Conservatives

Alternative King's Speech

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FOREWORD

When I took over as Leader of the Conservatives, I made a point of starting our party's renewal with a simple question.

What does the Conservative Party stand for?

Without a clear answer to that question, we stood no chance of fixing anything. I wanted us to have a clear vision of the country we want to live in, to agree on what the good life looks like and what principles we were fighting to uphold.

But answering this question was just the start.

Observing the last decade in Parliament, there are two lessons to learn and two mistakes that must not be repeated.

Firstly, the lesson of the Labour Government's speedy implosion.

What would people say, if you asked them to identify their biggest failure so far?

Some may point to their failure to reform welfare, others to their Winter Fuel fiasco, many to the fundamental failure to achieve anything approaching economic growth. In fact, there is a case to be made for their biggest failures being the sheer number of U-turns, nearly 20 in such a short space of time as Labour MPs were marched up hills and back down again by a government that is still unclear what it wants to achieve.

But every single one of these failures originates from one.

Labour didn't come into office with a plan for government.

They didn't spend their time in opposition thinking deeply about the country's problems. They didn't consider drafting legislation so they would be ready from day one. Instead, they spent their entire time focused on tactics and strategy.

They had a plan to win power, but once they did, they had no idea what they wanted to do with it. We can all see how well that's gone.

The world has never been more complicated. Nor have the problems facing Britain. No amount of goodwill, blustered statements or wishful thinking will solve those problems. They can only be solved by making serious plans and executing them competently.

The second lesson is from the Conservatives' time in government.

Previous Conservative governments, sometimes because of a lack of a majority, but at other times simply did not realise that it is not possible to solve many of Britain's problems without changing the laws that laid the foundations for those problems.

The last Conservative government failed to stop the small boats because of a reticence to unpick the Blairite Settlement which is no longer fit for purpose.

Time and again, efforts to get control over our borders were frustrated because power had been taken out of the hands of Ministers and handed to courts, in Britain and in Strasbourg.

Any future government that does not learn these two lessons - that you cannot fix anything without detailed plans, and that these plans must start by untying your own hands and restoring the levers of power - will solve nothing.

Later this week the Government will set out its second legislative programme. I suspect they have not yet learnt these lessons.

Instead, I predict Keir Starmer will continue as he started. Britain will continue its drift into a slow decline, and voters will continue to believe that politics doesn't work for them.

It doesn't have to be like this. So today, I am publishing our alternative King's Speech.

This is the culmination of eighteen months of proper, detailed, hard work done by a renewed Conservative Party. A team of smart people thinking hard about Britain's problems, and one by one tackling those problems to allow us to realise our vision of a better, happier, more productive country.

These are bills that Labour could enact tomorrow, and they are just the first downpayment of the plans we will have ready before the next election.

We have more work to do, and more time to do it in. But this just goes to show what you can achieve if you're willing to do the work.

If you believe in a country with strong borders, a country that is properly defended, a country that is a great place to do business, and a country in which the law is upheld, you have to do the work to build that.

That is the work my Conservative Party is doing.



Kemi Badenoch MP

Leader of the Conservative and Unionist Party

STRONGER ECONOMY

WELFARE REFORM BILL

"A Bill to make provision for restricting eligibility for the Personal Independence Payment for those with lower-level mental health conditions, and ensuring assessments are face to face, preventing those who are not British Citizens from accessing welfare, reforming fit notes, reinstating the two child benefit limit, and for connected purposes."

- **The welfare bill has spiralled out of control, with millions of people on benefits when they should be working.** The Conservatives will get Britain working again by getting people off welfare and into work, making substantial savings and transforming lives across the country. Households should not be receiving unlimited benefits when adults in the household could be working but are not, and welfare should not pay more than work.

- **For the first time ever, the total welfare bill is now higher than total receipts from income tax.**

- **The previous Conservative Government undertook substantial welfare reforms, including the introduction of Universal Credit, to get people off welfare and into work.** Prioritising work over welfare saw the employment rate hit a record high of 76.5 per cent in December 2019 to February 2020[1]. However, the COVID pandemic saw a significant rise in the number of those leaving the workforce due to mental health conditions. The Institute for Fiscal studies found that the "most significant change in conditions… is the rise in the share of mental and behavioural disorders".[2]

- **Entitlement to taxpayer-funded benefits should not be available to those who are not citizens of this country.** Citizenship should mean something and the welfare system should be there to support our citizens and those who have paid in and contributed to this country, not act as a pull factor for those seeking to come here and benefit from taxpayer-funded welfare. This also applies to our social housing system.

- **Welfare should be for those who are most vulnerable so we will reform welfare and ensure more people are able to support themselves through work.** We will limit eligibility for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) for those with lower-level mental health conditions. We will bring back face-to-face assessments and ensure that non-UK citizens are not eligible for welfare. We will reform 'fit notes' and stop abuse of the Motability system. We will reinstate the two-child benefit limit because we believe that those on benefits should make the same decisions about having children as those who are not, and reform the Household Benefit Cap to restore incentives to work for all adults capable of work.

- **Conservatives believe in the dignity of work and personal responsibility.** Millions of our fellow citizens are being written off and condemned to a life on benefits. This Bill will get people off benefits and into work, ensuring the welfare state is a safety net, not a trap.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **There are nearly 4 million people receiving PIP in the UK, up from 3.5 million at the last election.**[3]

- **The Labour Government have let the benefits bill spiral out of control.** The OBR estimates that spending on Universal Credit will hit £103 billion by the end of the decade, with disability spending reaching £61 billion in the same period.[4]

[1] ONS, *A01 – Summary of labour market statistics,* link.
[2] IFS, *Recent trends in and the outlook for health-related benefits,* link.
[3] Gov.uk, *Personal Independence Payments: Official Statistics to January 2026*, link; Gov.uk, *Personal Independence Payments: Official Statistics to July 2024,* link.
[4] OBR, *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, March 2026, link.

- **The Labour Government cannot tackle the problem.** When the Prime Minister tried to legislate to reduce the cost of benefits by freezing the allowances for new claimants for Limited Capability for Work and Work- Related Activity until 2030, and limiting eligibility for PIP, his backbenchers forced him into a humiliating climbdown.[5]

- **Unemployment is rising under Labour.** The unemployment rate is 5.2 per cent and the OBR have raised the unemployment rate forecast for 2026, 2027 and 2028. In March 2026, the OBR raised the forecast unemployment rate in 2026, 2027 and 2028 – hitting 5.3 per cent in 2026. The unemployment rate for 16 and over reached 5.2 per cent in November 2025 to January 2026, up from 4.2 per cent at the election.[6]

- The Conservatives introduced the Household benefit Cap to make sure you could never be better off on welfare than in work. Since then, the culture around benefits has changed and claiming has become easier. Too many households now get thousands in extra welfare through exemptions to the cap.

- **957,000 young people are not in education, employment or training, up by 36,000 on Labour's watch.** There were 957,000 young people aged 16 to 24 who were not in education, employment or training in October to December 2025, up from 921,000 in April to June 2024 when the Conservatives left office, denying young people the opportunities they deserve.[7]

- **Labour are hiking welfare spending, with one in four full-time UK workers better off swapping wages for combined benefits.** Following Labour's decision to scrap the two-child benefit cap, The Centre for Social Justice estimates that there are now 6.2 million full-time workers – around one in four – whose take-home pay is lower than combined benefits.[8]

- **Labour are prioritising welfare spending over defence spending.** Labour have ignored Conservative calls to raise defence spending to 3 per cent of GDP, instead increasing welfare spending by £18 billion this year to £333 billion, with overall welfare spending projected to reach £409.6 billion in 2030-31.[9]

What will the Bill do?

- **Reinstate the two-child benefit cap in full.** Those who receive benefits should make the same decisions about having children as those who do not.

- **Restrict eligibility for PIP for people with lower-level mental health conditions.** Cash benefits are not the best way to support people with lower-level mental health issues, who do not face significant additional daily living costs as a result of their condition. The welfare system should be there to support those most in need, and to support and incentivise people into work when they are able.

[5] *The Guardian*, 27 June 2025, link.
[6] OBR, *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, 3 March 2026, link; *ONS, Labour market overview*, UK: March 2026, 19 March 2026, link.
[7] ONS, *Young people not in education, employment of training*, 26 February 2026, link.
[8] CSJ, *Press Release*, 31 January 2026, link.
[9] OBR, *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, 3 March 2026, link.

- **Bring back face-to-face assessments for PIP.** It is easier to assess genuine need face to face rather than through a phone call or online assessment.

- **Ensure that those who are not British citizens cannot be eligible for welfare**, unless specifically provided for in agreements signed by the Government. In tandem with our Meaningful Citizenship Bill, this Bill will ensure that those who are not British citizens are not eligible for benefits.

- **Ensure that those who are not British citizens cannot access social housing.** Around 33,000 new social tenancies each year are going to households where the lead tenant is not a UK national. The government is spending around £4 billion a year to deliver around 30,000 new social homes annually – meaning that spending on the Affordable Homes Programme is going entirely on housing non-nationals. We would restrict social housing to UK citizens, delivering significant savings.

- **Reform the fit note system.** The current system isn't fit for purpose, with Centre for Social Justice research showing that of the estimated 11 million fit notes issued during 2025, 90 per cent certified people as unfit for work.[10] The previous Conservative Government started common-sense reforms that Labour ditched which we will legislate for in this Bill. These included moving the responsibility for issuing fit notes away from GPs, and ensuring access to specialised work and health support, so the focus is on what people can do, not what they cannot.

- **Stop abuse of the Motability scheme**. By tightening eligibility for PIP, we will ensure that people with lower-level mental health conditions will not get access to taxpayer-funded cars.

- **Strengthen the benefit cap.** Many thousands of households are exempted from the benefit cap. The Bill will limit the extra benefits households receive if they are on an exempting benefit or if there is an adult in the household who is able to work but not working. Exemptions shouldn't be a golden ticket.

[10] *Centre for Social Justice,* 3 January 2026, link.

BACK OUR HIGH STREETS BILL

"A Non-Domestic Rates Bill to scrap rates for high street businesses, and for connected purposes."

- High streets are the backbone of our communities, and bring job opportunities, including for young people.

- Rising taxes and burdensome regulation are holding businesses back though, weakening local economies and undermining enterprise, jobs and opportunity. A core part of our economic plan is backing business, because Government doesn't create economic growth – it's the private sector.

- After years of economic shocks, businesses have faced rising costs, but Labour's tax rises and red tape have intensified pressures on high streets. Under new leadership, we will take decisive, permanent action to cut taxes and back businesses.

- We will introduce a permanent 100 per cent business rates relief for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses, capped at £110,000 per business. This will benefit 250,000 businesses in England, cutting costs, supporting jobs and enabling them to reinvest in staff, improve premises and keep prices down.

- This relief is fully funded through our £47 billion savings package, including through cutting the welfare bill and shrinking the size of the Civil Service.

- Only Conservatives have a plan to help local businesses by cutting business rates for 250,000 retail, hospitality and leisure businesses, ending business rates for thousands of them, to build stronger local economies.

Why is the Bill needed?

The retail, hospitality and leisure sectors are important to our community and economy:

- **The retail, hospitality and leisure sectors employ 5.8 million people.** According to the Office for National Statistics, accommodation and food services employs 1.88 million people and 1.1 million people work in arts, entertainment and recreation. According to the British Retail Consortium (BRC), retail employs 2.8 million people.[11] This sector is particularly important for young people – many of us find our first job in a high street business, gaining experience and skills for future careers.

Labour's choices have hit hospitality venues hard:

- **Labour have broken their manifesto promises on business rates.** They pledged: 'Labour will replace the business rates system, so we can raise the same revenue but in a fairer way. This new system will level the playing field between the high street and online giants'. The reverse has happened. The high street is paying more, and tax revenue has gone up. [12]

- **Labour's National Insurance Jobs Tax is hiking up the cost of hiring staff.** For the average pub with eight employees, the National Insurance Jobs Tax is going to add an additional £7,200 of tax to the wage bill.[13]

- **In 2025, Labour hammered firms with higher business rates and higher National Insurance**. In April 2025, the Labour Government slashed back Retail, Hospitality and Leisure business rate relief, originally introduced by Conservatives, from 75 per cent in 2024-25 to 40 per cent in 2025-26. This is a tax rise of £1.1 billion a year from 2024-25 to 2025-26 which dwarfs Labour's sticking plaster measures.

- **In 2026, Labour will hike business rates even more.** Autumn Budget 2025 announced further changes to the way business rates work and a business rate revaluation from April 2026. In 2026-27, the OBR have said that revenue from business rates will rise by 10.2 per cent, up +£3.5 billion a year, even with transitional relief.[14] Bills will further rise as transitional relief is then phased out.

11 Nomis, *Workforce jobs by industry*, June 2025, BRC, link; *Retail in numbers*, accessed 6 October 2025; ONS, *Employment by industry*, 12 August 2025, link.
12 Labour Party, *2024 general election manifesto*, 13 June 2024, link.
13 ONS, *Economies of ale*, 26 November 2018, link; IFS, *Autumn Budget*, 30 October 2024, link.

- **Some sectors are hit very hard**: Many types of businesses will see their bills skyrocket by the revaluation. For example, the average Rateable Value of the hotels sector is up 78 per cent from the last revaluation; pubs are up 30 per cent [NB. The Rateable Value is not the same as the bill].[15]

- This table shows business rates are soaring (taking into account Labour's partial U-turn): [16]

How business rates are increasing for independent retail, hospitality and leisure (RHL)

Business Rates (£)	*Pubs*	*Shops*	*Hotels*	*Restaurants*	*Markets*
Business rates bill for a RHL property in **2024-25**	£3,967	£2,196	£2,495	£5,080	£3,980
Business rates bill for a RHL property in **2025-26**	£9,521	£5,269	£5,988	£12,216	£9,551
Business rates bill for a RHL property in **2026-27** (after transitional relief + pub relief)	£9,307	£6,069	£6,886	£14,048	£10,983
Business rates bill for a RHL property in **2027-28** (after transitional relief + pub relief)	£9,493	£6,869	£8,745	£17,841	£13,949
Business rates bill for a RHL property in **2028-29** (after transitional relief + pub relief)	£9,683	£7,880	£12,419	£18,641	£19,520
Increases					
2024-25 to **2028-29**	£5,716	£5,684	£9,924	£13,561	£15,540
Increases (per cent)					
2024-25 to **2028-29**	144%	259%	398%	267%	390%

14 OBR, *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, 26 November 2025, pp. 105, 186, link.

15 VOA, *Official Statistics*, 26 November 2025, link; OBR, *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, 26 November 2025, link.

16 VOA, *Non domestic rating: change in rateable value of rating lists, England and Wales, 2026 Revaluation (draft list)*, November 2025, link.

- **At the same time, Labour's Employment Rights Act will burden businesses with additional costs and will cost jobs.** Labour's Employment Rights Act will put over 70 new 1970s regulations or requirements on businesses – at a cost to business of up to £5 billion a year. [17]

As Labour's business rates hikes loom, the hospitality sector is at breaking point:

- **1,867 pubs are forecast to close under Labour.** According to *The Independent*, one pub a day has closed since Keir Starmer became prime minister. The latest possible date for the next general election is 15 August 2029, a period of 1,867 days. Therefore, if the rate of closure continues, 1,867 pubs will close over the course of this government.[18]

- **Kate Nicholls, CEO of UKHospitality, said that hospitality venues are already closing earlier because of the Jobs Tax.** She said: 'Pubs are being forced to tighten their belts to weather this tax storm and many are choosing to close on quieter days, or to operate on shorter hours to make ends meet. Not being able to trade at full capacity hits a pub's bottom line but it also makes it more difficult for communities to pop in for a drink or to eat out with friends and family. That is the custom that our pubs desperately need'.[19]

What will the Bill do?

- **We would introduce a permanent 100 per cent business rates relief for the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality (RHL) Sector in England.** 250,000 businesses will benefit from the relief, delivering substantial savings that can then be reinvested in better premises, more staff and lower prices, and lifting thousands out of business rates altogether. The relief would be capped at £110,000 per business.[20]

- **Conservatives will introduce a new Retail, Hospitality and Leisure rate relief in England, worth 100 per cent.** This would otherwise be based on the 2025-26 rate relief scheme. This would be subject to the £110,000 cash cap per business. Our policy costing is based on keeping the 2026-27 Retail, Hospitality and Leisure multiplier, and the pubs and live music relief. No-one will lose out from their current entitlements. The 40 per cent RHL rate relief scheme in 2025-26 cost £1.4 billion. Uprating the scheme for 100 per cent relief, and CPI inflation, we estimate a cost circa £4 billion a year by 2029-30.[20b]

17 The Labour Party, *Plan to Make Work Pay*, 24 May 2024, link; *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 May 2024, link; DBT, *Employment Rights Bill*, October 2024, link; *Electoral Commission*, 11 November 2024, link.

18 *The Independent*, 27 January 2026, link; *BBC News*, 28 January 2026, link.

19 *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 April 2025, link.

20 HMT, *Press Release*, 13 November 2024, link.

20b MHCLG, *National non-domestic rates collected by councils in England: forecast 2025 to 2026*, March 2025, Table 4, link.

GET BRITAIN WORKING BILL

"A Bill to make provision to amend the law relating to employment rights; about procedure for handling redundancies; about the treatment of workers involved in the supply of services under certain public contracts; to abolish the School Support Staff Negotiating Body and the Adult Social Care Negotiating Body; to make provision about trade unions, industrial action, employers' associations and the functions of the Certification Officer; to make provision for the enforcement of legislation relating to the labour market; to prohibit local authorities from paying workers full time pay for less than full time hours; to make provision to reintroduce Minimum Service Levels and to restrict strike action; and for connected purposes."

- The Employment Rights Act 2025 burdened employers with 330 pages of red tape. The result has been reduced hiring, job cuts, and enormous cost to business. The act fundamentally changed the balance between employer and employee in a way that is not economically sustainable and violates decades of cross-party consensus.

- This problem was the direct result of a piece of legislation enacted by the Labour government and was opposed by Conservatives at every stage of its passage through Parliament. Effective opposition which resulted in a government U-turn to protect probationary periods for new workers.

- We will repeal all the job killing measures in the Employment Rights Act 2025.

- The NHS has been brought to a standstill by repeated industrial action, and it is patients bearing the cost. We believe that medicine is a vocation as well as a profession, carrying unique responsibilities to those in need. Essential public services must be protected from widespread disruption, especially where lives are at risk. We will protect patients by ensuring the continuity of NHS services by re-introducing minimum service levels and restricting certain healthcare professionals from striking, bringing doctors in line with the police and military.

- Conservatives believe that only the private sector can create economically sustainable, well-paying jobs. We believe in backing business by reducing red tape to unleash their potential. We believe that it is essential to get Britain working again and ensure young people have the opportunity to get their first chance on the career ladder, out of welfare, and into work.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **Since Labour took office, unemployment has risen to 5.2 per cent.** Unemployment has risen every month that Labour have been in Government as employers have struggled as a result of tax rises, stagnant growth, and increased regulation.[21]

- **Since Labour took office, payrolled jobs have reduced by 110,000**. Labour's attacks on employers have resulted in fewer pay-rolled jobs in the economy, as HMT's real-time PAYE data clearly shows.[22]

- **Youth unemployment has been worst hit with 1 in 6 unable to find a job**. As a result of Labour increasing red tape on first-time jobs, young people are struggling to find work. The latest unemployment figures show that 16 per cent of those aged 16-24 are unemployed (almost 1 in 6).[23] Labour claim they have provided additional rights, but those rights have no value if people cannot find a job. Their approach has failed.

- **Businesses have been clear that the Employment Rights Act will lead them to cut jobs**. Research from respected business groups like the Institute of Directors[24] and the Federation of Small Businesses[25] have repeatedly shown that employers would

21 *ONS unemployment rate MGSX, 19 March 2026,* link.
22 *ONS PAYE RTI Data, 19 March 2026,* link.
23 *ONS 16-24 unemployment rate MGWY, 19 March 2026,* link.
24 *IoD, 6 June 2025,* link.
25 *Federation of Small Businesses, 6 January 2025,* link.

respond to the Employment Rights Act by reducing hiring or cutting existing jobs. This draws a clear causal link between the legislation and the job cuts we have seen in the economy.

- **The Government's own assessment of the Act admits it will cost business billions.** Even after the Government fiddled the figures to cut its estimate of how much the Act would cost business from the initial estimate of £5 billion a year, it still had to admit it would cost around £1 billion a year. That means that over the life of this Parliament the Act will have cost businesses billions.[26]

- **Over the last three years there have been 15 doctors' strikes**. They have cost the taxpayer at least £3 billion.[27] This is money that could otherwise have been spent on frontline services and reducing waiting lists. The strikes have had a terrible effect on patients, leading to thousands of cancelled appointments and operations, as well as additional stress and anxiety.

- **Labour repealed Conservative minimum service level protections, removing safeguards that kept essential NHS services running during strikes.** They have handed out pay increases with no conditions, emboldening trade unions and encouraging more strikes.

- **The total cost of facility time to the public sector is at least £89.8 million**. Conservative analysis of shows that £89.8 million was spent on facility time in the public sector from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. Facility time is time paid by the employer for the worker to do trade union duties. 859 individuals spent 100 per cent of their working hours on facility time at the taxpayers' expense - these are public sector employees who never do the job for which they were hired. There are a total of 20,355 trade union representatives who do some facility time paid out of public funds. We estimate that dismissing public employees spending all their time on facility time will save the public sector at least £13.3 million, with further savings from eliminating taxpayer funded facility time on a part time basis.[28] Some Labour and Liberal Democrat councils have adopted four day weeks, where workers are paid a full time salary but only work four days a week. Plaid Cymru and the Greens have adopted this as policy. This is a burden on council taxpayers, and harms service delivery.

What will the Bill do?

This Bill will repeal all job killing measures of the Employment Rights Act 2025. These are:

- Sections 1-8: Right to guaranteed hours
- Section 9: Right to request flexible working
- Sections 10-13: Statutory sick pay
- Sections 15-16: Parental and Paternity leave: removal of qualifying period of employment
- Section 21: Harassment by third parties (NB: non-sexual, the banter ban)
- Section 25: Right not to be unfairly dismissed: qualifying period and compensation
- Section 28: Dismissal for failing to agree to variation of contract, etc.
- Sections 29-31: Procedure for handling redundancies
- Section 32: Public sector outsourcing: protection of workers
- Sections 33-34: Duties of employers relating to equality
- Part 3, Chapter 1 (S. 38): School support staff
- Part 3, Chapter 2 (S. 39-55): Social care workers
- Section 56: Seafarers' wages and working conditions
- All of Part 4: Trade unions and industrial action, etc.
- All of Part 5: Enforcement of labour market legislation

[26] *DBT Employment Rights Act 2025 Economic Analysis (page 7)*, January 2026, link.
[27] *The Telegraph*, 6 April 2026, link.
[28] Cabinet Office, *Public-sector trade union facility time data,* 9 March 2026, link.

- All of Part 6: Miscellaneous and general
- All of Schedule 1: Agency workers: guaranteed hours and rights relating to shifts
- All of Schedule 2: Consequential amendments relating to sections 1 to 5
- All of Schedule 3: Minor and consequential amendments relating to section 25
- All of Schedule 4: Pay and conditions of school support staff in England
- All of Schedule 5: Seafarers' wages and working conditions
- All of Schedule 6: Trade union recognition
- All of Schedule 7: Legislation subject to enforcement under Part 5
- All of Schedule 8: Warrants under Part 5: further provision
- All of Schedule 9: Persons to whom information may be disclosed under section 135
- All of Schedule 10: Consequential amendments relating to Part 5
- All of Schedule 11: Transitional and saving provision relating to Part 5
- All of Schedule 12: Increase in time limits for making claims

- **We will refer the remaining sections of the Act to our Backing Business Advisory Board for review.** The Board will include people who have worked in or set up a business and will give us the guidance and certainty to decide on the future of parts of the Act which may have had support or which fall into technical areas where further change would cause more disruption to business than maintaining the current provisions. This also includes parts of the Act that called for a review rather than effected a change, and so the board may consider the outcome of that review.

- **We will reintroduce Minimum Service Levels across key sectors**. We will restore and strengthen minimum service level requirements to ensure that essential services like health, fire, education, transport, border security and nuclear continue to operate safely: protecting emergency care, urgent treatment, and critical services.

- **We will amend provisions on unfair dismissal concerning striking doctors and industrial action relating to NHS services will no longer constitute protected trade union activity.** Doctors who strike will lose automatic protection from unfair dismissal that endangers patient safety, bringing their obligations closer in line with those of other essential public service professions.

- **We will ban councils across Great Britain from operating a four-day week for full-time staff on full time pay.** The Bill will protect taxpayers and ensure ratepayers do not pay more for less service.

- **We will abolish the statutory duty on employers to provide paid facility time and ban paid facility time in the public sector outright**. Private sector businesses will remain free to agree their own arrangements with their workforce, but that choice will rest with them, not Whitehall. Unpaid time off for trade union duties will be preserved, as will the right to be accompanied at disciplinary and grievance hearings in full compliance with the UK's international obligations.

REDUCING BUREAUCRACY BILL

"A Bill to make provision about non-financial corporate reporting; requirements for businesses to report on environmental, social, and governance activities; non-financial objectives and remits of regulators, including in financial services; and to make further provision about companies, and for connected purposes."

- The explosion of environmental, social and governance (ESG) red tape has created a vast web of complex rules that force businesses to comply with political targets at a cost to investment, job creation, and Britain's competitiveness. Backing business is a core part of our economic plan for getting Britain working again.

- Since the early 2000s, Britain has seen an explosion of ESG requirements through legislation, regulation, and regulators' activity. These arrived piece by piece over a long period of time and went unchallenged by successive governments until they amounted to a large and costly corpus of red tape. The result has been to hold back British businesses and economic growth for little gain.

- We will repeal statutory ESG reporting, including any future Labour legislation implementing ethnicity pay gap reporting, and refocus regulators strictly on their economic mandates. This will save businesses billions of pounds in costs. Removing ESG requirements is only possible because of the Conservatives' commitment to repeal the Climate Change Act. Voluntary disclosures or third-party associations remain an option but should not be promoted, funded, or mandated by the state.

- Business success should be based on competitive offering the best good or service to customers, not compliance with ideological frameworks – we shouldn't hold business back or burden them with political expectations. Conservatives believe in reducing the size of the state and the complexity businesses face by cutting regulation.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **ESG reporting requirements are only becoming more onerous.** Between 2011 and 2023, 1,255 ESG regulations were introduced globally, compared to 493 regulations between 2001 and 2011. Since 2000, there has been a 647 per cent increase in ESG regulations. There are now over 2,400 ESG regulations in over 80 jurisdictions.[29]

- **ESG reporting is forcing businesses to focus on compliance, not growth**. An independent survey by Mitie found that over half of those working in sustainability reporting believe the current requirements are too complex. A survey by Mitie found that 55 per cent of UK sustainability decision makers think current reporting requirements are too complex with 38 per cent stating they are unsure what they should even be reporting. 59 per cent said they are worried about the impact of not meeting reporting requirements and the financial impact this would have.[30]

- **An independent survey by the OECD found that over 57 per cent of surveyed businesses spend over $1 million a year on sustainability reporting**. The report by the OECD of companies across a range of sectors and countries found that, of the respondents, half spend a quarter of their sustainability budget or more on reporting, 57 per cent spent $1 million or more on sustainability reporting, 57 per cent cited compliance complexity as a 'major challenge', 62 per cent were concerned about supply chain unpreparedness and 49 per cent raised high costs associated with reporting.[31]

29 *ESG News*, 20 June 2023, link.
30 Mitie, *News* , 22 March 2024, link.
31 OECD, *Report*, July 2025, link.

- **ESG is leading to businesses and individuals, such as defence companies, being debanked:** According to the Financial Times, defence companies have been debanked as a result of concerns over ESG. An article by Peggy Hollinger, international business editor of the Financial Times, said that ESG concerns are forcing banks and investors away from investing in defence companies, writing: 'For years now, investors and financial institutions have been backing away from the defence sector for fear of being tainted by controversy over the arms trade'.[32]

- **Labour are placing more ESG reporting requirements on businesses, forcing businesses to spend more time on compliance.** Labour have consulted on mandating financial institutions and FTSE 100 companies to 'develop and implement credible transition plans that align with the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement, new climate related disclosures (UK SRS S1 and S2) and the creation of a voluntary registration regime for the providers of assurance of sustainability reporting.

What will the Bill do?

The Bill will repeal the following:

- **The Companies Act (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013**. These regulations require that companies who do not enjoy a small companies exemption report on social and ethical matters in an annual strategic report. This includes non-financial KPIs on environmental, employee, community, and human rights issues.

- **The Companies Act (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013**. These regulations require quoted companies to include annual greenhouse gas emissions and a report on environmental impact in the directors' report.

- **The Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme Regulations 2014**. These regulations require that any company with over 250 employees or over £44 million in turnover to conduct an energy audit every 4 years to identify energy efficiency opportunities. These audits are not currently published but the Government has consulted on requiring public disclosure and extending the scheme to smaller companies.

- **The Companies Act 2006 (Non-Financial Reporting) Regulations 2016**. These regulations require that public interest entities with over 500 employees include a non-financial and sustainability information statement in the Strategic Report covering environmental, social, employee, human rights, and anti-corruption issues.

- **The Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liability Partnerships (Energy and Carbon Report) Regulations 2018**. This requires that large companies and partnerships report in detail on carbon and energy usage. Quoted companies must report on Scope 1 and 2 emissions and energy use while unquoted companies must report Scope 1 use.

- **The Companies (Miscellaneous Reporting) Regulations 2018**. These regulations place an added requirement for large companies to include a section 172(1) statement in their strategic report outlining regard for employees, suppliers, customers, the community, and the environment.

- **The Companies (Miscellaneous Reporting) Regulations 2018**. These regulations introduced executive pay ratio reporting for UK listed companies with over 250 employees who must report their pay against the median, 25th, and 75th percentile pay of their UK employees. This is subject to an audit.

- **Section 27 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2023.** This section of the Act

32 *The Financial Times*, 9 March 2022, link.

introduced a regulatory principle for the FCA and PRA to contribute to achieving climate and net zero targets.

- **Schedule 17 of the Environment Act 2021**. This will require companies with over £50 million in turnover using certain 'forest risk' commodities to conduct due diligence on their supply chains as well as publishing annual reports to this end to demonstrate due diligence. This schedule requires implementing legislation which has yet to be laid and so is not currently in force. Schedule 17 was written in to the Environment Act 2021 in order to comply with the COP26 Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forest and Land Use. The Declaration is not legally binding but a political declaration. Withdrawal from the Declaration would not be necessary.

- **The Companies (Strategic Report) (Climate Related Financial Disclosure) Regulations 2022** and **The Limited Liability Partnerships (Climate-related Financial Disclosure) Regulations 2022**. These regulations require companies and LLPs (generally those with over 500 employees or over £500 in turnover) to disclose how their board oversees climate risks, the impact of climate change on strategy, and climate risks and opportunities. This must be accompanied by metrics and targets. These regulations were introduced in line with the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) framework.

The Bill will also introduce a ministerial veto over the adoption of new non-financial regulations in the financial services sector, as a safeguard against regulatory 'mission creep'.

Alongside the Bill we will:

- **Issue an immediate request to all regulators to cease new or expanded ESG duties and to remove existing ones.** We will request all regulators to remove ESG duties and cease new or expanded ESG duties in statute and procurement guidance and back this up with legislation where necessary. This will include Companies Act reporting regulations, ESOS 2014, Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting 2018, TCFD 2022 and Environment Act Schedule 17.
    - **In 2021, the FCA published a new ESG sourcebook**. This required asset managers and certain FCA regulated asset owners to make disclosures consistent with the recommendations of the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures.
    - **FCA Listing Rules introduced 'comply or explain' obligations on listed companies to publish climate-related disclosures**. While formally non-binding, failure to comply invites market censure and reputational risk. The rules are rooted in political fashion rather than statutory necessity and should be repealed to restore merit-based governance and protect market integrity.

- **Replace Net Zero 'have regard' letters with growth and competition neutrality letters.** We would require the PRA to withdraw climate stress tests, update existing FCA financial-crime guidance on 'reputational risk' to clarify that regulators will not make judgements about firms' reputable conduct based on otherwise lawful engagement with other lawful businesses, confine regulators to prudential and market objectives and order a cross-quango review on business reporting with the aim of standardising reporting procedures.

- **Monitor regulatory mission creep to prevent reintroduction of repealed duties.** At the outset, we will provide a 12-month safe harbour, publish a compliance repeal list, and issue guidance to Ministers to monitor and consider regulatory mission creep to prevent reintroduction of repealed duties.

SAVE BRITISH INDUSTRY BILL

"A Bill to make provision to abolish the Vehicle Emissions Trading Schemes and the Zero Emission Vehicles mandate; about the monitoring of domestic and offshore carbon emissions; to repeal the Climate Change Act 2008; and for connected purposes."

- Britain is rapidly losing industrial capacity because of crippling carbon taxes and sky-high energy prices. Net Zero is making our industry uncompetitive and leaving us unable to make products which are vital in a modern economy. We are offshoring our production to countries with lower environmental standards.

- The Conservative Party is under new leadership. Claire Coutinho and Kemi Badenoch have changed our position on Net Zero and been honest that we never should have signed Net Zero into law to an arbitrary deadline and without a plan to achieve it. Now we are setting out fully funded, serious plans to save British industry. Conservatives remain committed to ensuring we leave a better environment for the next generation.

- We will repeal the Climate Change Act to allow us to axe the Carbon Tax in its entirety and repeal the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) mandate. We will also set up a monitoring and reporting process to measure how much the decline in British industry is simply offshoring our emissions.

- Our industrial power is our hard power – it is the power that we turn to in times of conflict or war. Shutting down our industry just so we can import more things from countries still powered by coal, all in the name of tackling climate change, is insanity. We must save British industry to create a stronger economy and a stronger country.

- Losing our domestic refining capacity leaves us more exposed to supply shocks, such as those we are experiencing from the recent Middle East conflict or the war in Ukraine.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **Britain lost a third of its refineries last year and our chemical manufacturing output has fallen by 60 per cent in just four years.** This means we are importing more goods from abroad, with higher emissions.[33]

- **Our output of energy-intensive manufactured goods fell by a third in just three years, to its lowest level in 35 years.**[34]

- **Labour's first budget launched a £25 billion tax raid on British business, breaking a manifesto promise and imposing Labour's Jobs Tax.** Labour have increased employer National Insurance contributions, increasing the cost of employment for a business by £900 for the average worker, breaking their manifesto commitment to 'not increase national insurance'.[35]

What will the Bill do?

- **Repeal the Climate Change Act 2008**, to give us the freedoms needed to cut energy prices, rebuild energy security and cut environmental red tape on business. Economic growth rests on reliable and cheap energy, for families and industrial users – it is the foundation of our prosperity.

- **Establish a monitoring and reporting mechanism for the offshoring of emissions**, so the full story about deindustrialisation is known.

- **Repeal the ZEV mandate**, so Britain's car industry can remain internationally competitive and families can choose the best car for them.

Policies that will be included in a Finance Bill:

- **Axe the Carbon Tax,** specifically the Carbon Price Support, Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism and relevant parts of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme to cut electricity bills for business by 20 per cent. With British industry facing some of the most expensive energy costs in the developed world it is no surprise that we are losing so much of our heavy industry.

33 *Energy Select Committee*, Oral Transcript, Evidence from Rachel Fletcher, Octopus; Chris Norbury, E.ON, Simone Rossi, EDF, link.
34 Ofgem, *Energy Price Cap*, accessed 7 August 2025, link.
35 IFS, Autumn Budget 2024, 31 October 2024, link; The Labour Party, *Manifesto 2024*, 13 June 2024, link.

CHEAP ENERGY BILL

"A Bill to abolish the Carbon Price Support mechanism; to abolish the Clean Heat Market Mechanism; to abolish the Renewables Obligation; to abolish Great British Energy, about town and country planning, habitats regulations and environmental impact assessments in relation to nuclear power installations; and for connected purposes."

- Britain has the highest industrial electricity prices and the second highest domestic electricity prices in the developed world. We must take radical action to bring down the cost of energy for households and businesses to create a stronger economy.

- The Conservative Party is under new leadership. Claire Coutinho and Kemi Badenoch have changed our position on Net Zero and been honest that we never should have signed Net Zero into law. Now we are setting out fully funded, serious plans to rewire the energy system to put cheap, reliable energy first.

- We will cut energy bills by £200 for households and cut electricity bills on average by 20 per cent for businesses by removing VAT from domestic energy bills for three years, axing the Carbon Tax, and abolishing the Renewable Obligation subsidies. We will scrap the Boiler Tax. We will also make nuclear power much cheaper and easier to build by streamlining planning regulations.

- We will scrap government interventions which are pushing up energy bills for every family and business in Britain, stop spending taxpayers' money on wasteful Net Zero projects like Great British Energy – the energy company that doesn't produce any energy, and reorientate the entire energy system into making energy cheaper to create a stronger economy and get Britain working again.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **Britain's energy prices are far too high, largely because of Government policy**. Labour are piling hundreds of pounds of costs onto energy bills in their obsessive rush towards Net Zero. This means that by 2030, even if gas was free, energy bills would still have to rise to pay for all the extra costs of Labour's rush to Net Zero, like building more grid and paying wind farms to switch off.[36]

- **Labour promised to cut energy bills by £300 but they have risen by £73.** The energy price cap for July to September 2024 was £1,568 compared to £1,641 for April to June 2026, a £73 increase.[37]

What will the Bill do?

- **Scrap Great British Energy, the Renewable Obligation subsidy scheme for renewables and the Boiler Upgrade heat pump subsidies**, to cut electricity bills by £22.

- **Abolish the Clean Heat Market Mechanism** (Boiler Tax), the subsidy for heat pumps, which nobody wants and can be used to cut bills for all.

- **Disapply the habitats regulations and Environmental Impact Assessments for large-scale nuclear sites**, making it easier and cheaper to build new nuclear to help bring down bills, while protecting crucial safety standards.

Policies that will be included in a Finance Bill:

- **Scrap VAT on domestic energy bills for three years**, to cut energy bills by £94.82

- **Axe the Carbon Tax** (the UK Emissions Trading Scheme and Carbon Price Support), to cut electricity bills by £75.

- These policies are funded by getting Britain drilling and by changes to wider energy policy including removing the Clean Heat Market Mechanism.

36 *The Independent* , 29 April 2025, link; Chemical Industries Association, *Letter to the Prime Minister,* 3 March 2026, link.
37 ONS, *The impact of higher energy costs on UK businesses: 2021 to 2024,* 19 May 2025, link.

GET BRITAIN DRILLING BILL

"A Bill to make provision about licences to search, bore for and get offshore petroleum and natural gas; to change the name, functions and duties of the North Sea Transition Authority; to remove decarbonisation requirements in the offshore petroleum sector; to remove restrictions on the export of oil and gas technology; and for connected purposes."

- Britain's domestic oil and gas industry is being shut down because of crippling taxes and Labour's ban on new licences. We are losing a thousand jobs a month and becoming more dependent on foreign imports with higher emissions. Kemi Badenoch and Russell Findlay have said that the North Sea industry is now facing an emergency.

- In Government, the Conservatives were legislating to provide for the regular issuing of oil and gas licences. Labour came to office and banned new licences, as well as increased and extended the Energy Profits Levy – the so-called Windfall Tax - which is making the sector uninvestable. Claire Coutinho and Kemi Badenoch have changed our position on Net Zero and been honest that we never should have signed Net Zero into law.

- We will legislate to strip away the Net Zero taxes, mandates, and restrictions that are strangling the oil and gas sector.

- It is better for our economic, national, and energy security to use our own oil and gas. Making ourselves more dependent on foreign imports with higher emissions, while leaving our own resources sitting under the North Sea, is economic and environmental insanity. This is all the more important given recent supply shocks cause by the Middle East conflict and the Ukraine war. Only the Conservatives have a plan to get Britain working by getting Britain drilling again.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **We are losing a thousand jobs per month in the North Sea** because of Labour's Net Zero policies.[38]

- **Britain's imports of liquefied natural gas increased by 42% in a single year** because of declining domestic production.[39]

- **Our oil and gas industry is being strangled by vexatious legal challenges and Net Zero rules.**[40]

- **Labour hiked taxes on the oil and gas industry leading to a £25 billion fall in revenue for the Exchequer by 2035.** In 2024, the Chancellor increased the rate of the Energy Profits Levy (EPL) by 3 per cent and extended it to 2030. Stifel, predicted that tapering down the EPL by 2027 would raise an additional £1-2 billion per year in tax revenue, rising to a total of £25 billion across 2030-35.[41]

What will the Bill do?

- **End the ban on new exploration and drilling licences in the North Sea**, to unlock billions more barrels of oil and gas for extraction and to create new jobs.

- **Rename the North Sea Transition Authority to the North Sea Authority and remove its Net Zero mandate**, to maximise North Sea oil and gas drilling and raise billions more in revenue which can be used to cut taxes.

- **Remove the requirement to decarbonise/ electrify oil and gas rigs**, cutting the red tape which stops rigs from being built, meaning more oil and gas can be extracted and creating thousands more jobs.

- **End the ban on exporting oil and gas technology overseas**, which previously created £5 billion in exports to support our oil and gas industry.

- **Reverse the Finch ruling which requires oil and gas projects to account for their Scope 3 emissions**, making it easier for new North Sea developments to get approval.

Policies that will be included in a Finance Bill:

- **Repeal the Energy Profits Levy,** to incentivise investment in the North Sea which is forecast to increase tax revenue by £25 billion over the next ten years, meaning more money for public services.

38 *Aberdeen Angus Business News*, 19 August 2025, link.
39 *Aberdeen and Grampian Chambers of Commerce* , 26 June 2025, link.
40 DESNZ, *Press Release*, 29 August 2024, link.
41 Stifel, *Written Evidence* , January 2026, link.

STRONGER
COUNTRY

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE ECHR AND CONSTITUTION RESTORATION BILL

"A Bill to make provision about the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Convention on Human Rights; and for connected purposes. A Bill to make provision about repealing the Human Rights Act; and for connected purposes."

- Membership of the ECHR and the Blairite Human Rights Act have undermined democracy and accountability. They have affected all areas of law and policy, at all levels of government. They have prevented us from securing our borders and removing illegal immigrants and prisoners, and enabled veterans and members of our armed forces to be pursued through the courts by activist lawyers. Protesters have been allowed to block roads and disrupt lives, time and time again. The European Court of Human Rights has even intervened on climate change policy.

- Conservatives believe our sovereign Parliament, accountable to the British people, should make the laws that govern the United Kingdom. Lord Wolfson KC advised in his report to the Shadow Cabinet: '*When it comes to control of our sovereign borders, preventing our military veterans from being pursued indefinitely, ensuring prison sentences are applied rigorously for serious crimes, stopping disruptive protests, or placing blanket restrictions on foreign nationals in terms of social housing and benefits, the only way such positions are feasible would be to leave the ECHR.*'

- Leaving the ECHR and repealing the Human Rights Act are necessary preconditions for the steps urgently needed to secure our borders, restore fairness in the benefits system and protect our service men and women from lawfare. These steps are further advanced by other bills in this King's Speech.

Why are these bills needed?

Lord Wolfson KC's review of ECHR membership has concluded control of our sovereign borders is only feasible if we leave the ECHR.

- **The ECHR started off as a noble endeavour, but in practice it prevents us protecting our borders and our citizens.** It prevents us removing dangerous foreign criminals. It prevents us removing those who cross the channel illegally. The very foundations of democracy are being undermined because the British people have made it clear they want to see action in these areas, and successive governments have failed to deliver.

- **Lord Wolfson's Commission sets out: 'In practice, the ECHR places significant restrictions on the ability of any government and Parliament to operate the UK's immigration policies without running a risk of breaching the ECHR and being subjected to Rule 39 Orders (as was the case with the Rwanda scheme).** ECHR membership places significant practical limits on the UK's ability to maintain control of its borders, both for reasons of mandated process and substance (in the sense that even where claimants lose in the end, the process cost may frustrate effective immigration enforcement more generally)."[42]

The ECHR makes it very difficult to remove illegal immigrants from the United Kingdom.

- **The European Court of Human Rights has expanded non-refoulement obligations beyond what is contained in the Refugee Convention or the Torture Convention.** Articles 2 and 3 of the ECHR have been interpreted as imposing obligations not to return or deport people to territories where their life might be at risk or where they might be subject to a real risk of inhuman or degrading treatment, or even a third country to which they might be moved from the recipient country.[43]

- **ECHR claims can be successfully brought if a person can show they would receive worse medical treatment in their home country than in the United Kingdom.** Following the legal test in an earlier European Court of Human Rights decision, the UK Supreme Court has ruled that to remove someone the Government must prove that the medical facilities available to the deportee in his or her home country would eliminate any real risk that his or her lifespan would be significantly shortened by removal from NHS facilities

to that country.[44] Given the relative quality of medical care in the UK, almost anyone requiring medical care from a 'developing country' could made a claim to frustrate their removal.

The ECHR prioritises the rights of foreign national offenders over British citizens.

- **The ECHR privileges the rights of illegal immigrants over British citizens.** Illegal immigrants can challenge decisions to remove them from the United Kingdom using ECHR Articles 2 and Article 3. The European Court of Human Rights has determined that any Article 2 or Article 3 risks to the citizens of the United Kingdom from the continued presence of foreign national offenders who have used the ECHR to challenge their deportation is irrelevant.[45] A real risk of ill-treatment contrary to Article 3 of the ECHR will, prevent deportation of an individual no matter what the reason for their expulsion, such as the nature of any crime for which they have been convicted or the risk to the 'host' population of the deporting state.

Membership of the ECHR prevents us from being able to protect our veterans, and members of our armed forces:

- **Expanding case law means that the ECHR has now displaced the law of armed conflict in relation to military operations, frustrating our ability to act in conflict situations.** The ECHR has been held to apply extraterritorially, meaning the United Kingdom is under ECHR obligations to anyone in relation to whom the UK exercises force in any overseas area over which it has effective control.[46] Claims could be brought, for example, for the length of time enemy combatants are detained, or whether handcuffs have been used to detain an individual.
- **The ECHR has led to years of enquiries, inquests and, ultimately, prosecution of veterans in the context of the Troubles in Northern Ireland**. The Conservative's Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 granted conditional immunity to all combatants of the Troubles to prevent onesided prosecutions of veterans. The Northern Irish Court of Appeal held it to be incompatible with the ECHR and the Victims Directive. The Labour Government has decided not to appeal this decision and instead, through a Remedial Order made possible by the Human Rights Act, is legislating to repeal key elements of the 2023 Act and restart inquests into Northern Ireland veterans.[47]

The Human Rights Act gives effect to Convention Rights in domestic law; the benefits of leaving the ECHR will be difficult to realise while the Human Rights Act remains in force.

- **The Human Rights Act outsources control of our laws to a foreign court**. The Human Rights Act requires any UK court or tribunal determining a question that has arisen in connection with a Convention right to take into account judgments, decisions, declarations and advisory opinions of the European Court of Human Rights; it requires all United Kingdom legislation must be interpreted (as far as possible) compatibly with Convention rights – overriding the intention of Parliament; it mandates public authorities to act compatibly with Convention rights and it allows courts to make a declaration of incompatibility where legislation cannot be interpreted in a manner consistent with Convention rights, which triggers ministerial powers to remedy the incompatibility through an expedited legislative process.

42 Letter from Lord Wolfson to Kemi Badenoch, page 45, 2 October 2025, archived.
43 *R (on the application of AAA and others) v Secretary of State for the Home Department* [2023] UKSC 42 ("AAA") [95] [105].
44 Policy Exchange, *Immigration, Strasbourg, and Judicial Overreach,* link.
45 *Saadi v Italy* (37201/06, 28 February 2008, ECtHR) ("*Saadi v Italy*").
46 *Al-Skeini v United Kingdom* (55721/07, 2011, ECtHR).
47 NIO, *The Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 (Remedial) Order 2025*, 14 October 2025, link.

- **Retaining the Human Rights Act after leaving the ECHR would leave it to the courts, rather than Parliament, to set and interpret human rights.** Our democratically elected Parliament, rather than the courts, should decide on the balance and limits of rights. It is not guaranteed in this situation that our courts will move away from current Strasbourg and domestic case law; if this didn't happen, then nothing would change. Further, any case law changes would be incremental. We need to act now.

The Supreme Court judgment in Miller has called into question the operation of the prerogative power to enter and leave treaties.

- **After the 2016 referendum to leave the EU, the Supreme Court ruled that Parliament had to agree that the Government could serve notice to leave the EU.** Although the question of whether to make or un-make treaties has been traditionally seen as a prerogative matter not requiring Parliamentary approval, in R (on the application of Miller and Dos Santos) v Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, the Supreme Court decide it would be inconsistent with the terms of the European Communities Act 1972 for the Prime Minister to give notice to the EU, under Article 50(2) of the Treaty of the European Union, of the United Kingdom's intention to withdraw from the EU Treaties without a prior Act of Parliament.

What will the bills do?

European Convention on Human Rights (Notification of Withdrawal) Bill

- **Give the Prime Minister the power to withdraw Britain from the European Convention on Human Rights.** This Bill will put beyond all legal doubt that the United Kingdom will leave the ECHR.

Human Rights Act (Repeal) Bill

- **Repeal the Human Rights Act.** The result of this Bill would be that the United Kingdom would revert the situation that had existed before 1998, with Parliament as the guardian of rights through existing statutory and common law protections without needing a single statute setting out rights. Fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, the right to a fair trial, protection of private property rights, and personal liberty have long been recognised in UK law; most the rights encompassed by the ECHR are already included in various forms in UK statute.

A separate bill will establish a framework for the operation of institutions in Northern Ireland outside of the ECHR to ensure that the intentions of the Belfast Agreement are adhered to (as per Lord Wolfson's report).

The Conservatives are the only Party with a plan to get Britain working again:

The Labour Government:

The Labour Government are trying to tinker round the edges of Human Rights law which will not stop the small boat crossings or enable us to deport illegal immigrants. Shabana Mahmood is trying to restrict the application of Article 8 in immigration cases, but illegal immigrants will use other absolute articles to prevent deportation.[48]

48 *Hansard*, 20 November 2025, Vol. 775 Col.901, link.

PROTECTING OUR BORDERS BILL

"A Bill to make provision about banning asylum claims for illegal immigrants, withdrawing from the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking Human Beings, deportation of all illegal arrivals and all foreign national offenders; to make provision about abolishing the immigration tribunal, judicial review and legal aid for immigration cases; to make provision about returns agreements backed by visa sanctions; and for connected purposes."

- The UK faces a border crisis. Small boat crossings have surged under this Labour Government. Keir Starmer has presided over a higher number of illegal boat crossings than any Prime Minister on record.

- The Labour Government has no answer to these questions and no plan – only gimmicks. Their laughable claim to 'smash the gangs' lies in tatters. The previous Conservative Government legislated for the Rwanda plan to deter crossings but endless lawfare prevented it from becoming fully operational. The Labour Government dismantled it with no replacement. That is why we must go further.

- The Conservative Party has developed a real plan to tackle illegal immigration and protect our borders – our BORDERS plan. We will ban asylum claims for illegal immigrants, leave ECAT, deport all illegal arrivals and FNOs, end legal aid and restrict judicial review for immigration cases, use visa sanctions against countries who refuse to take back their nationals, and abolish the immigration tribunal to put a stop to lawfare.

- Our plan puts the power back into the hands of the British public. We will stop British taxpayer's money being wasted on rewarding illegal immigrants with free housing and free healthcare, making the system fairer for those who have actually paid into it and putting British citizens first.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **More than 69,000 illegal immigrants have crossed the Channel since the 2024 General Election, giving Keir Starmer the highest number of crossings of any Prime Minister on record.** Since the 4 July 2024, 69,155 illegal immigrants have crossed the Channel.[49]

- **The total number of people in asylum accommodation is 107,003, higher than at the time of the 2024 General Election.** The number of asylum seekers being housed in accommodation by 31 December 2025 was 107,003. The number of asylum seekers being housed by June 2024 was 100,995.[50]

- **In Labour's first year in office, they recorded the highest ever number of asylum claims in history.** A total of 111,084 people claimed asylum in the UK in the year ending June 2025. 43,600 of these claims came from illegal immigrants who arrived on boats and 12,100 came from illegal immigrants who entered through other illegal routes. 41,100 came from immigrants who arrived on a visa or other leave with relevant documentation.[51]

- **Only 6 per cent of small boat arrivals have been returned under Labour and less than 17 per cent of returns have been enforced.** Between July 2024 and December 2025, only 3,676 small boat migrants were returned whilst 64,799 have arrived. Only 14,351 returns have been enforced since July 2024.

- **Over 200 people living in asylum hotels were charged with criminal offences last year.** It was reported that at least 200 people living in asylum seeker hotels have been charged with criminal offences in 2025.

49 Home Office, *Small Boat Arrivals*, 25 March 2026, link.
50 Home Office, *Accredited Official Statistics*, 26 February 2026, link.
51 Home Office, *Accredited Official Statistics,* 21 August 2025, link.

- Court records show that 211 people living in the hotels, which are used by the Home Office to house asylum seekers, have been charged with a combined 425 offences.' [52]

What will the Bill do?

- **The Bill will ban asylum, and other protection claims for illegal entrants.** Claims from illegal entrants will no longer be heard.

- **The Bill will reinstate a duty on the Secretary of State to remove illegal migrants.** Everyone who arrives by small boat will be immediately deported to their home country if possible, or to a safe third country if not.

- **The Bill will give Parliamentary approval to withdraw from ECAT.** We will exit the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (ECAT). Domestic modern slavery laws will be amended so that modern slavery claims no longer prevent removal of those with no right to be here.

- **The Bill will lower the threshold for automatic deportation of FNOs and mandate deportation for all illegal immigrants within a week of arrival.** All those arriving illegally will be immediately removed with no hearing, subject only to the Home Secretary's exceptional discretion. We will lower the criminal threshold for automatic deportation to any criminal conviction (with exceptions only for the most trivial penalties such as parking or minor speeding offences).

- **The Bill will end the Immigration Tribunal, most Judicial Review and Legal Aid for immigration matters.** The only grounds for Judicial Review will be that the Home Secretary has acted without proper statutory authority, strictly and narrowly defined.

Non-legislative measures to take back control of our borders

- **We will use existing powers to remove foreign aid and target visa sanctions at countries who will not take back their own nationals.**

52 *The Daily Telegraph*, 7 August 2025, link.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITIZENSHIP BILL

"A Bill to make provision about indefinite leave to remain and citizenship conditions; to make provision about immigration entry requirements; to require the Secretary of State to set an annual limit on the number of people entering the United Kingdom through non-visitor visa routes; and for connected purposes."

- The Labour Government have shown they are too weak to act to restrict eligibility for indefinite leave to remain (ILR) and citizenship, and all of the rights that entails: they are failing to stand up to the former Deputy Prime Minister to get through planned changes to ILR which will save the British taxpayer billions of pounds.

- Under a future a Conservative Government, only those who make a real contribution can stay permanently, and only British citizens will be eligible for benefits funded by British taxpayers. We will introduce a binding annual cap on immigration so that only highly skilled workers will be able come to the UK.

- This will take pressure off public services and stop British people having to subsidise low skilled workers through their taxes. This will also put the British people first in the queue for well paid jobs, housing and other public services.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **898,000 people came to the UK last year under Labour.** Even though net migration is coming down, immigration is still very high – 898,000 people came to the UK in the year ending June 2025. The number of nationals from nonEU+ countries is still at 670,000, 75 per cent of total immigration.[53]

- **Since 2021, family visa applications have been on an upward trend, driven primarily by a 57 per cent increase in partner visa applications between 2021 (35,714) and 2024 (56,076).**

    - **Over 66,000 family visas were issued in the year to December 2025.** 9,027 applications from Pakistanis were granted, 4,376 from Afghans, 2,792 from Nepal, 3,432 from the USA and 2,903 from Indians.

- **Because of Conservative reforms, long-term net migration is down by almost 50 per cent – but this is not enough.** The number of people immigrating long-term minus the number of people emigrating long term is provisionally estimated to be 431,000 in the year ending December 2024 compared with 860,000 a year earlier.

    - **This is because of the visa rule changes introduced by the former Conservative Government.** This included clamping down visas by restricting dependents of most international students and care workers and increasing the minimum income for the Skilled Worker visa.[54]

- **It has been estimated that between 742,000 and 1,224,000 migrants are likely to get ILR in the next few years.** In the base case scenario, more than 801,000 recent migrants would receive ILR.[55]

- **Labour have paused our increase to the family visa salary increase to £38,700, reversing part of our immigration reforms that would have brought down net migration by 300,000.** Another Labour review means that the Conservative Government's increase in the family visa salary will be stopped and will remain at £29,000.[56]

- **48 per cent of London's social housing is occupied by people who are foreign-born.** According to the 2021 census, 47.6 per cent of social housing was occupied by a lead tenant who was born outside of the UK.[57]

53 ONS, *Long term international migration, provisional: year ending June 2025*, 27 November 2025, link.
54 HO, *News Story*, 2 January 2024, link.
55 CPS, *Here to Stay?* link.
56 ONS, *Tenure of household and year of arrival in the UK*, 28 March 2023, link; *The Daily Telegraph* , 9 April 2025, link.

- **72 per cent of Somalians live in social housing in the UK.** For people from countries like Afghanistan, Ghana and Jamaica, the proportion of those living in social housing is 36 per cent, 37 per cent and 41 per cent respectively. Rates varied from 6 per cent for people from India to 15 per cent for people from Pakistan to 34 per cent for people from Bangladesh. By contrast, only 5 per cent of people from Australia and 6 per cent of Americans are in social housing.[58]

- **Nearly 1 million people in England and Wales cannot speak English well or cannot speak English.** In 2021, in England and Wales there were 810,720 people cannot speak English or Welsh well and 140,858 who cannot speak English or Welsh at all.[59]

- **According to a 2021 study, about 55 per cent of British Pakistanis are married to first cousins, while the practice accounts for about 3 per cent of all marriages nationally.**[60]

What will the Bill do?

- **The Bill will introduce a legally binding Parliament voted annual cap on migration, giving power back to Parliament.** This cap would be decided annually and ensure that the levels of migration are determined by the British people.[61]

- **The Bill will double the period of time you have to be in this country before you can claim Indefinite Leave to Remain from five to ten years.** We would also add new conditions, including the individual not having claimed benefits or used social housing during the entire qualification period, be a net contributor, and not have any criminal record.[62]

- **The Bill will extend the time to apply for British citizenship from 12 months to five years after obtaining ILR.** This country is not a hotel or a dormitory – it is our home. And citizenship must be a privilege, not something which can be automatically acquired.

- **The Bill will introduce new rules to bring an end to the era of mass lows-killed migration, including a higher salary threshold.** Spousal visas will be strictly limited. This includes implementing a higher salary threshold for the UK-based partner, mandating that both partners be over the age of 23 to combat forced marriages, mandate that no spousal visas will be issued to first cousins, and create an overall annual cap on family visas (within the overall cap) to specify that no one country's nationals can take up more than seven per cent of the total allocation.

- **The Bill will make provision for any individual who is found to have obtained ILR or citizenship on the basis of false information to have their status revoked.**

58 ONS, *Country of birth and tenure of household* , 28 March 2023, link; Neil O'Brien, *Substack* , 30 January 2024, link.
59 UK Statistics Authority, *Letter*, 7 February 2025, link.
60 *BBC News*, 27 January 2025, link.
61 *The Conservative Party*, 7 October 2025, link.
62 *BBC News*, 6 February, link.

TAKE BACK OUR STREETS BILL

"A Bill to make provision to take back our streets from criminals by introducing immediate justice community sentences, cracking down on cannabis consumption, curbing e-bikes and scooters on pavements and cracking down on ghost plates, and for connected purposes."

- Anti-social behaviour, crime and disorder destroy our high streets and undermine our society. They also allow more serious offending to take root: graffiti, open use of drugs, phone theft and rampant shoplifting. We can all see it happening in Labour's Britain. The effect is higher prices for consumers and challenges for businesses.

- That is why the Conservative Party are introducing their plan to take back our streets with the Take Back Our Streets Bill. This will expand the use of stop and search to get drugs and knives off our streets, and roll out Live Facial Recognition to catch known criminals. These measures will supported by the deployment of 10,000 additional police officers on the streets, funded through our savings package from welfare reform and shrinking the size of the Civil Service.

- Leaving the ECHR allows us to pass laws on trespass that will allow the police to take firm action on travellers trespassing on land and local authorities to enforce planning law. Trespass legislation by Conservative governments was successfully challenged on human rights grounds, and traveller communities have used equality and human rights laws to deter councils from enforcing planning law. The Labour government has done nothing to support landowners and local authorities. This bill restores fair and equal enforcement of the law and protect property rights.

- People deserve to feel safe on our streets and that will only happen when criminals who undermine society are punished justly. Only the Conservatives with a strong leader, experienced team and clear plan will deliver this with our Take Back Our Streets Bill that will get Britain working again by taking back our streets.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **Serious crime is rising on Labour's watch, meaning people feel less safe on their streets.** In the year ending September 2025, there has been a five per cent increase in the number of shoplifting offences, an eight per cent increase in sexual offences, and a 66 per cent increase in robbery of property business, harming community trust and businesses on our high streets.[63]

- **The number of police officers fell by over 1,300 in the year ending September 2025.** There has been a decrease of 1,318 police officers in the 12 months between September 2024 and September 2025.[64]

- **Police in England and Wales recorded around one million incidents of anti-social behaviour in the year ending September 2025, highlighting just how widespread these crimes have become.** According to ONS survey, 38 per cent of the public have personally experienced or witnessed anti-social behaviour during that period.[65]

- **Knife crime remains at alarming levels, which is eroding trust within our communities.** According to the ONS, there were almost 50,000 knife incidents in the year ending September 2025.[66]

63 ONS, *Crime in England and Wales: Year Ending September 2025,* 29 January 2026, link.
64 HO, *Police Workforce England and Wales: 30 September 20256* , 28 January 2026, link.
65 ONS, *Crime in England and Wales: Year Ending September 2025,* 29 January 2026, link.
66 ONS, *Crime in England and Wales: Year Ending September 2025,* 29 January 2026, link.

- **Shoplifting has increased by 10 per cent since the 2024 General Election**. There were 519,000 reported incidents in the year ending September 2025.[67]

- **There has been a 65 per cent decrease in Stop and Searches nationwide**. In 2008-2009, police conducted 1.52 million Stop & Searches nationwide but by 2024-2025, the number was down to 528,000.[68]

- **Cannabis is Britain's most commonly used illicit drug.** 6.8 per cent of adults, or around 2.3 million people, have used cannabis in the last year.[69]

- **Two-thirds of officers believe that cannabis has been decriminalised in practice**. As a result, cannabis possession has a much lower charge or summons rate (16.7 per cent) than for other drug possession offences (29.7 per cent).[70]

- **Under the last Conservative Government, Parliament strengthened the law to tackle unauthorised traveller camps, but the courts have since blocked it.** The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 extended the no-return period from three months to twelve months and introduced a new offence of residing on land with a vehicle without consent where significant harm is caused. The courts blocked our plans under the ECHR. In May 2024, the High Court ruled the 12-month no-return period incompatible with Article 14 of the ECHR, claiming it would be discriminatory. This prevented the democratically elected Parliament from protecting communities.[71]

What will the Bill do?

- **Triple stop and search to take knives and drugs off the streets.** The Bill will amend section 60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to explicitly allow "without suspicion" searches to take place in the 2,000 worst crime hotspot areas. We would amend PACE Code A to enable a single suspicion indicator to be reasonable grounds for a stop and search. This will lead to one million more stop and searches and 300,000 more arrests.[72]

- **Enable the police to issue 'Immediate Justice' assignments.** The Bill will give the police the power to issue timely community sentences, meaning that those committing lower-level offences, such as criminal damage, minor or common assault, or drunk and disorderly, will clean up our streets and parks to make our communities tidier and more orderly. These new powers will enable police to issue an estimated two million hours of graffiti cleaning and clearing up parks and public areas.

- **Give the Home Secretary the power to set overall operational priorities so that the police will be directed to crack down on cannabis use.** We will remove the need for a force to be 'failing' or any College of Policing consent through amendments to Section 40 and Section 41A of the 1996 Police Act – this will give the Home Secretary the power to set overall operational priorities. First time offenders will get a formal, on-the-record caution or an Immediate Justice assignment. Second offences will be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court.

67 ONS, *Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2025*, 29 January 2026, link.
68 Home Office, *Stop and Search data tables year ending 31 March 2025*, 6 November 2025, link.
69 ONS, *Drug misuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2025,* 11 December 2025, link.
70 Home Office, *Crime outcomes in England and Wales 2024 to 2025*, 5 August 2025, link.
71 UK Parliament, Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, 4 April 2026, link; High Court, Smith v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2024] EWHC 1137, 14 May 2024, link.
72 Home Office, *Stop and Search data tables year ending 31 March 2025*, 6 November 2025, link.

- **Curb dangerous e-bike and e-scooter riding.** E-bike and e-scooters scan be dangerous to pedestrians, with some being heavy, fast and powerful, yet they are currently treated like bicycles rather than motorbikes. The Bill will enable the police always to intervene when they see dangerous behaviours on e-bikes and scooters and impose increased penalties.

- **Stamp out ghost plates.** Using fake or 'ghost plates' allows serious criminal activity but there is only a £100 fine for using a non-compliant plate and a £1,000 fine for making and selling them. The Bill will make it illegal to make, sell or fit any false licence plate. Manufacturers or online retailers of cloned plates will face a fine of up to £100,000 and 5 years in prison. The Bill will introduce a driving ban of up to two years, up to a year in prison and a £5,000 fine for any driver caught using a plate that does not match their vehicle's registered build.

- **We will back the police by giving them the power to deal with unauthorised traveller camps.** The Bill will give the police the power to ban travellers from returning to encampments indefinitely. The police will be given the power to remove travellers if requested by the landowner – going further than has previously been possible. We will also rebuild hard deterrence. We will make it an offence to trespass with a vehicle after being directed to leave and scrap the ban on removing trespassing travellers if no alternative site is available.

- **We will stop traveller planning cases being treated as an 'equality' matter**. Planning decisions should be made on the basis of their spatial effect on the locality, not based on the identity of the applicant. Outside the ECHR, we will disapply the past rulings that planning laws applied to travellers are an equality law matter. Instead, decisions should be made through the prism of housing policy (for authorised sites) and planning policy (for unauthorised sites). As part of our review of the Equality Act, we will ensure the public sector equality duty does not apply to such planning decisions.

- **We will end the abuse of retrospective planning permission by unauthorised travellers**. Following our departure from the ECHR and repeal of the Human Rights Act, Conservatives will be able to legislate to end the two-tier planning system. This will stop the unauthorised caravan sites intentionally being built first and regularised later. These reforms focus on the nature of the development, not the identity of the developer, and apply equally to everyone.

- **We will amend Section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 so that no retrospective planning application may be made for a material change of use of land to a residential caravan site.** Anyone who wants to live on land in a caravan must always get permission first. The prohibition on retrospective applications will apply to all applications made after commencement. Existing unauthorised sites will be subject to a 12 month grace period during which occupiers may apply for permission on a different site or make arrangements to vacate.

Non-legislative measures to take back our streets:

- **Deploy 10,000 extra police and introduce hotspot patrolling.** A quarter of all crime happens in just five per cent of neighbourhoods, which is why we will use our investment in 10,000 extra police officers to introduce intense hotspot patrolling of these 2,000 crime hotspot areas. This will prevent an estimated 35,000 crimes and deter anti-social behaviour, shoplifting and knife crime. This commitment is fully-funded through our savings plan.

- **Roll out Live Facial Recognition in crime hotspots across the country (LFR).** Live Facial Recognition is a breakthrough technology to fight crime. A Met Police trial in 2024 saw 1,000 known criminals arrested, and when used in Croydon Town Centre, there was a 12 per cent reduction in crime in a year. Rolling out routine LFR to the 100 highest crime areas will deliver an estimated 24,000 arrests of wanted criminals.

SOVEREIGN DEFENCE FUND BILL

"A Bill to make provision for the creation of a National Defence and Resilience Bank, and for connected purposes."

- These are extremely dangerous times. But Labour is not prepared to finance our armed forces and can't even publish its promised Defence Investment Plan. The Government has no plan for hitting 3 per cent of GDP on defence this Parliament, despite the growing threats we face.

- By contrast, Conservatives would establish a Sovereign Defence Fund to accelerate Britain's war readiness. The fund would mobilise billions in public and private funding to overhaul the country's defence industrial base. The plan is a fully funded plan, with £17 billion of public spending reallocated to defence, from re-prioritising R&D funding and funds currently earmarked for net-zero and other wasteful programmes.

- Labour's priority is spending billions more on welfare spending and handing over £35 billion to Mauritius to surrender the Chagos Islands and pay for the privilege. Only the Conservatives will take the tough decisions needed to ensure Britain remains a cornerstone of global security.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **Labour's Defence Investment Plan is still nowhere to be seen, despite the government committing to complete it in Autumn 2025.** We are still yet to see a Defence Investment Plan from Labour, despite the obvious and growing threats to Britain's security.[73]

- **Labour's much-vaunted Strategic Defence Review was late – and a damp squib.** Labour committed to publishing their flagship Strategic Defence Review in Spring 2025 but ended up publishing it in the summer. In addition to being overdue, the Review kicked big procurement decisions down the road, because Labour has not got a plan to hit 3 per cent of GDP on defence.[74]

- **Labour has parked the Conservatives' fully funded £10 billion Munitions Plan.** We went into the General Election with a plan to spend £10 billion to replenish our munition stocks. Labour has not committed to that plan and can't even publish its own Defence Investment Plan.

- **Since the election, Labour have dithered and delayed over the decision to increase defence spending whilst the world got more dangerous.** On 25 February 2025, seven months after Keir Starmer scrapped the previous Conservative Government's fully funded increase to defence spending, Labour announced defence spending would reach 2.5 per cent of GDP by 2027. They cannot guarantee spending of 3 per cent this Parliament.[75]

- **There are reports that Labour is facing a £28 billion black hole in its defence spending plans**. These reports confirm what we've been warning for months – Labour's plans for defence spending fall a long way short of what is needed to actually keep us safe, in the face of rising threats. The Defence Investment Plan is late because the money just isn't there to fund it. Labour has prioritised higher welfare spending over defence of the realm and our armed forces are paying the price.[76]

- **With the seriousness of the threats we are facing, Conservatives would raise defence spending to 3 per cent of GDP by the end of this Parliament and are pushing Labour to make that same commitment, rather than kick the can down the road into the next decade.** Kemi Badenoch made clear that the UK must show global leadership, calling on the Labour Government to set out funded plans to raise defence spending to 3 per cent of GDP by the end of this Parliament.[77]

73 MoD, *Strategic Defence Review*, June 2025, link.
74 *CapX,* 30 July 2025, link; *Hansard*, 2 June 2025, Vol.768, Col.54, link.
75 PMO, *Press Release*, 25 February 2025, link.
76 *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 January 2026, link.
77 *The Telegraph*, 1 March 2025, link.

- **Conservatives would create a Sovereign Defence Fund to transform our armed forces and strengthen the resilience of our defence industrial base**. We would establish the Sovereign Defence Fund by re-purposing Labour's National Wealth Fund and reallocating some R&D funding.

- **The Fund would enable procurement of new drone technologies at a far greater pace and scale, enabling the armed forces to truly embrace the uncrewed revolution in warfare.** To enable British defence companies to raise drone production to the levels required, the SDF would mobilise billions in public and private funding to support them. This would include: taking stakes in UK defence start-ups, investing in dual-use companies, and supporting the resilience of supply chains – reducing our reliance on hostile states like China.

- **Our plan is fully funded and ready to go.** We are re-purposing £17 billion of funding from the National Wealth Fund (NWF) and Government Research and Development (R&D). The NWF has been capitalised with £27.8 billion and has a target to mobilise private finance at a ratio of £3 for every £1 of public investment.[78] This figure of 3:1 is also the Government's target for the ratio of private-public finance crowded in by the British Business Bank's planned investments in sectors identified in the Industrial Strategy, which includes defence.[79] Around £20.3 billion of public money is yet to be committed from the NWF. We would ringfence £11 billion of this capital for defence. In addition, £2 billion per year (£6 billion over the course of this parliament) would be reallocated from the Research and Development (R&D) budget in the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology to the MOD.

What will the Bill do?

- **The Bill would repurpose Labour's National Wealth Fund to be spent on defence and resilience.** We would amend the UK Infrastructure Bank Act to ensure that the National Wealth Fund's objectives are no longer 'to help tackle climate change', to refocus its objectives on funding our defence, and change the name to the National Defence and Resilience Bank.[80]

78 *National Wealth Fund Impact Report* , October 2025, link.
79 *The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy*, June 2025, link.
80 *UK Infrastructure Bank Act 2023,* link.

PROTECT OUR VETERANS BILL

"A Bill to make provision to repeal The Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 (Remedial) Order 2025 and repeal the Northern Ireland Troubles Act; and for connected purposes."

- The Labour Government is allowing civil claims and inquests into events during the Troubles to start again, enabling the prosecution of veterans who served in Northern Ireland.

- The Conservative Government sought to end the vexatious prosecution of Northern Ireland veterans by granting conditional immunity through the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023. The High Court in Belfast found this conditional immunity was incompatible with Convention Rights. Rather than stand up for our armed forces and appeal the judgment, Labour's Remedial Order will allow inquests to restart and their new Northern Ireland Troubles Bill will enable further litigation by setting up a new system for inquests.

- We will repeal the Remedial Order and the Northern Ireland Troubles Bill (if it passes) to restore the conditional immunity granted by the Conservatives to those who comply with investigations. We will put beyond all doubt the legality of this action by leaving the European Convention on Human Rights to protect our veterans.

- We will protect those who have served our country and end vexatious prosecutions of our elderly veterans in the courts. We seek to provide answers to the families of victims of the Troubles and provide assurances that the system to do so will not be infiltrated by prejudice. We will create a stronger country by delivering a process for reconciliation in Northern Ireland and standing up for our armed forces.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **Investigations into the deaths during the Troubles have predominantly focussed on the actions of those deployed during Operation Banner.** In 2006 the Police Service for Northern Ireland's (PSNI) Historical Enquiries Team was created to investigate the deaths of people killed during the Troubles. As of May 2022, there was a caseload of over 900 cases.[81]

- **The treatment of veterans and former paramilitaries was unbalanced**. Through prisoner releases, the Northern Ireland (Sentences) Act 1998 which limited prison sentences to two years, the decommissioning of weapons legislation, which allowed for the destruction of forensic evidence that could have led to convictions and an effective amnesty for all those who provided information to the Independent Commission for the Location of Victims' Remains, the previous Labour Government provided de facto immunity for terrorists.

- **The Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 aimed to restore justice and protect our veterans**. The Act stopped inquests into deaths during the Troubles by creating the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR). Those who gave an account to the ICRIR that was 'true to the best of [their] knowledge and belief' would be granted immunity from prosecution.[82]

- **Labour are now returning to a system which protects former paramilitaries but leaves our veterans vulnerable**. In prematurely abandoning the Conservative appeal against the finding of the High Court in Belfast that the 2023 Legacy Act was incompatible with Convention Rights, Labour have returned to a lopsided system which provides de facto immunity for terrorists, but leaves our veterans vulnerable to vexatious prosecutions.

- **Over 200,000 people have signed a petition against Labour's appalling plan to rip up protections for Northern Ireland veterans introduced by the Conservatives.** Labour is repealing key sections of the Conservative

81 NIO, *Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill 2023 Explanatory Notes*, link.

82 *Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023*, link.

Government's Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act, including the provisions on conditional amnesty and the ban on inquests and civil actions related to Troubles-era incidents. [83]

- **Expanding case law means that the European Convention on Human Rights has now displaced the law of armed conflict in relation to military operations, frustrating our ability to act in conflict situations.** The ECHR has been held to apply extraterritorially, meaning the United Kingdom is under ECHR obligations to anyone in relation to whom the UK exercises force in any overseas area over which it has effective control.[84] Claims could be brought, for example, for the length of time enemy combatants are detained, or whether handcuffs have been used to detain an individual.

- **We will leave the ECHR to ensure we can protect our veterans and service personnel**. Once we have left the ECHR, we will legislate to ensure that case law from the European Court of Human Rights cannot be used to bring vexatious claims against UK service personnel and ensure that the law of armed conflict is the standard by which our armed forces will be judged in any operation overseas.

What will the Bill do?

- **The Bill will repeal the Remedial Order and the Northern Ireland Troubles Bill if the latter passes**. It will restore the Conservative policy of conditional immunity when requested in exchange for providing information to an independent Legacy Commission. We will ensure any prosecutions started under the Bill and Remedial Order are terminated. This will protect our veterans from vexatious prosecutions.

- **The Bill will ensure that no one involved in paramilitary activities can play any part in the work of the ICRIR.** This will help ensure that victims can engage with the ICRIR in the knowledge that their cases will not be overseen by those who may have been involved in crimes against them.

- **The Bill will clarify existing case law relating to armed conflict overseas**. When we leave the ECHR we will be able to distance ourselves from the case law of the European Court of Human Rights which has held that Convention rights apply extra-territorially in combat situations, and ensure that our armed forces have the clarity of knowing that the law of armed conflict applies to our operations overseas.

- **The Conservatives will also legislate to ensure a Conservative Government can withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights**. Withdrawing from the ECHR will eliminate appeals against the legislation based on rulings from a supranational court, and will enable our domestic courts to take a more balanced approach to the rights of our veterans and serving armed forces personnel.

83 Parliament.uk, *Petition,* accessed 21 October 2025, link.
84 *Al-Skeini v United Kingdom* (55721/07, 2011, ECtHR).

RESTORING SCHOOL STANDARDS BILL

"A Bill to make provision about academy freedoms, banning the use of smartphones during the school day, and exclude pupils who bring knives into schools, and for connected purposes."

- School standards in England improved significantly following Conservative reforms, but Labour is now undermining the freedoms that helped drive that progress. At the same time, poor behaviour and violence in schools are rising, alongside growing concerns about political impartiality in the classroom.

- Conservative reforms raised standards by expanding school autonomy, but rising behaviour challenges and incomplete reforms to alternative provision limited schools' ability to act decisively. Guidance alone on issues such as phones in schools proved insufficient. A future Conservative government will legislate to ban smartphones from schools, restore academy freedoms, and complete reforms to alternative provision and pupil referral units, enabling zero tolerance of violence and disruption.

- We will repeal provisions in the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act that restrict academy freedoms, to preserve the autonomy that has contributed to rising school standards in England. We will introduce a statutory requirement for schools to prohibit the use of smartphones during the school day to support behaviour and pupil wellbeing and strengthen behaviour expectations by establishing a zero-tolerance approach to knives and other serious weapons in schools.

- This will restore discipline through zero tolerance of violence and poor behaviour, back evidence-based reforms that raised standards, and protect political impartiality so classrooms focus on learning, not ideology.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **Only 11 per cent of schools are genuinely smartphone free.**[85]

- **The Department for Education's own statistics show that phones disrupt nearly half of GCSE classes every day.**[86]

- **Students in smartphone free schools achieve 12 grades higher.**[87]

- **Two in five teachers experience physical abuse from pupils each year, with 81 per cent reporting worsening behaviour and rising threats involving weapons even in primary schools.**[88]

- **Reforms that raised standards in England were not implemented in Wales, where attainment outcomes have fallen behind England in international comparisons such as PISA.**[89]

What will the Bill do?

- **Restore academy freedoms**. The Bill will repeal the relevant sections of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 which restrict academy freedoms. This will enable academies to set their admissions arrangements and curriculum. This will also ensure that failing schools can quickly be improved by becoming academies.

- **Ban smartphones from schools**. The Bill will ensure that children are free to concentrate on their education by banning the use of smartphones during the school day, including 'not seen, not heard'.

85 Policy Exchange, *Disconnect: the Case for a Smartphone Ban in Schools* , 30 April 2024, link.
86 DfE, *National Behaviour Survey*, April 2024, link.
87 Policy Exchange, *Disconnect: the Case for a Smartphone Ban in Schools* , 30 April 2024, link.
88 *The Times*, 18 April 2025, link.
89 Welsh Government, *PISA National Report 2022*, 5 December 2023, link.

- **Back political impartiality in schools**. The Bill will prevent local authorities, mayoral authorities, or other public bodies from encouraging or requiring schools to sign up to externally developed inclusion charters where these conflict with school behaviour policies or undermine headteacher disciplinary autonomy. The Bill will reinforce compliance with statutory political impartiality duties under the Education Act 1996 by granting the Secretary of State stronger powers to direct the Teaching Regulation Agency to investigate alleged breaches by teachers, restricting the use in schools of politically partisan third-party materials that do not meet statutory impartiality requirements, and clarifying that guidance issued by trade unions and other external organisations does not override teachers' legal duties of political neutrality in the classroom.

- **Change presumption in favour of exclusion where a child brings a knife or a serious weapon into school or assaults a teacher or another pupil**. The Bill will ensure that children who need additional support receive this in specialist settings, while instituting a zero-tolerance approach to keep other pupils and teachers safe.

Other legislative changes

- **The Conservatives would legislate quickly to ban children aged under 16 from being able to access social media.**

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY BILL

"A Bill to make provision about abolishing real interest rates on Plan 2 student loans, capping numbers on specified university courses and expanding apprenticeships, and for connected purposes"

- Youth unemployment is rising and has risen above the level in the euro-zone for the first time since records began. Graduates are leaving university unable to get jobs, and those in work are seeing their student debt mount up. This is not fair.

- Previous Conservative governments expanded higher education participation but did not fully address the growth of low-value courses. A future Conservative government will rebalance the system towards degrees that actually set young people up for the world of work, apprenticeships, and fairer student finance that rewards work.

- We will reduce enrolment on low-value degree courses that leave students with high debt and weak employment prospects. The Government currently issues around £8 billion annually in student loans that are not expected to be repaid, and evidence suggests many young people do not benefit financially from attending university. Savings from reducing low-value provision will be used to reform Plan 2 student loans by linking balances to RPI only, ensuring graduates are no longer penalised by rising real-terms debt while making repayments. We will expand high-quality alternatives to university by creating 100,000 additional apprenticeships annually for 18- to 21-year-olds, responding to strong unmet employer demand. To support this expansion, businesses will receive targeted incentives worth up to £5,000 in wage support per apprentice to increase participation and strengthen pathways into skilled employment.

- This will restore fairness to student finance, end funding for low-value degrees, and expand high-quality apprenticeships so young people have real choices after school and stronger routes into secure, well-paid work.

Why is the Bill needed?

- **The 16-24 youth unemployment rate is 18 per cent, up 2.4 percentage points on Labour's watch.** The 16-24 unemployment rate was 15.8 per cent in December 2025 to February 2026, up from 13.4 in April to June 2024 when the Conservatives left office.[90]

- **Around one third of graduates are not in graduate-level jobs.** In 2024, only 67.9 per cent of graduates were in 'high-skilled employment' leaving 32.1 per cent not being in a graduate-level job.[91]

- **The Government issues roughly £2.5 billion per year in student loans that are not expected to be repaid.** The IFS found that the upfront support through loans for tuition fees is £10.6 billion. The Government has confirmed that it budgets for around 25 per cent of this not to be paid back.[92]

- **1 in 5 undergraduates would be better off financially had they not gone to university.** An IFS study showed the 85 per cent of women and around 75 per cent of men achieve positive net lifetime returns from attending university.[93]

90 ONS, *Labour market overview, UK: March 2026*, 21 April 2026, link.

91 DfE, *Graduate Labour Market Statistics*, 5 June 2025, link.

92 DfE, *Resource Accounting and Budgeting charge estimates,* link; IFS, Annual report on education spending in England: 2024-25, 8 January 2025, link.

93 IFS, *The impact of undergraduate degrees on lifetime earnings*, 29 February 2020, link.

- **Many creative arts degrees deliver negative financial returns.** The IFS showed that for women, the net lifetime returns are close to zero, and for men the returns are negative, and around three-quarters of those studying these subjects are worse off than if they had not gone to university.[94]

- **Two-thirds of young people would be interested in doing an apprenticeship if one were available.** Sutton Trust polling shows 64 per cent of young people are now likely to consider an apprenticeship if one were available for a job they wanted to do.[95]

- **Around three quarters of Plan 2 graduates are not expected to repay their loans in full**.[96]

- **Labour's plan to cap Plan 2 student loan interest rates at 6 per cent will still leave graduates being ripped off and paying interest above inflation**. Labour MPs voted against our proposals to reverse Rachel Reeves' threshold freeze, which has left more graduates paying more sooner, and our plans to put an end to dead end degrees double apprenticeships and make Plan 2 student loans RPI and RPI only.

What will the Bill do?

- The Bill will abolish real interest rates on Plan 2 Student Loans, ending the unfair treadmill in which high interest rates cause student debt to rise faster than graduates can pay it off.

- The Bill will introduce caps on the number of publicly funded university places.

- The Bill will expand high-quality apprenticeships through an Apprenticeship Guarantee – lifting the funding cap for 18–21-year-olds – and introduce our BRITS scheme, offering employers an incentive of up to £5,000 to take on young apprentices.

94 IFS, *The impact of undergraduate degrees on lifetime earnings* , 29 February 2020, link.
95 Sutton Trust, *University Aspirations 2019* , 14 August 2019, link.
96 House of Commons Library, *Student Loan Statistics* , 10 December 2025, link.

NOTES:

STRONGER
ECONOMY

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COUNTRY



Promoted by Sheridan Westlake on behalf of the Conservative and Unionist Party, both at 4 Matthew Parker Street, London, SW1H 9HQ.