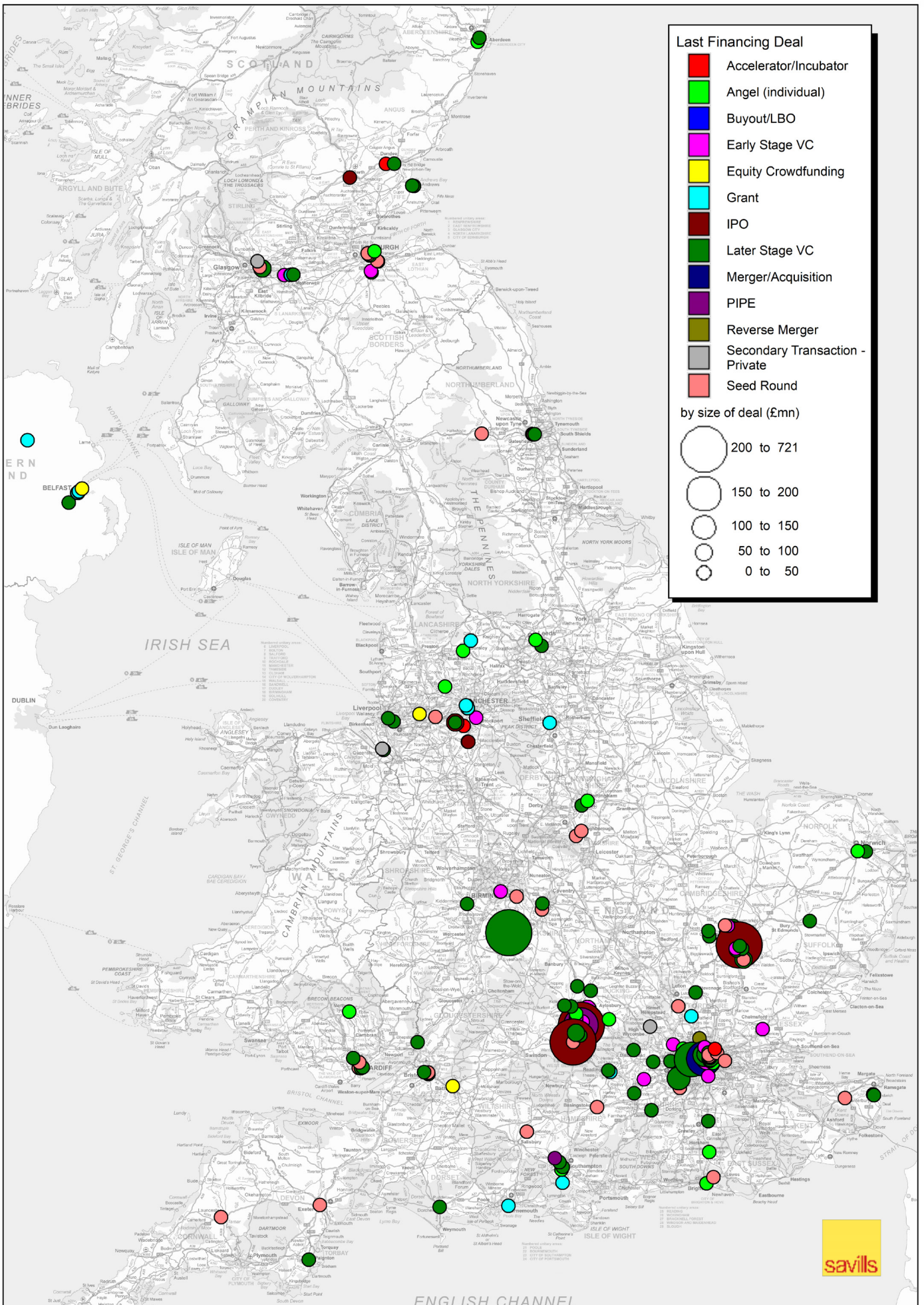
To provide stability, Labour will maintain the current structure of R&D tax credits over the next parliament, while cracking down on fraudulent claims and those made in error. This will ensure business can invest with confidence after years of chopping and changing.

Labour will also set ten-year budgets for research and development, giving our world-leading institutions the certainty to strike long-term partnerships with industry, leveraging greater investment, and international collaborations. This will build on the success of the Aerospace Technology Institute, which has a ten-year settlement, and as a result levers seven pounds

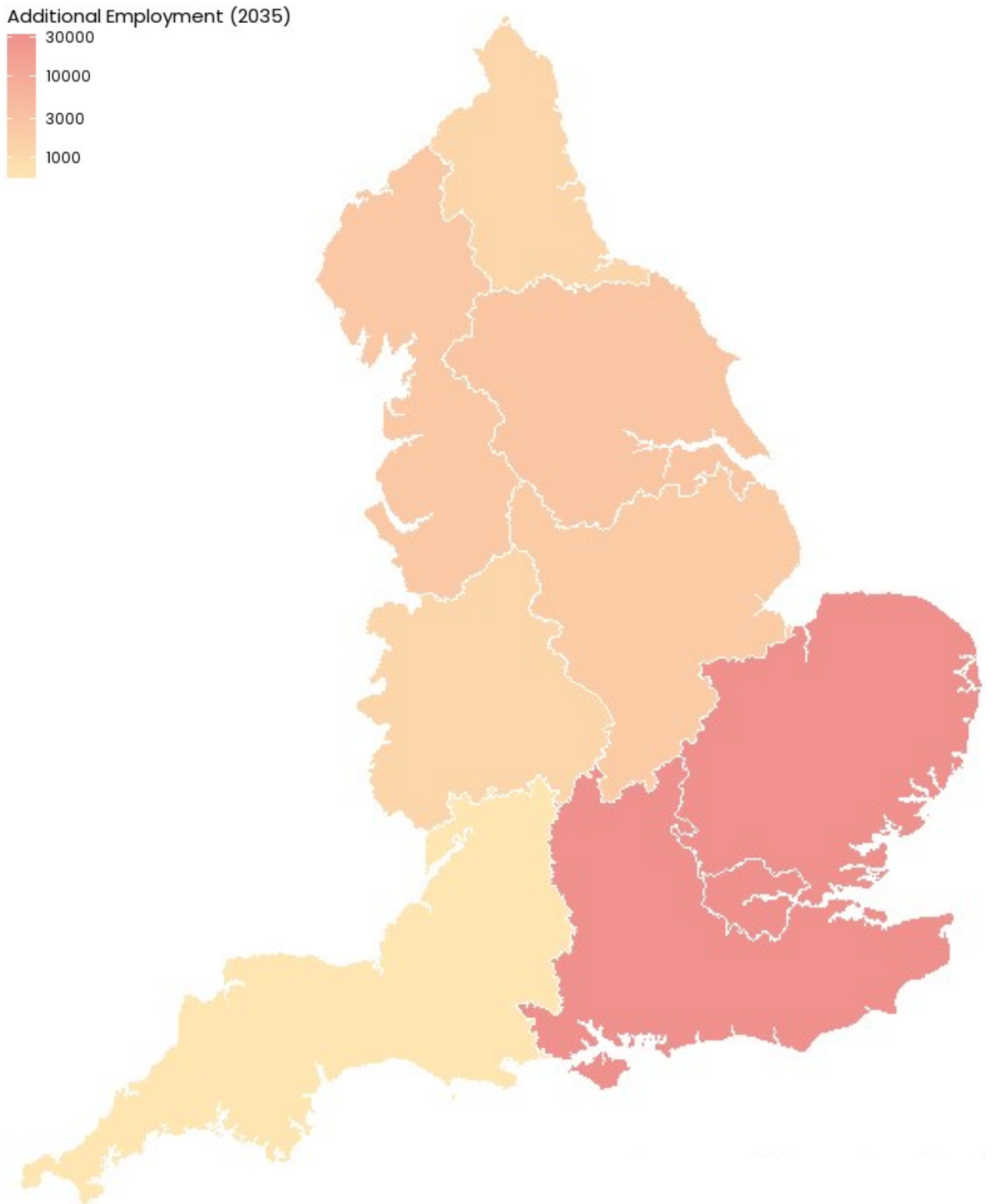
<sup>16</sup> New Economics Foundation, *Closing the Divide*.

<sup>17</sup> Resolution Foundation, *Ending Stagnation*.

# Map of UK life sciences clusters



# Indicative additional employment by region through planning reform to unlock investments in life sciences R&D sites



Sources: British Land and Savills; Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v.3.0. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024.



of private investment for every one pound of public money.

We will also create a Regulatory Innovation Office to improve accountability and promote innovation amongst regulators, with targets for regulatory approval for innovative products and services, targets for the speed of regulatory decisions, and transparent data on regulators' performance against these targets.

## PUBLIC SERVICES

- ▶ Cut waiting times with 2 million more NHS appointments, double the number of scanners, 8,500 new mental health staff, and 700,000 urgent dental appointments.
- ▶ Tackle crime with 13,000 more neighbourhood police and PCSOs and crack downs on anti-social behaviour and shoplifting.
- ▶ Drive higher standards in schools by recruiting over 6,500 more teachers, introducing free breakfast clubs, and broadening the curriculum to give every child skills and experiences that set them up for life.

Strong public services are the bedrock upon which good lives, fair societies and successful economies are built.

When they are working well, our early years providers, schools, colleges and universities create opportunity for individuals and drive our economic prosperity. Without the security that strong public services create, Britain cannot meet its full economic potential. The crises in health and social care are already excluding people from the labour market because of long term sickness or unpaid caring responsibilities. And without good schools, available childcare, and safe streets, places will not attract the skilled workers they need to drive up productivity.

Labour will reverse the Conservative decline in our public services with our national missions to get the NHS back on its feet, take back our streets, and break down barriers to opportunity. These will mean people can take back control of their own lives, with the health, security, and education to make the choices they want.



# 3. A partnership to power up Britain

## INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

- Use an active state to support sectors and places across the country and throughout our economy to succeed on the international stage.
- Maximise the strengths and specialisms of our towns and cities in life sciences, digital, creative, financial services, clean power, automotive and defence sectors.
- Partner with local leaders, businesses, universities and trade unions to decide Local Growth Plans with good jobs and living standards at their heart.

For Labour, national competitiveness will always be a priority, but setting a strategic course with an active industrial strategy is just as vital in an increasingly competitive world.

Without it, opportunities are missed, sectors we can lead in are not given the backing they deserve, the nascent potential in every region of the country is left to wither, and business lacks the support it needs to win new orders in new markets.

The state can — and increasingly must — play a constructive, strategic role in the economy. It is vital to secure the conditions for our economic success and to fully harness economic specialisms across the country, whether aerospace in Bristol and Derby, information and communication in Newcastle, precision medicine in Glasgow, or offshore wind in Humberside.

In today's world, where state-led policies have reasserted themselves across the globe, an industrial strategy approach is no longer a 'nice to have' but essential to secure our economic

prospects, national security, and access to vital goods, raw materials and energy.

Our strategy will combine a sector and place approach. It is a misconception that Britain cannot do industrial strategy and place based economic development. The success of our financial services sector and the redevelopment of the East of London demonstrates how competitive national tax and regulation, combined with sustained infrastructure investment and local leadership on commercial and residential planning can shift the economic fortunes of former industrial centres.

### **Labour is working in partnership to deliver economic growth**

Mayor of West Yorkshire Mayor Tracy Brabin is bringing together business leaders in the West Yorkshire Business Board. The board's chair sits as a non-constituent member of the authority, helping local employers to contribute to pro-growth, pro-investment policy.

In South Yorkshire, Oliver Coppard has brought together business leaders and economists in a Business Advisory Board and Mayoral Economic Advisory Council. The South Yorkshire Plan for Good Growth is designed explicitly to complement and support growth strategies of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield.

A Labour government would work with all combined authorities to help deliver bespoke Local Growth Plans that involve major employers, economic actors, local authorities, so they can mobilise the whole local economy to deliver growth and higher living standards.

We are clear-eyed that the UK cannot expect to excel in every sector or emerging technology, but we will proudly support those in which we do because they are so crucial to our prosperity. At a local level, businesses need the depth of skilled labour, land and energy. Labour will support areas to specialise their skills provision, invest in transport and digital connectivity, densify our core cities, accelerate grid connections and liberalise planning for housing, infrastructure and employment.

Our strategy will maximise Britain's strengths in life sciences, digital, creative, financial services, clean power, automotive and defence sectors.

- **Life sciences:** Our expertise in life sciences is spread across the UK, with significant life sciences clusters around Leeds, Oxford and Cambridge, Glasgow, and Tyneside. Industry estimates suggest policies to boost building on lab space could create thousands of jobs and create billions in growth in areas outside London.

- **Automotive:** Our world leading car industry supports good jobs and growth across the UK, with hubs in the South West, North East and Midlands. Our automotive strategy, backed by investment in battery gigafactories, will protect and enhance this industry, creating up to 80k new jobs in electric vehicle manufacturing.

- **Financial services:** The financial services plan includes included proposals to boost regional financial centres alongside established hubs in London and Edinburgh. This includes thriving insurance sectors in Manchester, Glasgow, and Cardiff, the country's second largest financial services hub in Birmingham and emerging Fintech strengths in Leeds.

- **Creative industries:** Our creative industries plan will grow the industry across the UK, like the video games industry in Dundee, filmmaking in Northern Ireland, audiovisual media in Cardiff and media production in West Yorkshire. We will champion thriving arts communities and creative opportunities in our towns and cities and prevent the loss of local cultural spaces through 'Space to Create', the first national cultural infrastructure map.

In England, our new Local Growth Plans will go with the grain of our national industrial strategy, in partnership with local economic actors and with the support of central government and the Industrial Strategy Council. This will help to make sure local plans focus on meaningful local specialisms, are aligned with national growth strategies and that the hard decisions necessary to deliver growth, unblock constraints and attract inward investment are confronted.

In return, we will make sure that local leaders have the powers and support from central government needed to foster local economic clusters and deliver sustained growth.

## BUILDING HOMES

- Build 1.5 million new homes over the next parliament, unleashing growth and putting more money into people's pockets.
- Deliver the biggest boost of social and affordable housebuilding in a generation, embedding security and stability in our economy.
- Empower metro mayors to deliver new housing projects linked up to the jobs and infrastructure needed to support regional growth.

By getting Britain building again, Labour will make housing more affordable and give working people more control over what they spend their income on and where they choose to live. Nobody should be locked out of pursuing new opportunities, taking up a job they love or moving to a new city by high housing costs.

Nor should workers in our biggest cities see the lion's share of their paycheque disappear every month to spiralling rents and mortgage costs, cancelling out the benefits of high productivity for all but the very highest earners or the already fortunate.

### Labour is delivering good, secure homes

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan is overseeing a renaissance in council homebuilding, with the largest increase in council housing for generations. Last year, London built more council homes than double the rest of the country combined, providing security and higher living standards for Londoners.

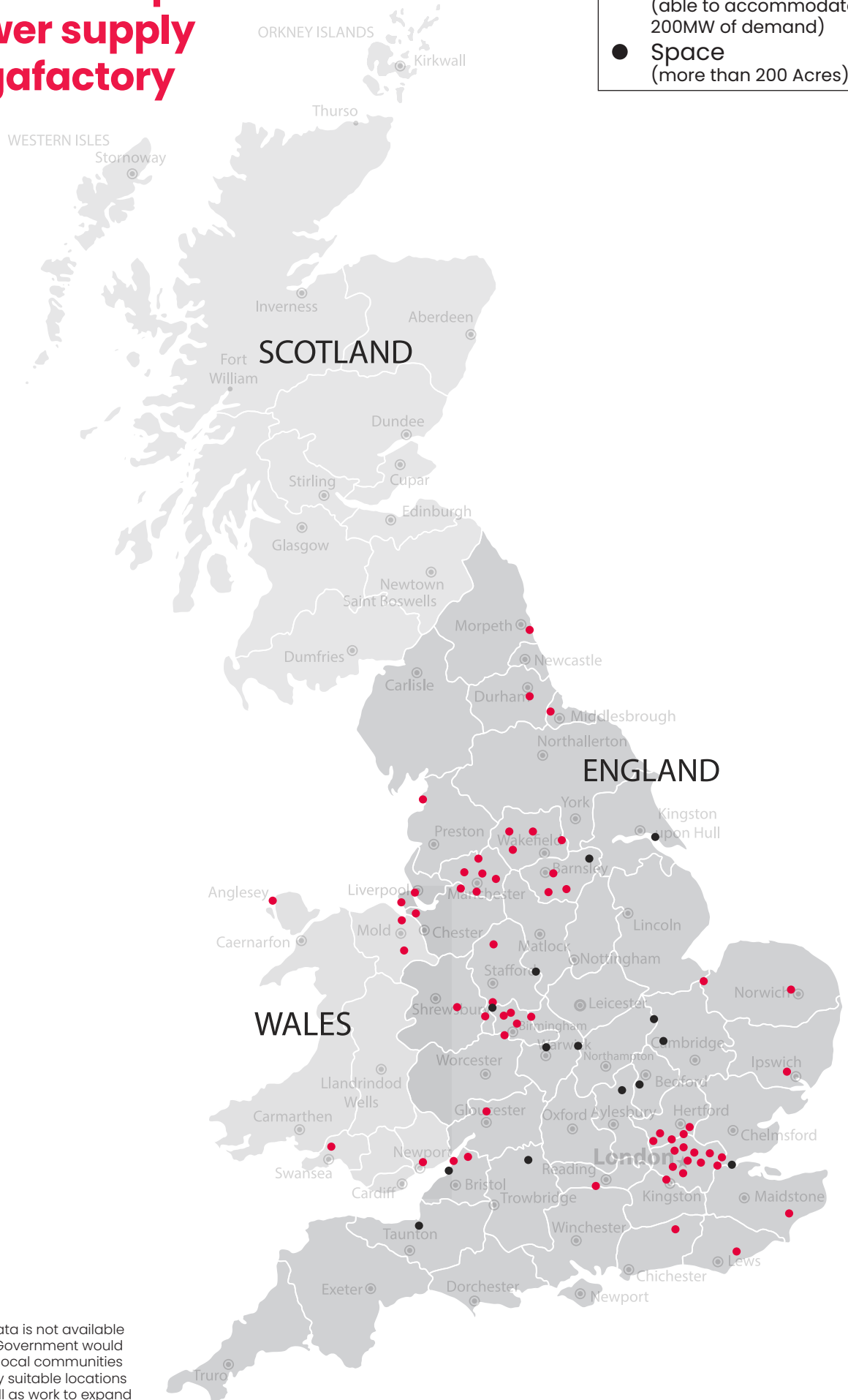
Andy Burnham is working to drive up the quality of the private rented sector across Greater Manchester through a new Good Landlord Charter, giving tenants the information they need to find good quality, stable housing.

A Labour government will equip local leaders with more tools they need to go further and help to deliver 1.5 million new homes over the next parliament, boost growth and help the next generation get on the housing ladder.

# Map of current sites with sufficient space and power supply for a Gigafactory

**Key**

- Power (able to accommodate 200MW of demand)
- Space (more than 200 Acres)



This is indicative and data is not available for Scotland. A Labour Government would work with industry and local communities across Britain to identify suitable locations for development as well as work to expand grid capacity.

Source: National Grid, Savills

Labour will build 1.5 million high quality homes in the right places, with new towns, urban extensions and smaller developments – and they will be connected to infrastructure and built strategically as part of sub-regional strategies from mayors and combined authorities. This will increase the ‘effective size’ of our major cities and high-potential towns so that they can reap the benefits of scale and agglomeration needed to develop and cement their labour market clusters and comparative strengths.

Our approach combines robust national policy frameworks, including targets for housing delivery, with measures to support local leaders delivering plans for meeting those targets and ensuring homes are built in the right place. We want to give local leaders a say over ‘how’ new homes are delivered, whilst being robust in national policy about ‘if’ areas build the homes they need.

With new home approvals plummeting we need swift and meaningful action to make sure a generation are not locked out of homeownership. In England, we will deliver:

- The **biggest boost in affordable homes for a generation** – with social and council housing at the core of Labour’s plan for secure homes.
- A **housing recovery plan**, a blitz of planning reform to quickly and materially boost housebuilding, delivered in our first weeks and months in office.
- The **next generation of new towns, garden cities and large sites**, new communities with beautiful homes, green spaces, reliable transport and bustling high streets
- **New powers to unleash mayors** including a package of devolution to mayors, handing them stronger powers over planning and departmental style settlements for housing
- **‘Planning passports’ for urban brownfield delivery**, a tough package of planning reform to fast track approvals and delivery of high density housing on urban brownfield sites
- **300 new planning officers across the country**, paid for by raising the stamp duty surcharge on non-UK residents, to improve public sector capacity to expedite planning decisions.

## GREEN PROSPERITY PLAN

- Create 650,000 new, skilled jobs in the industries of the future in every region and nation of the UK.
- Create new clusters of internationally competitive green industries, rebuilding the strength of our industrial heartlands.
- Empower local leaders to deliver our Warm Homes plan and community energy projects, cutting bills and delivering local jobs.

Labour’s Green Prosperity Plan will help us turn Britain’s economy around and to release our untapped strengths. It is at the heart of another of Labour’s missions to secure the highest sustained growth in the G7 and switch on Great British Energy. Strategic, responsible public investment is at the heart of this plan, supporting the industries of the future in every corner of the UK. It will help the places that built Britain rebuild their industrial capabilities to deliver decent jobs and lower bills for all.

There are already a number of detailed analyses that show the UK has potential to create new economic clusters of international comparative strength in green industries. A recent LSE and Resolution Foundation report found a number of high value green industries which are “relatively close to the UK’s existing capabilities” including renewable energy and environmental monitoring equipment.<sup>18</sup> Labour will support green industries in every part of Britain – from heavy industry in South Wales to renewables clusters in North East England – rebuilding the strength of our industrial heartlands. We will grow supply chains and support pioneering technologies in which the UK has a competitive advantage, from cabling to floating offshore wind.

If we are to position the country as a leader in the global green economy, we need an active government working in partnership with devolved governments, local leaders, and the private sector to drive investment and provide the right conditions to foster innovation, unlock new job opportunities and ensure a just transition.

We will base our new publicly owned energy company Great British Energy in Scotland and deliver new clean energy opportunities in Wales and Northern Ireland. In England, our Green Prosperity Plan will protect existing jobs in the steel industry in Yorkshire, create new jobs in carbon capture and storage from Merseyside to Teesside and build electric vehicle battery plants across the country, which could benefit the West Midlands and

<sup>18</sup> S Unsworth, *Net-zero-aligned investment in the UK for jobs and growth after COVID-19; The Economy 2030 Inquiry, Growing clean.*

the South West. Our plans to upgrade ports around the UK coastline will open up new opportunities for clean energy work from the Celtic Sea to the Solent.

As part of this, we will deliver a British Jobs Bonus, providing an incentive to winning bids in the Contracts for Difference auction to invest, create jobs and build their supply chains in industrial heartlands and coastal communities of the UK. This includes communities with historic and current ties to fossil fuel production like coal, oil and gas. In this way, there will be a clear and transparent incentive for companies to create jobs in these areas and take advantage of skills and strengths of their workforces.

### **Labour is harnessing clean, cheap and renewable energy**

Mayor of the Liverpool City Region Steve Rotherham has delivered a fleet of new, clean hydrogen buses and battery power trains and is working to build the world's largest tidal scheme on the banks of the River Mersey.

In the West of England, Dan Norris is helping homeowners band together to buy solar panels, batteries and EV charging points at discounted prices. So far, more than 900 homeowners have installed solar panels and batteries, cutting thousands of tonnes of CO2 over the next 25 years.

Working in partnership with our pioneering metro mayors, a Labour government will cut energy bills, give communities a stake in their energy infrastructure and switch on Great British Energy.

We will establish a new National Wealth Fund, a strategic body to invest and create good jobs in the green industries of the future. It will invest public money to drive forward projects that are necessary to the energy transition and our industrial future, crowding in further private investment in crucial infrastructure. As well as creating new jobs and growing our economy, we want to make sure that when public money is invested, the British taxpayer will get a return on its investment and where appropriate, own a share of the project to ensure it happens.

A Labour government will partner with local and combined authorities to deliver our Warm Homes Plan in England. We will also give local leaders a direct say over local area energy plans, and input into the National Energy Systems Operator's regional system plans. GB Energy will partner with local authorities and communities through the Local

Power Plan to build cheaper, cleaner power in our villages, towns and cities.

And by cutting energy bills for good, we will make it easier for local entrepreneurs to set up businesses and give retailers and hospitality companies the support they need to contribute to our local economies and high streets. All too many shops, pubs and cafes are being forced under by high energy costs and stubborn food inflation downstream of the energy crisis, and it is the responsibility of the government to give them the stability and security they need to support their local communities.

### **SKILLS AND ADULT EDUCATION**

- Establish Skills England, to identify skills needs in each area and work with education providers, local leaders and business to fill them.
- Put local leaders back in control of adult education budgets and create a Growth and Skills levy, to give more people the chance to get on.
- Make local leaders and employer bodies' jointly accountable for skills planning, and allow them to transform FE colleges into Technical Excellence Colleges, so that skills provision is aligned with what local businesses and industry need.

The Conservatives have overseen more than a decade of decline in skills and training opportunities. This is limiting our businesses and denying individuals the chance to learn and upskill.

In England, young people are missing out on professional careers advice, leaving the information and support they get on their future options and opportunities down to who they know, not what can help them thrive. Universities and colleges, which should be engines of growth and opportunity across our towns and cities, are being belittled and let down by a government which has no plan and no vision for adult education or training. Businesses wanting to upskill or train staff are being held back by a lack of flexibility within the system.

To provide national leadership and bring together a fragmented skills sector, Labour will establish Skills England, which will work across government and with both the Industrial Strategy Council and Migration Advisory Committee to identify skills and labour needs in each part of England. It will oversee the national effort to meet the skills needs of the coming decade across all regions, and ensure

## Green Prosperity Plan: UK-wide

- 🔗 **Cut household energy bills by up to £1400 a year,** insulating millions of homes and building cheaper, cleaner power across the country
- 🔗 **Save businesses £53bn in energy bills up to 2030,** making British industry more competitive and lowering prices for consumers
- 🔗 **Create hundreds of thousands of good new jobs,** for plumbers electricians, engineers and technicians across Britain as Labour invests in the industries of the future

# SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

## Scotland

- 🏠 **Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers
- 🏭 **National Wealth Fund:** Deliver industrial decarbonisation in the Scottish cluster, with our £1bn commitment, protecting thousands of jobs in heavy industry as well as creating many more in CCS and hydrogen

Invest in the **Forth and Tay and North East Scotland** renewable clusters as part of our £1.8bn commitment to upgrade ports

- 🏠 **Warm homes:** Upgrade cold, draughty homes
- 📍 **GB Energy:** Headquartered in Scotland
- 🔌 **Local Power Plan:** Build over a thousand local power projects

## Northern Ireland

- 🏠 **Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers.
- 🏭 **National Wealth Fund:** Invest in **Belfast Harbour** as part of our £1.8bn commitment to upgrade ports
- 🔌 **Local Power Plan:** Build hundreds of local power projects

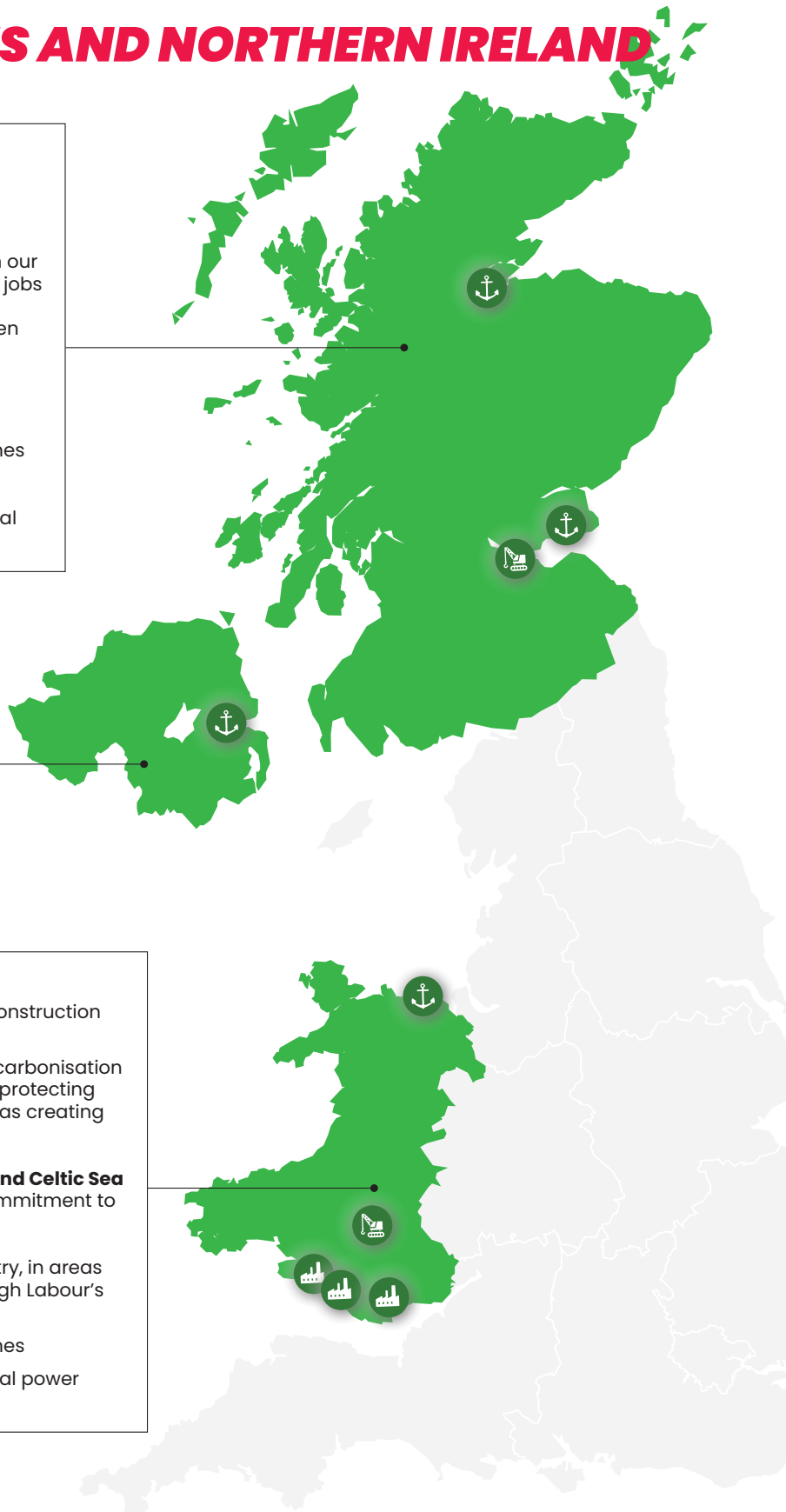
## Wales

- 🏠 **Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers.
- 🏭 **National Wealth Fund:** Deliver industrial decarbonisation in **South Wales** with our £1bn commitment, protecting thousands of jobs in heavy industry as well as creating many more in CCS and green hydrogen

Invest in the **North West and North Wales and Celtic Sea** renewable clusters as part of our £1.8bn commitment to upgrade ports

Protect thousands of jobs in the steel industry, in areas like **Port Talbot, Newport and Cardiff**, through Labour's £2.5bn Plan for Steel\*

- 🏠 **Warm homes:** Upgrade cold, draughty homes
- 🔌 **Local Power Plan:** Build over a thousand local power projects



\*Subject to commercial negotiation  
Job numbers per region and nation denote direct jobs

# ENGLAND

**British Jobs Bonus:** Labour's British Jobs Bonus will support over 35,000 new jobs in clean energy and its supply chains in England by 2030.

## North West

**Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers

**National Wealth Fund:** Deliver industrial decarbonisation in **Merseyside**, protecting thousands of jobs in heavy industry as well as creating many more in CCS and green hydrogen

Invest in the **North West and North Wales** renewable cluster as part of our £1.8bn commitment to upgrade ports

Fund electric vehicle battery plants in automotive heartlands through Labour's £1.5bn Battery Power fund\*

**Warm homes:** Upgrade cold draughty homes

**Local Power Plan:** Build over a thousand local power projects

## North East

**Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers

**National Wealth Fund:** Deliver industrial decarbonisation in **Teesside**, protecting thousands of jobs in heavy industry as well as creating many more in CCS and green hydrogen

Upgrade ports in **North East** renewable cluster as part of our £1.8bn commitment to upgrade ports

Fund electric vehicle battery plants in automotive heartlands, through Labour's £1.5bn Battery Power fund\*

**Warm homes:** Upgrade cold, draughty homes

**Local Power Plan:** Build hundreds of local power projects

## Yorkshire and the Humber

**Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers

**National Wealth Fund:** Deliver industrial decarbonisation in the **Humber**, protecting thousands of jobs in heavy industry as well as creating many more in CCS and green hydrogen

Protect thousands of jobs in the steel industry, in areas like **Sheffield, Scunthorpe and Rotherham**, through Labour's £2.5bn Plan for Steel\*

Fund green hydrogen manufacturing, from our pledge to spend up to £500m over the parliament\*

**Warm homes:** Upgrade cold, draughty homes

**Local Power Plan:** Build over a thousand local power projects

## West Midlands

**Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers

**National Wealth Fund:** Fund electric vehicle battery plants in automotive heartlands through Labour's £1.5bn Battery Power fund\*

Fund green hydrogen manufacturing from our pledge to spend up to £500m over the parliament\*

**Warm homes:** Upgrade cold, draughty homes

**Local Power Plan:** Build over a thousand local power projects

## East Midlands

**Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers

**National Wealth Fund:** Fund electric vehicle battery plants in automotive heartlands through Labour's £1.5bn Battery Power fund\*

Fund green hydrogen manufacturing, from our pledge to spend up to £500m over the parliament\*

**Warm homes:** Upgrade cold, draughty homes

**Local Power Plan:** Build over a thousand local power projects

## East Anglia

**Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers

**National Wealth Fund:** Invest in the **East Anglia** renewable cluster as part of our £1.8bn commitment to upgrade ports

Fund electric vehicle battery plants in automotive heartlands through Labour's £1.5bn Battery Power fund\*

**Warm homes:** Upgrade cold, draughty homes

**GB Energy:** Boost our nuclear industry by backing and building **Sizewell C**

**Local Power Plan:** Build over a thousand local power projects

## South West

**Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers

**National Wealth Fund:** Invest in the **Celtic Sea** renewable cluster as part of our £1.8bn commitment to upgrade ports

Fund electric vehicle battery plants in automotive heartlands through Labour's £1.5bn Battery Power fund\*

**GB Energy:** Boost our nuclear industry by backing and building **Hinkley C**

**Warm homes:** Upgrade cold, draughty homes

**Local Power Plan:** Build over a thousand local power projects

## South East

**Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers

**National Wealth Fund:** Invest in the **Solent** renewable cluster as part of our £1.8bn commitment to upgrade ports

Fund electric vehicle battery plants in automotive heartlands through Labour's £1.5bn Battery Power fund\*

**Warm homes:** Upgrade cold, draughty homes

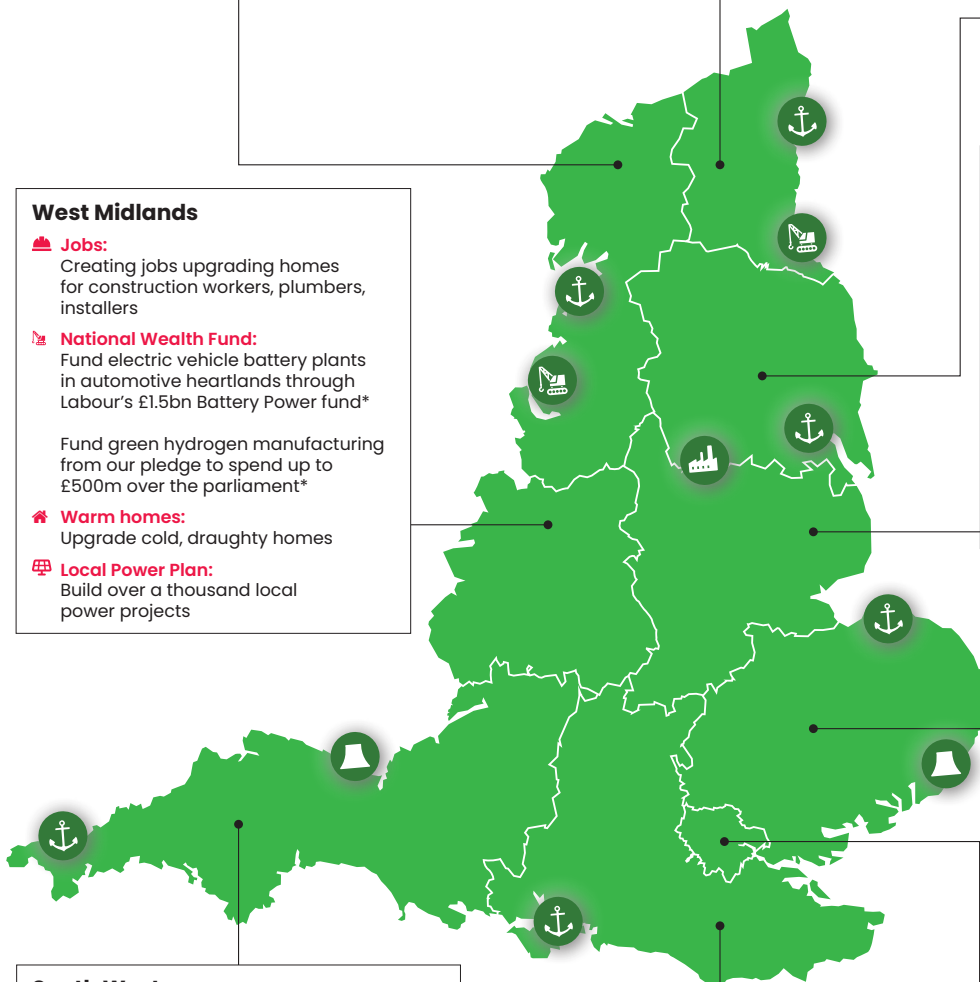
**Local Power Plan:** Build over a thousand local power projects

## London

**Jobs:** Creating jobs upgrading homes for construction workers, plumbers, installers

**Warm homes:** Upgrade cold, draughty homes

**Local Power Plan:** Build over a thousand local power projects



*\*Subject to commercial negotiation  
Job numbers per region and nation  
denote direct jobs*



we have the skills to deliver our growth and clean energy missions.

Skills policy, like many drivers of growth, has been overcentralised. Labour will combine and devolve adult education budgets in England to Mayors and combined authorities, so that they have what they need to create opportunities for workers and boost local productivity. Skills and employment support should go hand in hand, so Labour will also reform and devolve employment support in England to ensure greater local innovation in its delivery and design.

### **Labour is transforming skills provision locally**

South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority's Skills Bank is a co-investment fund that encourages businesses to invest in upskilling their workers. The initiative is part of a comprehensive Skills Strategy that aims to move those far from the labour market into work or ready for work, raise attainment of core knowledge and skills, and increase the supply of a high-skilled workforce.

Skills Bank has a specialist team of skills advisors that support local businesses to identify current challenges and emerging opportunities. Businesses can get funding for forms of training that are not currently publicly funded, including bespoke learning that does not lead to qualification, as long as it supports business development, resilience or growth. For example, the Skills Bank recently approved funding for a tailored sales training programme for the Leighton Vans, a local retailer of bespoke VW sports vans. This aims to elevate sales performance and increase revenue.

With Labour government and across our combined authorities, we can go further, with new skills initiatives opening up opportunities for people and businesses across the country.

With Labour, local leaders will work with colleges, businesses, universities, and employers to align skills and training provision with real job opportunities. Labour will transform existing further education colleges into new Technical Excellence Colleges, based on proposals put forward by local communities aligned to their local skills improvement plans, to ensure local areas, education providers and businesses feed in to define the training needs of their communities. Bids to specialise will be assessed by Skills England

to make sure local skills provision meets national strategic growth priorities and reskills people in the jobs of the future.

The Conservatives' failed Apprenticeships Levy is not translating into opportunities for working people - apprenticeship starts have plummeted by third in the last decade. Labour will turn it into a Growth and Skills Levy, giving employers new flexibility to invest up to 50% of their levy contributions in modular, flexible courses and pre-apprenticeships training which businesses tell us they need to develop and grow. This will mean more people across England have the chance to upskill and move into better jobs with higher pay.

### **TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

- ▶ Empower local leaders to bring buses under public control and lift the Conservatives' ban on municipal bus ownership.
- ▶ Establish a passenger focused, publicly owned rail system and a credible programme of transport infrastructure, in-line with our fiscal rules.
- ▶ Deliver a once-in-a-generation overhaul of the nationally significant infrastructure regime to reflect our changing economy and cut red tape.

Transport and infrastructure across the North and Midlands, as well as in the South West, and East Anglia have been neglected by this government. The Conservatives believe that the country which created the railways can no longer build them - and they gave up any pretence of 'Levelling Up' the North when they scrapped HS2 last year. Now they admit that they promised tram lines which were already built, and upgrades to roads that have never existed.

Labour knows that successful economic clusters need an extensive and reliable network of transport infrastructure to function effectively. The underperformance of UK cities and towns outside London is partly explained by poor transport infrastructure reducing their 'effective' size. The UK has worse public transport than Europe and worse roads than the US.<sup>19</sup> The result is businesses looking to locate in cities like Manchester and Birmingham have a much smaller pool of workers to recruit from than businesses looking to set up in places like Cologne and Milan and workers from our cities and surrounding towns have fewer opportunities.

<sup>19</sup> A Stansbury, D Turner and E Balls, *Tackling the UK's regional economic inequality: Binding constraints and avenues for policy intervention*.

The Conservatives have failed to deliver the infrastructure regional economies need to grow. Our commuting times are the third longest in the OECD and it takes years of costly consultation and delay to build much needed transport infrastructure projects.

### **Labour is putting passengers first**

Alongside Andy Burnham's Bee Network, Steve Rotherham in Liverpool City Region, Tracy Brabin in West Yorkshire and Oliver Coppard in South Yorkshire are bringing buses, trams and trains back under public control so they can deliver better, more reliable transport for passengers.

In London, Sadiq Khan is supporting commuters with the cost of living with a fare freeze until March 2025, and rolling out new, fast Superloop bus routes to better serve outer London.

Nik Johnson in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is saving and expanding dozens of bus routes and halving fares for young people, and Dan Norris in the West of England is cutting fares for residents and encouraging public transport use.

With Labour in power in Westminster and across our combined authorities, we can go further, with new stations, new routes and better integration transport services.

Northern Powerhouse Rail was first pledged nearly a decade ago and was promised on sixty

separate occasions by Ministers. After the fiasco of HS2, we still have no credible plan to deliver the public transport the North and Midlands need.

Our roads are crumbling, with big backlogs in maintenance work. Major road projects are repeatedly stalled and delayed, meaning it costs twice as much to build roads as it does in France. Labour will speed up delivery of critical transport infrastructure projects, lowering costs and reducing delay.

We will deliver a once-in-a-generation overhaul of England's nationally significant infrastructure regime. Labour will update all National Policy Statements and ensure they reflect national spatial policy, modernising the regime to reflect the types of infrastructure crucial in our changing economy, and cutting red tape by embedding principles of proportionality and standardisation.

We will call time on decades of failure on rail, delivering a passenger focused, publicly owned rail system. Labour will work with local leaders in the North and Midlands on a credible and transformative programme of transport infrastructure investment in line with our fiscal rules.

We do not have to wait to start this work. Labour mayors and Labour-run councils up and down the country are already taking action to bring better buses to the people they represent. Local leaders are already showing the difference that Labour in power makes, but we want to go further. We will give every town and city in England the power and support to deliver better bus services and will devolve new powers over transport to combined authorities and metro mayors.





