

BRITAIN RECONNECTED

**Fixing the foundations to ensure a safe,
secure and resilient UK**

CONTENTS

FOREWORD KEIR STARMER	3
FOREWORD ELLIE REEVES.....	4
INSTRUCTIONS	5
ACCESSIBLE MATERIALS	6
Consultation questions	7
The context	8
The inheritance.....	9
What Labour is delivering	10

Our Labour government was elected on the promise of change – to deliver a decade of national renewal and put the country back in the service of working people.

The hard work of the National Policy Forum in the years before the 2024 election set us on the path to an election-winning manifesto, a manifesto at the heart of our historic election win.

Security and renewal are our twin tasks, and now, we are getting on and delivering that change for working people.

We've fulfilled our pledge to deliver over two million extra NHS appointments – seven months early. We've delivered pay rises for 3.5 million people through a rise in the minimum wage, and average wages are growing at their fastest rate in three years.

We have launched Great British Energy to provide clean, secure, homegrown power. We've established a National Wealth Fund to fuel growth, we've overhauled planning laws to make the dream of home ownership a reality and we've delivered a £1 billion boost to police funding to keep our streets safe. Thanks to Labour, free breakfast clubs are being rolled-out in every primary school, starting with the first 750 from this April, saving parents up to £450 a year.

But the work has just begun. Our Plan for Change sets six clear, measurable milestones that the British people can expect to see delivered by the end of this Parliament: higher living standards; 1.5 million homes built; hospital backlogs ended; police back on the streets in every community; a record proportion of children starting school ready to learn; and secure, home-grown energy.

This can only be delivered with the strong foundations of economic stability, national security, and border security.

The National Policy Forum is a vital part of Labour's democratic policy-making process. We look forward to hearing from you and invite you to get involved in the NPF, to support the Party's policy priorities and build towards the next General Election.

Keir Starmer
Leader of the Labour Party
Prime Minister



Having spent 19 years on the National Policy Forum in a number of different roles, I am delighted to return to the NPF as Party Chair and to have been elected as NPF Chair. It is an absolute privilege now to take up this position to guide our first NPF in Government in more than 14 years.



The strength of our Labour movement produced our brilliant general election victory. But the work doesn't stop there.

Our Labour Government inherited unprecedented challenges, with crumbling public services and crippled public finances. This Government will not shy away from tough decisions: we will always put service before politics.

In this context, the NPF's Annual Consultation 2025 will focus on fixing the foundations to deliver change.

The consultation documents reflect some of the vital areas we must fix if we are to deliver Labour's decade of national renewal and make working people feel more secure. We are getting our economy back on track, boosting living standards, tackling the housing crisis and modernising our public services. We are building a more secure country at home while building our strength abroad.

We all have a role to play in responding to the challenges the country faces. As Party members, supporters and stakeholders your voice plays a vital role in these debates, from sharing your lived experiences, to expertise, knowledge and insight. We are stronger together and it is vital we maintain a strong link between the Party in government and the Party in the country. We encourage you to get involved and play your part in supporting the new Labour Government.

Please consider submitting your views either individually or as part of your CLP or organisation. We also invite you to attend one of the online members' events to hear from my Cabinet colleagues.

Together, our long-term work will deliver a decade of national renewal and a more secure and prosperous Britain.

Ellie Reeves
Party Chair and NPF Chair
Cabinet Office Minister

Thank you to everyone who got involved in the previous cycle of the National Policy Forum (NPF) and helped us produce an election-winning manifesto.

The new cycle of the NPF was launched in January 2025. We were delighted to welcome NPF reps from across the Labour movement to the first online meeting of the full NPF where we heard from the Prime Minister and Cabinet members.

The NPF is made up of the following six policy commissions:

- **Kickstart economic growth**
- **Build an NHS fit for the future**
- **Make Britain a clean energy superpower**
- **Safer streets**
- **Break down barriers to opportunity**
- **Britain reconnected**

This year's consultation runs from 31 March to 8 June.

The theme for this first-year consultation is **'fixing the foundations to deliver change'**. During the consultation, each commission will consult on fixing the foundations to enable the Labour Government to deliver the milestones set out in the Plan for Change and identify future challenges on the path to delivering the decade of national renewal that Labour promised in the 2024 Manifesto.

Each commission has produced a set of questions to guide discussions, as well as details on the policy context, our inheritance from the previous Conservative Government, and what the new Labour Government is already doing to deliver security and renewal for working people.

You don't need to answer every question in the document, nor answer them in a specific way. These questions are intended as a guide to stimulate discussions on the main issues in each policy area. When considering these questions, it may be helpful to consider examples of best practice in the policy areas, perhaps from your own experience and your local area, or the blockages to policy implementation which need to be overcome.

We welcome submissions from members of the public, Constituency and Branch Labour Parties, trade unions and socialist societies, as well as contributions from expert organisations such as think tanks, businesses and civil society.

Please submit your responses on our new website here:

<https://nationalpolicyforum.labour.org.uk/>

This website also provides further information about this year's consultation and other ways to get involved, including our programme of members' events.

Finally, we recommend looking at our FAQs here

<https://nationalpolicyforum.labour.org.uk/about/> if you have any questions.

Thank you again for getting involved with the NPF. It is through our collective work that we will deliver a decade of national renewal for working people.

**WANT
TO KNOW
MORE?**

Scan here to explore our new website:



And follow us on Twitter/X here:
@labpolicyforum

The Labour Party is an inclusive, member-based organisation that prides itself on being accessible to all. If you would like an accessible version of these documents, please email us at **policydevelopment@labour.org.uk** to discuss how we can best accommodate your requirements.

1. What are the main threats to national security facing this Labour Government?
2. What are the main lessons Labour can learn from the last Conservative Government's failings on national security and resilience?
3. What lessons can Labour learn from our close allies and key partners' approach to national security?
4. How can we ensure our national security strategy responds effectively to possible future threats and rapidly changing global events?
5. How can Labour best ensure investment in defence and national security drives growth across the UK?
6. What are the specific implications of policy proposals in this area for (a) women, (b) Black, Asian and minority ethnic people (c) LGBT+ people, (d) disabled people and (e) all those with other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010?
7. What consideration would need to be given to policy proposals in this area when collaborating with devolved administrations, combined authorities and other local governments in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland?

The first duty of any government is to protect its citizens and keep the country safe. Labour recognises that peace and security are hard earned, and require constant vigilance.

The world is a different place to when Labour last left office, with military conflict present once again on the continent of Europe. Putin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has challenged European security, with a direct impact on the security and cost of our energy supply. Threats to our safety and security have diversified greatly, including from increasingly sophisticated cyber-attacks.

The Conservatives' response left us weaker. They spent fourteen years damaging our international reputation, treating our closest friends as foes, and abandoning our values by undermining international law. By their own admission, they hollowed out and underfunded our Armed Forces.

Labour is proudly patriotic. As the new party of government, Labour has put national security at the heart of its agenda. No policy commitment matters unless we uphold our duty to keep the country safe. It is the foundation underpinning the Plan for Change.

Labour is already stepping up, setting out plans to meet this generational challenge through the biggest sustained increase in defence spending since the Cold War.

As one of the original founding members of NATO during the post-war Attlee Government, Labour's unshakeable commitment to the alliance is driving this approach. Our commitment to the UK's nuclear deterrent is absolute, it is a safeguard for the UK and our NATO allies. We are working more closely with our European neighbours on defence and security, and have already secured a landmark defence agreement with Germany.

There is much more to do. Technology is developing rapidly and changing the nature of warfare, while the climate crisis continues to unfold.

Working people in Britain are paying the cost of global instability, whether through increased energy bills, or threats to British interests and values. Labour is committed to making the country safer, more secure, and increasingly resilient against these interconnected threats.

For this reason, the Britain Reconnected policy commission will focus this year on fixing the foundation of national security.

The Labour Government inherited a national security framework that had become increasingly outdated, with major events over the last decade highlighting an urgent need to update our approach.

Both the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine highlighted the exposure of our supply chains and energy supplies to global events, while the pandemic itself exposed an alarming lack of preparation for a major health crisis.

As global threats multiplied and diversified, successive Conservative Governments each played their part in undermining our national security, leaving us exposed and increasingly at risk.

In 2020, the Intelligence and Security Committee's Russia report showed how the Tories had failed to act after allegations of Russian interference in British politics, despite clear evidence.

Most damagingly, the Conservatives had by their own admission 'hollowed out and underfunded' our Armed Forces, with plenty of evidence to support this.

Defence spending was cut from 2.5% of GDP at the time the last Labour Government left office, and was not matched by the Tories in 14 years. By 2024, the number of full time personnel was down by almost 50,000, with the British Army at its smallest size since the Napoleonic Wars.

Our Armed Forces personnel and their families were forced to live in shameful accommodation, with nearly half of all serving personnel living in the lowest grade Single Living Accommodation.

By the time the Tories left office, morale across the Armed Forces was at record lows of 40 per cent, down a third from 2010. The Conservatives' failure on defence had led to a crisis in recruitment and retention, and they had missed their recruitment targets every year in government.

In increasingly unstable times, it falls to Labour to strengthen our national security.

Our Plan for Change can only be delivered with strong foundations of economic stability, national security and border security.

Labour has immediately set to work on fixing the foundation of national security and delivering for defence, with targeted action right across government. This is led by the largest sustained increase in defence spending since the Cold War, with a commitment to spending 2.5% of GDP on defence from April 2027.

The Labour Government is conducting a Strategic Defence Review at pace to understand the threats we face and the capabilities our Armed Forces need, and has launched a Defence Industrial Strategy to ensure defence is an engine for jobs and growth across the UK.

Our mission to reconnect Britain with global friends and partners is fully underway, including a reset on our approach to the Global South that prioritises partnerships.

We are working more closely with European partners on security and defence, including a landmark agreement with Germany that will boost industry and jobs here in the UK.

We are demonstrating our unshakeable commitment to NATO with a leading role in new NATO exercises, and stepping up support for Ukraine by increasing our defence spending alongside European partners.

And we are renewing our contract with those that serve, securing the largest pay rise for service personnel in over 20 years, legislating for an Armed Forces Commissioner to improve life for service personnel, and bringing 36,000 military houses back into public ownership.

These are vital steps towards delivering a decade of national renewal. But to ensure we are secure at home and strong abroad, we need to fully understand the full range of the threats we are facing, and the impact that global events are having here in the UK.

We must build a national security framework that is fit for purpose for the unstable times ahead, learns the lessons of the recent past and fixes the failures we inherited from the Conservatives.

This is on top of our unwavering commitment to securing our borders. The Tories broke our immigration system with net migration at record levels and dangerous criminal smuggling gangs costing lives and undermining security. Labour has already started the work to crack down on these vile gangs and restore order to the asylum and immigration systems.

Given the pace and scale of changes in the international system, our approach must be responsive and agile, working across government in coordination with our goals.

