

Labour's National Policy Forum

ANNUAL
REPORT
2025

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This Labour Government's Plan for Change sets out a bold, mission-led approach to delivering security and renewal for the British people.

It set out six milestones which will deliver on the concerns and aspirations of working people across the country. Our plan commits to raising living standards, ensuring real improvements in household income. It promises to rebuild Britain by delivering 1.5 million new homes in England and accelerating major infrastructure. It sets out to fix the NHS by tackling the backlog.



It commits to make streets safer, with a named police officer for every neighbourhood and thousands more neighbourhood police. It pledges that more children will be ready to learn by the time they start school, breaking down barriers to opportunity. And it aims to make the UK a clean energy superpower, generating 95% of electricity from clean sources by 2030—helping secure the UK's energy and bringing bills down.

All of this is built on the foundations of strong public finances, secure borders, and national security.

I am so proud of what the new Labour Government is already delivering. We've secured the highest growth in the G7. Interest rates have been cut four times. Waiting lists are at their lowest level in two years. Free breakfast clubs are being rolled out in all primary schools, and the number of children receiving free school meals is being expanded lifting a hundred thousand children out of poverty. Billions are being invested into social and affordable housebuilding and we are taking action to reduce energy bills with the expansion of the Warm Homes Discount.

But there is still so much to do and I know we must go further and faster to meet the ambitious milestones set out in the Plan for Change and deliver the change we promised to the country last year.

That is why I am so pleased this year's NPF consultation focused on delivering on the ambitious goals in the Plan for Change: examining the challenges to doing so and consulting far and wide on how these may be overcome.

This would not have been possible without the energy, commitment and ideas of all our members, affiliates and stakeholders who have engaged with the NPF over the past year. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this year's Annual Report.

Keir Starmer
Leader of the Labour Party
Prime Minister

I am proud to introduce the 2025 report of Labour's National Policy Forum – the product of tireless work, rich debate, and meaningful collaboration across our movement. It represents the development of the policies that will help deliver our vision of national renewal and security for the UK.

This report provides a summary of the activity of this year's consultation and the conclusions of the National Policy Forum to support the new Labour Government to deliver its Plan for Change.

The policy discussion set out in this report is down to the dedication of our National Policy Forum representatives, members, trade unions, affiliates, elected representatives, CLPs and many more. Each has played a crucial role in shaping our ideas through consultation, evidence, and real-world experience.

I would also like to thank the many individuals, businesses, community groups, charities, and voices from across society who took the time to contribute to this year's consultation, either through written submissions or through joining the many roundtables and evidence sessions held during the consultation. Your insights have helped ensure that Labour's programme remains rooted in the everyday realities and aspirations of people across the country.

The result is a report that not only reflects the values and ambitions of our Party but also provides clear support for the Labour Government to deliver its Plan for Change. It will now form a vital part of the Labour Party's policy programme as we move onto the next stage of the policy development cycle.

Ellie Reeves
Party Chair, NPF Chair
Cabinet Office Minister



This is the first year of the new NPF cycle following our 2024 General Election victory. On 31 March 2025, we launched our annual NPF consultation inviting members, affiliates, stakeholders, and voters to have their say on 'fixing the foundations to deliver change'. The consultation ran for almost 10 weeks and closed on 8 June.

Each commission held stakeholder roundtables and expert evidence sessions, including in person events in Aberdeen, Manchester, Sunderland, and London. We were delighted to have many Labour Ministers and mission champions join us at these events.

We received more than 1,500 submissions both via our new Labour Policy Forum website and via email. These submissions covered a vast array of topics, from how to rebuild confidence in policing, to energy security, to the future of our NHS, and more.

Almost 300 members also joined our seven online members' events where they were able to discuss the policy issues they cared about the most and hear from Labour Ministers including Jacqui Smith, James Murray, Michael Shanks, Nic Dakin, Ashley Dalton, and Catherine McKinnell.

Thank you to all those who made submissions, hosted your own events, or attended and contributed to national events. This year's consultation encouraged wide engagement across the Labour movement to support the new Labour Government. As our democratic policymaking process, the NPF's strength lies in the breadth and depth of our movement and our wealth of experience, knowledge, and expertise. Together, we are delivering security for working people and renewal for our country – thank you for playing your part in this.

Labour Policy Development Team

KICKSTART ECONOMIC GROWTH

PLP

Rachel Reeves *

Angela Rayner

Jonathan Reynolds

Nesil Caliskan

Steve Yemm

Gurinder Singh Josan

CLPs, regions and devolved administrations

Rory Palmer – East Midlands Region

Adam Fox – Eastern Region

Jacob Cousens – North Region

Ben Procter – Scottish Labour Party

Parmjit Dhanda – South East Region

Niamh Iliff – West Midlands Region

Karen Whitefield – Scottish Policy Forum

Affiliates

Dave Ward – CWU

Dean Gilligan – GMB

Gary Smith – GMB

Helen Avis – Community

Val Hampshire – FBU

Xenia Horne – MU

Jayson-Mark Gill – TSSA

Joanne Cairns – Usdaw

Paddy Lillis – Usdaw

Hannah Reed – Unite

Ash Silverstone – Unison

Joe Fortune – Co-operative Party

Sagal Abdi Wali – National Women's Committee

Elected representatives and peers

Baroness Glenys Thornton

Peter Mason

Nathan Yeowell

NEC

Claire Holland

Anu Prashar

Gavin Sibthorpe

Karen Rose *

Maggi Ferncombe

Mary Williams

Mick Whelan

**Co-convenor*

Labour was elected with a clear mandate to end the financial chaos of the Conservatives, and to kickstart economic growth across Britain. In practice, that means delivering more good jobs in every region of the United Kingdom, getting Britain building again, improving our public services, and stabilising the economy to create the conditions to boost investment. That is why the Kickstart Economic Growth Policy Commission consulted on fixing the foundations to deliver higher living standards and 1.5 million new homes.

Through Labour's Plan for Change, that work is underway. Labour has delivered a new Modern Industrial Strategy, secured multiple trade deals worth billions of pounds to the UK economy, and achieved the fastest growth in the G7 in the first quarter of this year. In addition to this, we've boosted pay for working people by up to £1,400 a year through increases to the minimum wage and secured record levels of private investment.

This Commission discussed how Labour's plan to Make Work Pay is delivering the biggest upgrade to workers' rights in a generation, strengthening individual and collective rights so we can raise wages, ensure security at work and improve working conditions.

Labour is delivering record investment in social and affordable housing, with our Planning and Infrastructure Bill driving through long-overdue changes to get Britain building again. This is not only creating good jobs across the country but restoring the dream of home ownership for working people.

Recognising that a decade of national renewal requires all of government working in tandem, this Commission has examined a broad spectrum of issues related to raising living standards and getting Britain building. Across seven consultation questions designed to stimulate discussion, this included living standards, regional economic growth, private investment, planning, workers' rights, equalities and cross-government collaboration.

The Kickstart Economic Growth Policy Commission has engaged closely with trade unions, workers, sectoral experts and think tanks to assess and consider economic policy in the round. As we continue this multi-year NPF cycle, we will seek to support Labour's Plan for Change to deliver security and renewal for working people.

Labour's economic mission

At our first session, the Commission took evidence from the Institute for Government on Labour's economic mission and the wider macroeconomic considerations impacting the Government's agenda.

The Government's stark economic inheritance was set out, including a decade of stagnant growth, poor infrastructure and widening regional inequality. The Commission discussed the importance of the UK deepening trade partnerships amid global economic turbulence.

Commissioners identified the importance of cross-departmental collaboration in delivering the growth mission, with the industrial strategy identified as an integral way to provide targeted interventions and additional clarity in key sectors.

Business and growth

At the Commission's first roundtable, we heard from major business and financial services bodies, trade union representatives and policy leaders from organisations including the Productivity Institute and Social Market Foundation. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss how Labour can improve business investment, and where key regulatory barriers lie.

Financial service representatives argued that decades of under-investment have left the economy too dependent on consumer spending, and that the Government should prioritise levers to facilitate and increase business investment. Labour's focus on pension reforms was welcomed, but there were discussions around the importance of the Government continuing to work to assemble investable proposals from cities and regions across the UK.

We heard about the wider challenges to businesses, including employment and energy costs, as well as the importance of boosting workplace productivity.

Planning for growth

The Commission heard from leading planning experts from the IPPR and LSE, with opening remarks from the Minister of State for Housing and Planning, Matthew Pennycook MP. The Commission and experts discussed the positive planning reforms already carried out, with a new pro-growth planning policy framework identified as a key achievement in the first year of a Labour Government.

Infrastructure and amenities were identified as the most challenging aspect of the planning system, with Labour developing a holistic and cross-cutting 10-year infrastructure strategy to set out what the public can expect from infrastructure services and provide certainty for potential investment.

Industrial strategy

The Commission held a roundtable on the industrial strategy, chaired by Luke Charters MP and attended by representatives from a diverse range of organisations including the TUC, the LGA, the Alan Turing Institute and the Recruitment and Employment Confederation.

The Commission discussed how the Government can ensure its industrial strategy is a success, and utilise it to tackle challenges across investment, skills and recruitment.

Attendees discussed the importance of the industrial strategy aligning with the Government's wider devolution agenda, as well as recognising Local Authorities as convenors of local economic growth.

World of work

We held a roundtable on the world of work at the Mechanics Institute in Manchester with a wide range of trade union representatives and workers, including Usdaw, Unite, Unison and CWU.

The Commission discussed the significant strides made via Labour's Employment Rights Bill, as well as flexible working more generally and the importance of strong enforcement.

Members' event and commissioner meetings

Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury James Murray gave an update at our growth members' event. Members discussed regional growth and the importance of integrated decarbonised transport, housing, the cost-of-living crisis and how Labour can ensure the success of its workers' rights agenda.

Separate Commission meetings were held over the course of the consultation, where submissions were discussed, and commissioners heard from the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Raising living standards & regional economic growth

The Commission received a wealth of expert evidence on how economic growth can and should translate into improved living standards for working people, with the seven consultation questions providing a strong framework to stimulate deepened policy discussion.

Labour in government has already raised the living wage, benefitting more than three million workers, and wages are increasing faster than inflation. For 18-to-20 year olds on the National Minimum Wage, this represents an increase worth £2,500 for an eligible full-time worker.

The Commission strongly supports that Labour's Plan for Change is clear that all regions and nations of the United Kingdom should feel and benefit from economic growth in the form of higher living standards. Investing in local communities, transport and opportunities is a vital part of this equation, as is continuing to deepen and widen devolution across the country.

Labour will continue to ensure that prosperity is felt across all nations and regions of the United Kingdom – particularly important after 14 years of local government neglect and mismanagement under the Conservatives. Regional connectivity will be prioritised as a key lever to sustained economic growth and opportunity, welcomed by the Commission.

A key point that was made in response to the first consultation question is that living standards are intrinsically linked to wider economic stability, and the Commission believes that Labour's approach must continue to safeguard and strengthen the public finances. Fiscal responsibility has enabled the Labour Government to deliver unprecedented investment in social housing, infrastructure, and public services – all key in raising living standards for working people.

The Commission supports Labour's view that those with broadest shoulders should contribute properly to Britain's renewal. This has informed Labour's existing tax reforms, as well as its decision to remove tax breaks for private schools to help fund public services.

Labour is the party of equality and will continue to work to ensure that discrimination against Black, Asian, and minority ethnic people, as well as those with other protected characteristics, is rooted out in the workplace and across society.

Workers' rights and employment

The Commission heard how Labour's Employment Rights Bill is giving workers new protections against unfair dismissal, fire and rehire, insecurity of hours and placing important and long-overdue workplace protections on the statute book. Labour will ensure that these rights continue to adapt and evolve in line with workers' priorities, and that jobs are protected amid technological developments and evolving national policy priorities.

The Commission believes that workers must not be left behind by changes in technology, and they should be supported with the training and skills they need to share in the benefits of new technology. Workers should be properly consulted when new technology impacts on their jobs, and when restructuring takes place there should be additional provision of requisite skills and training opportunities to access and transition into good quality new roles.

The framework that Labour inherited to enforce employment rights is fragmented, inefficient, and results in too many workers being unable to enforce their rights.

Labour is the party of working people and will continue to implement in full its plan to Make Work Pay, ensuring that workers' rights are strengthened both by the letter of the law and through strong enforcement via the Fair Work Agency and employment tribunals system. Labour does not tolerate poor employment practices and believes in the power of trade union representation. The Commission supports our new partnership between trade unions, employers and government which will ensure we all benefit.

The Commission agrees with Labour in its belief that everyone deserves the right to a good job that is fulfilling and provides security. This is key to delivering higher living standards and reducing economic inequalities. As demonstrated in the Government's recent Spending Review, Labour's investment in energy, defence, and construction will create tens of thousands of jobs in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Supporting business

Labour wants Britain to be the best place in the world to start and grow a business. Through our Plan for Change, and in particular our Modern Industrial Strategy, Labour will continue to support businesses and generate vital private investment in our economy.

Well-designed regulation can promote growth and innovation, while offering protection and providing confidence.

However, we have heard through responses to this Commission that onerous forms and unnecessary administrative red tape have hamstrung British business for far too long. Labour will continue to prioritise regulatory reform, building on work that includes putting financial regulators on a growth agenda.

Backing British business amid shifting geopolitical currents is a core focus of Labour in government. British business and industry will continue to benefit from Labour's trade strategy, which has already seen trade deals secured with the European Union, the United States, and with India.

Getting Britain building

The Commission supports Labour's work to get Britain building again, fundamentally reforming a planning system that is holding back vital

development. Labour will continue to create good jobs through this agenda, building on the £600 million worth of investment the Government has provided to train up to 60,000 more skilled construction workers by the end of this Parliament.

The Commission agrees with Labour's belief that restoring the dream of home ownership is not just a moral obligation, but an economic one too. In delivering its Plan for Change milestone to build 1.5 million homes, Labour will continue to go further and faster in ensuring that Britain once again has the infrastructure and homes it needs to kickstart economic growth.

The Commission welcomes Labour's multi-billion-pound investment in social and affordable housing, recognising that additional housing must meet the needs of working people right across the country. This remains the priority as we deliver our Plan for Change.

Through responses to this Commission, multiple respondents have highlighted that Getting Britain Building isn't just about homes, it is a wider agenda that encompasses vital infrastructure from roads to rail links, to reservoirs. Labour will continue to identify unnecessary barriers to development which harm economic growth and prosperity.

This year's consultation received hundreds of submissions from across the United Kingdom, encompassing personal experience, academic policy development and business expertise. Submissions covered the following themes:

Housing, infrastructure and planning reforms

Respondents noted the scale of the housing crisis, and a poor record of housing delivery. There was widespread discussion over housing ownership being just one aspect of the housing crisis.

"The UK doesn't build enough housing. This has led to many shortages, which mean that prices of houses to buy are insane, and then also renting costs are going up, making even that difficult. This means that the government needs to build more houses to increase supply and lower the prices." – **Nimrod**

"The entire system is broken and we need the help of Labour to turn this around and give us hope for the security and our future. Having a secure home is a basic need [...] I've seen so many people having to move to completely new areas, changing schools, and facing months of uncertainty after being served Section 21 notices. This can't continue."
– **Emma**

"We should also be considering not just the provision of new homes, but the maintenance of those already built." – **Sarah**

Transport infrastructure was identified by respondents as a key barrier to economic growth and improved living standards.

"Regional economies are in desperate need of good jobs, improved opportunities, better infrastructure [...] this would make a huge visible and long-term difference to job and training opportunities."
– **Brenda, Labour Member**

"By ensuring that all regions and nations are empowered to have a functioning and publicly owned integrated transport network, businesses can be encouraged to invest in areas whilst residents will have access to an affordable public transport network for work and leisure purposes."
– **ASLEF**

Several respondents raised the issue of workforce, welcoming the Government's pledge to recruit 60,000 additional construction workers but highlighting the need to remain alive to this risk.

"The constraint on housebuilding is currently workforce, not planning permissions. Labour's plans for training and apprentices are a step in the right direction [...] the increase in workforce should go hand in hand with increase in planning permissions." – **Sam Corcoran, NPF Commissioner**

Living standards & workers' rights

Several respondents highlighted the fall in living standards under the previous government, and the difficulty facing working families after years of sluggish growth.

"The cost of living is the central marker of economic success. Over the past few decades aspiration has been suffocated – people are getting by, not getting on." – Sue, Labour Member

"Usdaw welcomes Labour's commitment to kickstarting economic growth, and we fully support the ambition set out in the Plan for Change to raise living standards. For many years the UK has been stuck in a cycle of low pay and insecure work, hindering productivity and damaging economic growth." – Usdaw

Respondents, including Mencap, highlighted the difficulty in living standards faced by disabled people.

"Higher living standards across the UK cannot be achieved without also addressing the structural inequality that disabled people face and supporting disabled people out of poverty should be seen as a key part of the government's growth strategy." – Mencap

The Employment Rights Bill was strongly welcomed by multiple respondents.

"Treating workers fairly and promoting collective bargaining are key components for driving up living standards, improving working conditions, tackling inequality, reducing insecurity, supporting recruitment and retention, enhancing skills, and improving innovation and productivity. Unite welcomes the Employment Rights Bill which is a step forward for workers." – Unite

Respondents noted the impact that improving the minimum wage and wider employment rights would have for those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

"Enforce good employment practices, e.g. the minimum wage, hire and rehire and zero hours, crucial for everyone but particularly for these groups." – Haringey Economic Forum

There was discussion on how Labour can continue to deliver its plan to Make Work Pay. Specific areas of concern raised by respondents included flexible working arrangements and strong enforcement of the Employment Rights Bill. There were also discussions on pay deals, with the recent industrial action in Birmingham highlighted as an area of concern.

Submissions also called for the government to ensure that it prioritised workers in any upcoming trade deals, and within the industrial strategy.

"We urge Labour to commit to supporting flexible work and re-skilling programmes." – Sue, Labour Party Member

"If it is to truly have a national industrial strategy that keeps the country resilient in dangerous, unpredictable times then Labour will need to forge cooperation between government, industries and unions. This should place workers' voices at the centre of a new dialogue on how to address the weaknesses in our economy." – GMB

There were also discussions on regional economic growth and the importance of rebuilding local government funding after 14 years of Conservative neglect.

Business investment & economic stability

Respondents, including the Co-Operative Party, welcomed the Labour Party's commitment to supporting diverse business practices, and highlighted the importance of boosting the co-operative sector.

"The Labour Government should ensure co-operatives are considered and included in the major economic growth plans – including the Industrial Strategy and the Small Business Strategy – reflecting the role the sector can play in meeting socio-economic challenges." – Co-operative Party

"It's crucial to strike a balance between investing in high-performing sectors and supporting those in low-growth areas to stimulate local economies." – Community

There were debates and discussions around redistributive taxation, with some respondents arguing for an increased 'wealth tax', and others suggesting that the tax reforms already made by Labour struck the right balance in asking those with the broadest shoulders to contribute their fair share.

Respondents welcomed Labour's focus on improving private investment, with many reinforcing the importance of connecting global investors with UK businesses.

"We need to reinvigorate how we connect pools of domestic and international capital [...] with UK businesses. If we do not do so, there is a serious risk of backsliding, hitting not just our relative global position but the prosperity of ordinary people around the country." – Stakeholder Submission

A number of respondents highlighted the importance of close collaboration with trading partners, boosting British trade while protecting our interests abroad.

"A stable economy with good trading agreements internationally creates an environment for business owners to invest in their companies." – Angharad, Labour Party Member

MAKE BRITAIN A CLEAN ENERGY SUPERPOWER

PLP

Ed Miliband *

Catherine Fookes

CLPs, regions and devolved nations

Rezina Chowdhury – Greater London Region

Hollie Wright – Greater London Region

Sam Corcoran – North West Region

Connor Dwyer – North West Region

Michelle McGinty – Scottish Labour Party

Duncan Enright – South East Region

Ashley Smith – South West Region

Chris Carter – Welsh Labour Party

Heather Doran – Scottish Policy Forum

Jenny Ann Rathbone – Welsh Policy Forum

Affiliates

Andy Green – Unite

Oliver Richardson – Unite

Simon Cox – Unite

Karen Atkinson – Unison

Collette Gibson – ASLEF

Finbar Bowie – GMB

Michelle Gordon – GMB

Chris Kitchen – National Union of Mineworkers

Andi Fox – TSSA

Melanie Smallman – Socialist Societies

Lucy Naylor – Co-operative Party

Elected representatives and peers

Baroness Rosie Winterton

Sharon Thompson

Peter Marland

NEC

Cat Arnold

Melanie Onn *

Jane Jones

**Co-convenor*

In his Plan for Change, Keir Starmer has set out a clear and ambitious milestone: securing home-grown energy, protecting billpayers and putting us on track to at least 95% clean power by 2030, while accelerating the UK towards net zero.

Britain's energy independence has been overlooked by previous Tory governments who failed to grasp the significant economic opportunity of accelerating to net zero. The renewable energy sector is one of the fastest growing parts of the UK economy and therefore should be supported to grow and thrive. For these reasons, this Commission consulted on fixing the foundations to secure home-grown energy.

This Commission welcomes that Labour in government has already delivered unprecedented investment in clean energy, including in new nuclear, to create good jobs and drive down energy bills. This has come alongside an expansion of the Warm Homes discount, a National Wealth Fund to drive low-carbon investment, and the launch of Great British Energy.

Through our Plan for Change, Labour will make the most of Britain's rich natural resources, unleash the power of technological innovation and secure billions of pounds worth of investment.

This year, the Make Britain a Clean Energy Superpower Policy Commission consulted on 'fixing the foundations to secure home-grown energy' to support the Labour Government on their delivery of this milestone, while looking ahead to the future of our energy supply and delivering good green jobs.

Clean energy expert evidence session

The Commission held an expert evidence session on Labour's Clean Energy mission with a senior representative from RenewableUK. The Commission discussed the importance of the industrial strategy in ensuring that requisite clean energy infrastructure – particularly around offshore and onshore wind – was in place to deliver Labour's mission.

The Commission also discussed the importance of a just transition with a greater transfer of skills between sectors within the industry.

Unblocking the grid

The Commission held a roundtable with businesses, third sector organisations, union representatives and thinktanks on Labour's Clean Power 2030 plan. Attendees welcomed Labour's existing actions on net zero, with discussion focussing on how best to tackle the problem of grid capacity, and how to ensure that the clean power mission delivers lower energy bills and domestic resilience.

The Commission also discussed planning and Labour's focus on accelerating the construction of nationally significant infrastructure.

Energy resilience and lower bills

Melanie Onn MP chaired a roundtable on the importance of driving down energy bills for consumers and ensuring that Britain is resilient to major shocks on the energy market. Attendees included leading policy experts from Nesta, the Energy Saving Trust, GMB, and the ECIU.

Attendees discussed the importance of smart energy advice and energy efficient homes to reduce household bills.

Participants emphasised the need for a just transition that protects and supports already existing decent, skilled and unionised jobs, and the communities supported by them – as well as creating new ones. This means working in partnership with workers currently employed in these industries. Participants raised the importance of Labour's transition plans including robust union engagement and collective bargaining throughout.

Green jobs

This session, attended by representatives from the Trades Union Congress and the Grantham Research Institute, focused on supporting and creating green jobs through the transition to net zero. Attendees highlighted the importance of ensuring that workers remain at the heart of the Government's agenda through union engagement, skills passporting and a strong industrial strategy.

Discussion also referenced the important role of the National Wealth Fund and Great British Energy in supplying a guaranteed pipeline of investment.

Energy security

Held in Aberdeen, in conjunction with the Britain Reconnected NPF Commission, this roundtable focussed on the international challenges to securing domestic energy security. Shoring up supply chains through a combination of domestic manufacturing and international partnerships was identified as a key priority.

Attendees included climate analysts, Labour's Climate and Environment Forum, EnBW, IPPR Scotland, GMB and RUSI.

The natural world

The Commission held an evidence session with nature organisations and policy experts. Discussion included the importance of protecting natural assets, local nature recovery, and opportunities for carbon storage and sequestration.

Members' event and commissioner meetings

Michael Shanks MP joined our clean energy online members' event which was chaired by Tom Hayes MP.

Across several breakout rooms, discussions included conversations around a just transition, the importance of nuclear power, how to lower energy bills, and Labour's Planning and Infrastructure Bill.

Over the course of the consultation period, commissioners held meetings and heard from Ed Miliband MP and Steve Reed MP on Labour's priorities in government.

Home-grown energy

The Make Britain a Clean Energy Superpower Policy Commission received extensive evidence on the importance of delivering Labour's Clean Power Mission in driving down energy bills and building domestic energy resilience. These aligned with the questions as set out in the NPF consultation document but also provided additional policy considerations beyond the set questions.

Commissioners welcomed Labour's actions to date including the lifting of the de-facto ban on onshore wind, clean energy investment, and the Planning and Infrastructure Bill.

Over the course of the consultation, there were extensive discussions around our future energy mix, as well as possible ways to decouple gas and electricity prices. Accelerating the green energy transition and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels is key to delivering lower energy bills while also boosting jobs and opportunities across the United Kingdom.

For too long, Britain's natural resources have been ignored. Labour is turning the page on the failed approach of the previous Conservative Government, and building a diverse domestic energy mix including wind, solar, new nuclear and hydroelectric. As committed to by the Government, this will include a strategic reserve of gas-fired power stations.

The Commission believes that in today's volatile global environment, energy security is national security. Labour's clean energy mission is ensuring we develop domestic capacities in clean energy generation, supply chains and skills to protect the UK's resilience, workforce, and economic sovereignty.

To lower energy bills, this Commission agrees that we must deliver our green energy sprint in tandem with energy efficiency measures. As well as funding energy upgrades for homes across the country, Labour will work to break down the barriers to warm home upgrades – which include lack of awareness and wider supply chain problems – to ensure these options are attractive to consumers.

Labour was elected on a clear mandate to deliver clean power by 2030 and strengthen our energy security amid challenging global headwinds. Labour utterly rejects the flawed ideology which seeks to undermine decades of climate science and technological advances. Turning back the clock on clean power will not only leave energy bills at the mercy of foreign gas markets, but snatch jobs from hundreds of thousands of hardworking people across the country.

Green jobs

The Commission supported the Labour Government's actions to save British steelmaking; the Labour Government has shown once again that it is the party of working people and will continue to ensure that communities are not left behind in the transition to net zero.

The shift to clean power provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to breathe new life into Britain's industrial heartlands. Net zero is one of the fastest growing parts of the UK economy, already generating £83 billion and employing close to a million people.

The Commission supports the Government's existing investment in clean power which will create tens of thousands of jobs, with the industrial strategy setting out a path to continued investment and security.

However, job creation is just one aspect of this Government's responsibilities, and Labour understands the anxiety some communities in carbon-intensive industries will feel over the course of this transition.

Labour will continue to engage closely with unions and industry leaders to provide workers with the skills they need to thrive in green industries and supply chains. This includes implementing skills passporting to help workers gradually transition in a properly planned fashion from carbon-intensive industries into established clean energy sectors, with a focus on sustaining and creating high-quality unionised jobs here in the UK. This will build on the regional skills investment the Government has already delivered in areas like Aberdeen, Cheshire, Lincolnshire and Pembrokeshire.

The Commission agrees that new green industries should deliver the same security and standards as existing sectors. Labour will work to ensure that good, decent jobs are prioritised – through procurement reforms and employment rights – as these industries grow.

In addition to this, Labour will ensure that there are viable pathways for key foundation manufacturing industries like chemicals and steel to decarbonise, and give workers and communities clear visibility and confidence about their future. This will build on the Government's significant investment in Carbon Capture, Utilisation, and Storage (CCUS) in Teesside, and North West England, and Hydrogen.

Supply chains and infrastructure

As discussed during the consultation, Labour recognises that grid connection issues present several challenges in the transition to clean power. As the Clean Power 2030 plan identified, paperwork and administrative delays mean that our current planning systems are not working as needed.

It is for this reason that Labour acted immediately to scrap the de-facto ban on onshore wind and is undertaking an unprecedented programme of legislative reform to drive through changes to planning policy. This work was supported by the Commission.

It is essential the Modern Industrial Strategy continues this work and supports the clean energy sector – identified as one of the eight key growth industries – to fast track decisions on critical projects stuck in the planning system. Labour

will work to ensure that these projects provide decent and secure employment opportunities for local communities.

Strengthening the UK's domestic renewables supply chain is essential in ensuring the UK is not unduly exposed to shocks abroad and develops its reputation as a world-leading exporter of low-carbon supply chains.

Labour will utilise Great British Energy and a strengthened UK Export Finance to crowd in and facilitate improved private investment in the clean energy sector.

The natural world

The Commission welcomes Labour's commitment to Britain's extraordinary natural beauty and sustainably harnessing Britain's natural resources. Labour believes that the natural world is not just a 'good' in and of itself but has wider social and economic benefits which need to be protected and enhanced.

Whether it be carbon sequestration, tree planting or wider environmental outcomes, our natural world has a vital role to play in our clean energy mission. Labour will ensure, as part of its work on sustainable farming and productivity, that public funds are targeted fairly and effectively to meet our nature obligations and objectives. Labour will build on recent announcements, which include plans to ban bottom trawling in more Marine Protected Areas, to protect our natural environment.

Labour is determined to build the houses and infrastructure we need to grow the economy and accelerate to net zero, and we will do so in a way that supports nature's recovery. Sustained economic growth depends upon a healthy natural environment, so Labour is transforming the planning system including through the Nature Restoration Fund, to enable development to proceed quickly and smoothly whilst restoring nature.

Jobs and a just transition

The Commission received a significant number of submissions on the importance of creating and protecting jobs while making the shift to clean energy.

“Directing funds toward renewable energy and home insulation would reduce the worst impacts of climate change while simultaneously addressing the cost-of-living crisis (partly by alleviating fuel poverty) and creating green jobs.” – Stu

“Domestic turbine manufacturing must be supported to create secure green jobs.” – Perry, Labour Party Member

“Industrial planning and future job sustainability is central to ensuring that workers in the oil and gas sector are upskilled (where necessary) and competent to take on new roles as jobs and industries change.” – Unite

“[Labour should] Invest in skills development for those working in fossil fuels to transfer to renewables with particular attention to communities which have been dependent on fossil fuels for employment and economic security.” – Suffolk Coastal CLP

Several respondents welcomed Labour's investment in decarbonisation as part of a just transition, while recognising the importance of a strong industrial strategy.

“Labour's October 2024 announcement on investment in carbon capture technology is a serious step in the right direction and a welcome investment in jobs and industries after years of neglect, but it needs to be backed up by real investment and a serious industrial strategy that will rebuild our nation's infrastructure after 14 wasted years.” – GMB

“Transitioning to renewable energy will help to protect our environment, create new jobs and facilitate new industries and technologies. Meeting the UK's net zero targets will help to reshape the economy – with the opportunity to reduce the regional inequalities which have harmed living standards across the UK.” – Co-Operative Party

Energy bills

Respondents noted Britain's heavy reliance on international gas markets, and the importance of decoupling electricity from gas.

"[Labour should] Decouple gas & electricity prices through rapid phasing out of gas, to reduce price volatility and overall costs, and increase energy security." – *Haringey Labour Climate Action*

It is an opportunity to decouple ourselves from the volatile oil and gas industry, to play our part in slowing (or reversing) climate change and to become a world leader in green technology."

– *Anthony, Labour Party Member*

"We welcome the government announcement of solar panels on most new homes. With the rising inflation costs affecting our heating bills, creating a cost of living crisis this is essential along with far greater retrofitting on existing homes." – *Sutton and Cheam Labour Party*

There were also active discussions on policy costs attached to energy bills, as well as submissions on prioritising energy efficiency in homes.

"Improving energy efficiency—particularly in the housing sector—remains a crucial step for any serious clean energy plan. Energy efficiency not only cuts emissions but also lowers household bills, reduces pressure on the grid, and improves health outcomes. The Warm Homes Plan must be accelerated and expanded." – *Labour's Environment Campaign SERA*

"[Labour should] Focus on housing as a key vehicle for climate action, promoting energy efficiency and social housing development to reduce emissions and improve living conditions. Implement a retrofitting plan to improve energy efficiency in existing homes and buildings." – *Erin*

Infrastructure

Respondents identified the barriers to infrastructure development and its impact on private sector investment. There were also discussions on the interlinking relationship between Labour's clean power mission and its plan to build 1.5 million homes.

"A major uncertainty facing investors, and the businesses they invest in, is the length of time it can take to get planning permission for infrastructure projects they are ready and willing to pay for, such as generation facilities and supporting technologies, but cannot build without approval." – *BVCA*

"One problem that has arisen in recent years is that the delivery of new homes in some areas of the country has been delayed due to concerns over grid capacity. [...] HBF is calling for the government to produce a strategy to ensure that infrastructure, such as the National Grid, is using existing capacity more efficiently and effectively"

– *Home Builders Federation*

Several respondents noted current grid constraints, and the impact this has on deployment.

“To deliver the infrastructure needed for clean power, the UK must accelerate grid upgrades, invest in low-carbon hydrogen, and modernise planning.”

– *The North-East Somerset and Hanham Constituency Eco Group*

Several submissions also highlighted the importance of energy infrastructure and public investment in protecting Britain's energy security.

“Sustainable, locally obtained energy is a security priority for the UK, particularly in light of recent fossil fuel hikes caused by the Ukraine war, etc [...] we welcome Great British Energy and the National Wealth Fund to ensure our UK natural resources benefit the public.”

– *Anne, Labour Party Member*

Natural world

Respondents highlighted the importance of Britain's natural resources for mental, physical and social wellbeing. The Commission additionally received submissions on the importance of ensuring the natural world is protected through Labour's planning reforms.

“[Labour should] protect existing natural assets, fund sustainable farming, support species, protect local nature recovery strategy areas”

– *Nature-based solutions initiative*

“Planning reform is needed, but a balance should be retained to ensure that the environment is protected.” – *Craig, Labour Party Member*

There were discussions on the role of the natural world in supporting Labour's net zero ambitions, particularly around carbon capture and sequestration.

“[Labour should] Restore peatlands and nature-based carbon sinks: Align habitat restoration with net zero goals.”

– *Lesley, Labour Party Member*

SAFER STREETS

PLP

Yvette Cooper *

Jess Asato

Shabana Mahmood

NEC

Joanne Thomas *

Jessica Barnard

Peter Wheeler

Nicola Jukes

CLPs, regions and devolved nations

Kelly Duddridge – East Midlands Region

Nathan Oswin – East Midlands Region

Sara Conway – Greater London Region

Antonia Shipley – North West Region

Heather Brannan-McVey – Scottish Labour Party

Stuart MacLennan – Scottish Labour Party

Ada Gravatt – South West Region

Salma Arif – Yorkshire and Humber Region

Lisa Banes – Yorkshire and Humber Region

Affiliates

Chris Morris – Usdaw

Siobhan Endean – Unite

Steve Turner – Unite

Susan Mathews – Unite

Katrina Gilman – Unison

Tracey Fussey – CWU

Jo Pitchford – GMB

Thomas Carr-Pollock – GMB

Steve Wright – Fire Brigades Union

Chris Wongsosaputro – Socialist Societies

Miriam Mirwitch – LGBT+ Labour

Jamie McMahon – Co-operative Party

Elected representatives and peers

Bella Sankey

**Co-convenor*

The focus of the Safer Streets Commission this year was around neighbourhood policing.

This was to reflect the Labour Government's Plan for Change priority of putting police back on the beat, with the milestone to recruit and deploy 13,000 extra neighbourhood police over the course of this Parliament. This will ensure that each neighbourhood has a named, contactable officer dealing with local issues.

After 14 years of neglect with the Conservatives, our communities have been left weakened. Their record is of antisocial behaviour at persistently high levels, record levels of shoplifting, fewer arrests being made and the police having to plug the gaps where other public services are under enormous pressures.

As a result, confidence in policing has dropped significantly; with too many crimes under-reported and people feeling unsafe in their local neighbourhoods.

The Commission therefore identified several key lines of enquiry to help support the Government's goal to rebuild neighbourhood policing. This included how the Government should tackle antisocial behaviour and the rise of retail crime, improving multi-agency working, strengthening crime prevention and addressing the root causes of offending.

As with many of the political challenges inherited, the Commission was keen to highlight the interconnectivity between these lines of enquiry and that policy solutions would invariably sit across multiple government departments and would require a joined-up approach.

Over the course of the consultation period, the Commission engaged with a range of frontline workers, practitioners, charitable organisations, unions, academics and policy specialists.

In May, the Commission held two evidence sessions; one of which focused on neighbourhood policing and the other on tackling antisocial behaviour.

During the session on neighbourhood policing, we heard evidence from those involved in frontline policing, as well as from Deputy Mayor for Police and Crime in West Yorkshire, Alison Lowe OBE, who shared her expertise setting the strategic focus of policing and delivering services for victims in her local area.

One of the conclusions was that police visibility is essential to improving public confidence.

The Commission also discussed the barriers to ensuring we have enough officers available to carry out neighbourhood patrols. For example, one issue that was identified was the impact of the prison capacity crisis, which has demanded extra police resources and staff being re-directed to monitor dangerous offenders being held in police cells.

The Commission also heard from Resolve and ASB Help; two organisations that provide support for victims of antisocial behaviour, deliver specialist training to practitioners and seek to influence national policy on improving community safety.

A key takeaway from the session was that antisocial behaviour remains underreported, and victims are not aware of their own rights. A YouGov survey on antisocial behaviour commissioned by Resolve, found that around 50% or more of people that are victims do not report it to the police. Furthermore, people are most likely to be a victim of antisocial behaviour in town centres, and residential areas rank fourth on the areas most affected. The Commission also reflected on recent evidence that the increase of shoplifting in some areas can be linked with serious organised crime and is being driven by gangs operating across borders.

Areas of reform that were discussed by the Commission included addressing the root causes of economic deprivation, improving information sharing between agencies, strengthening the use of the ASB Case Review and raising awareness of the services available to victims. This was explored further during a commission meeting attended by the Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper MP, who was able to provide a political update on the Crime & Policing Bill progressing through Parliament.

In addition to the evidence sessions, the Commission also held a series of roundtables, one of which focused on tackling retail crime, which reached historic levels in 2024.

Commission members heard evidence from a range of trade union and business representatives, such as Usdaw, the British Retail Consortium, the Association for Convenience Stores and the Retail Trust. The meeting was also attended by a retail worker, who was able to share their personal experience of the abuse they and many other colleagues have suffered and how this has increased over the past few years.

An Usdaw survey in 2024 found that of those surveyed, 77% experienced verbal abuse and 53% were threatened by a customer. Several common themes were identified during the meeting; such as increasing the quality of reporting, acknowledging most retail crime is driven by drug and alcohol use and improving engagement between the police, businesses and local agencies.

As part of considering how the Government can support the police prevent/deter crime, the Commission also held a roundtable on how emerging technologies could support the delivery of these aims and how it could improve police efficiencies more broadly.

This was attended by a range of experts such as the National Police Chiefs' Council, the Alan Turing Institute, Police and Crime Commissioners, Virgin Media, BT and the Police Foundation.

Several key areas were discussed, such as the use of biometrics for investigative functions and using data analysis to produce hot spot maps and assist with police prioritisation. Possible areas of further reform included updating historic infrastructure, improving data sharing between individual police forces, robust regulation, developing digital skills and how we can increase public engagement/awareness around police use of technology.

Invest in neighbourhood policing

The primary focus of this year's NPF Safer Streets consultation was neighbourhood policing. Under Labour's Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, the Government are recruiting 13,000 more neighbourhood police and PCSOs by 2029. This will ensure that officers are once again visible in communities, with guaranteed local patrols and a named officer to turn to when things go wrong. The consultation recognised the importance of matching this commitment with funding and welcomes the increase to police funding by an average 2.3% per year in real terms over the spending review period.

From this July, every area will have named, contactable neighbourhood policing teams to address local issues and concerns, and there will be guaranteed police patrols in high streets and town centres, backed by £66 million of funding announced last year for new hotspot patrols.

Stronger enforcement against antisocial behaviour

The Commission welcomes Labour's commitment to cracking down on antisocial behaviour as a top priority.

The consultation discussed the progress made so far, for example in the landmark Crime and Policing Bill, which will introduce Respect Orders to tackle the worst ASB offenders. It will stamp out issues such as public drinking and drug use to ensure that our communities are free from harm and nuisance.

The Commission also recognised the work undertaken so far to tackle retail crime and reiterated the need to ensure that all retail workers are protected against workplace abuse, threats and violence along with the need to increase reporting rates.

The Commission acknowledges the harm ASB is causing to our communities and welcomes Respect Orders that will help ensure that persistent adult offenders of ASB are banned from public areas where they are causing harm to our communities. The orders will be piloted prior to national rollout to make sure they are as effective as possible.

The Commission also welcomes stronger police powers to seize vehicles involved in antisocial behaviour, with officers no longer required to issue a warning before seizing the vehicles which bring misery to local communities.

This will allow the police to quickly remove antisocial vehicles which are creating a nuisance or disturbance in town centres and pedestrian areas. They will be able to deal more swiftly with the off-road and e-bikes terrorising neighbourhoods, and tackle car meets, which can see hundreds of cars gather in public spaces that often include loud aggressive engine revving and other noise related disturbances.

Improving police efficiencies and transparency

Labour recognises that confidence in policing is too low: ensuring the police are operating at peak performance and are upholding the highest standards is crucial to rebuilding trust.

The Commission supports Labour's introduction of the new performance unit to be established in the Home Office. The unit will harness national data to monitor performance and direct improvements, underpinned by a performance framework developed with the College of Policing, the policing inspectorate—His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services—the National Police Chiefs' Council and PCCs.

However, the Commission recognises that there is still much work to do to restore confidence in policing and address longstanding concerns with accountability, particularly amongst groups that have been affected by the disproportionate use of police power. The Commission reflected on how community relationships could be rebuilt and emphasised that Labour must work with the police to tackle this.

Adopting a preventative approach

Adopting a preventative approach was a key theme during the consultation. Addressing the root causes of offending is essential to driving down crime and making our communities safer.

Labour believes that fundamental to this is the delivery of the Young Futures Programme which will work to identify young people most at risk of being drawn into crime and other poor outcomes and create a network of Young Futures Hubs in communities across the country. Partnership working is essential and the Commission supports the Government's approach of working with external partners and young people to meet young people's needs and build on existing provision and expertise.

Rebuilding our criminal justice system

For the police to do their jobs effectively, the wider criminal justice system must ensure we are able to protect the public from greater harm and rehabilitate those that are released into the community.

The Commission recognises the current challenges in the criminal justice system due to the disastrous inheritance of record high court backlogs, prisons at over 99% capacity and a probation service significantly understaffed and overstretched.

The Commission welcomes the Government's commitment to implementing reforms outlined in the landmark Sentencing Review published in Spring earlier this year. This will put public protection and cutting crime at the heart of the justice system and ensure the public is never put at risk again from the threat of prisons running out of space and police unable to make arrests.

This includes a new earned progression model that will see prisoners earn their way to release through good behaviour or face longer in jail, and greater supervision of ex-offenders in the community. Our probation service will be backed with a 45% increase in funding of up to £700 million to help deliver the new system.

The Commission also recognised the importance of ensuring prison places are available for serious offenders and welcomes the £4.7 billion committed over the next three years to build 14,000 new places by 2031.

Several respondents commented on the growing demands and pressures our police force currently face. Understanding the context of a lack of investment and prioritisation by the previous Government, coupled with the evolving nature of crime, was identified as a key factor policy makers should be aware of. Investing in neighbourhood policing, and our criminal justice system more broadly, was a common theme across several submissions.

“GMB is also proudly a union for police staff, who must be central to Labour’s plan for safer streets and safer workplaces through better links between policing and the community. Labour has an opportunity to turn the page on years of Tory cuts to police staff and protect their terms and conditions from fragmentation in upcoming plans for English regional devolution.” – GMB

“With the growth in the availability of mobile phones, telephone calls for assistance have risen enormously. The workload from disclosure and paperwork is huge. Every call that results in an arrest means 1 or 2 officers off patrol for 3 to 4 hours.” – Ian, Labour Member

*“Increase in funding and capacity in both actual neighbourhood policing and in Court Services to enable faster and more efficient processing will relieve staff from delays and also act more promptly to bring end to any incident or career/spree of crime or antisocial behaviour.”
– David, Labour Member*

Several submissions also highlighted examples of best practice that have driven impressive outcomes in reducing crime within the community. This involved adopting a community-led approach that was supported by targeted data analysis to identify the key crime hotspots in local areas and providing a clear enforcement roadmap officers could then follow.

“Our response focuses on three pillars: Enforce, Reassure, and Divert ...

Enforce: Increased high-visibility patrols, night shifts, and plain clothes patrols identified 115 repeat offenders. Partnerships with MiST (prisoner handling team) streamlined arrests, increasing them by 2200%.

Reassure: Boosted public confidence through community engagement, visible policing, and social media updates. Joint patrols with Barnet Council enforced PSPOs, seizing illegal items and issuing fines. Facial recognition identified prolific offenders.

Divert: Developed diversionary activities with partners, including pathways to rehabilitation services and housing support. With Burnt Oak Problem Solving group and joint patrols with CGL fast-tracked individuals into support services, reducing reoffending.”

– Operation Woodson – A community led approach to tackling violence and anti-social behaviour in Burnt Oak, London

Other submissions commented on how the Government should tackle antisocial behaviour specifically. One policy solution identified was improving security infrastructure, so the police can properly investigate and respond to rising instances of crime in town centres.

“Strategically placed Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras serve as both a deterrent to potential offenders and a valuable tool for law enforcement in monitoring and responding to incidents.

There is a need to conduct a thorough assessment to identify high-crime areas and install high-definition CCTV cameras with clear signage indicating their presence.

In Bury town centre, the allocation of £368,579 from the Safer Streets Fund facilitated the installation of 32 new CCTV cameras. This initiative aimed to reduce crime rates and enhance public confidence in safety measures.” – Faith, Labour Member

Other respondents focused on addressing the root causes of crimes and ensuring there are safe spaces and diversionary programmes available for young people. Local authorities' youth funding fell by 73% under the previous Government, with 1,243 council-run youth centres across England and Wales closed between 2010–23.

Ensuring that local agencies work together to help support those that may be at risk of criminal exploitation was another area discussed.

“Reducing the roots of crime and anti-social behaviour must start with childhood support and opportunities.

One of the best things the Blair administration did was the Sure Start approach. This and youth centres, youth workers and family support must be restored.” – Adam, Labour Member

“A vulnerable person, or indeed a vulnerable community, may need the assistance of a wrap-around, multi-agency approach. For example, this could include housing, social services, health visitors, youth workers, children's services, probation, speech and language therapy, and various associated charities. Often each of these agencies struggles to cope with its own day-to-day workload, let alone effective liaison with each other.”

– Horsforth & Rawdon CLP

“Policing needs to work alongside preventative services like community legal and advice services, decent housing, poverty reduction initiatives, mental health support, drug and alcohol services, support for the rehabilitation of ex-offenders, CAMHS and professional youth services.”

– Unite

"Reducing reoffending is an important part in curtailing retail crime. The Labour Government should work with policing and criminal justice authorities to review how offenders can be rehabilitated effectively – including partnering with major retailers on developing rehabilitation programmes." – Co-operative Party

Several submissions highlighted a lack of confidence in policing as a barrier to overall policing effectiveness, for example through its impacts on crime reporting which hinders effective crime deterrence, prevention, and justice.

"Labour's plans to recruit 13,000 additional police officers, with 3,000 of those due to be in post this year, will be a key first step in increasing the visibility of the police and enabling them to deter and prevent crime. The effectiveness of these additional officers will however be dependent on having access to the correct data on crimes.

Far too many retail crimes are not currently recorded, Usdaw's latest evidence shows that 13% of retail staff who were assaulted during 2024 did not report the incident. We believe that there are also significant disparities between incidents being reported to the employer and incidents being reported to the police. The key issues with reporting are both complexities of the current systems and a lack of confidence that reporting will make a difference or be taken seriously." – Usdaw

"There is a growing perception that crime is not taken seriously in South East Cornwall. On the doorstep, residents frequently report a rise in antisocial behaviour, thefts, and a lack of visible police presence. This concern is supported by recent data showing that antisocial behaviour now accounts for 19.1% of all reported crimes in Cornwall, with a 13.2% year-on-year increase in such incidents between April 2024 and March 2025.

Public confidence in the judicial system is low, with many feeling there is little point in reporting crime due to perceived inaction or lack of police presence or follow-up." – South East Cornwall CLP

The NPF consultation also received many submissions on the criminal justice system. Many of these submissions recognised the catastrophic mess the Conservative Government left in our prison system, as well as the need for urgent investment.

"A core function of our judicial system is to deter criminal behaviour and rehabilitate offenders by supporting their reintegration as law-abiding, productive, and socially responsible members of society. This, in turn, helps make our streets and communities safer. However, our prisons are currently falling short of this goal. In 2022, the reoffending rate in the UK stood at 26.4 percent, highlighting the persistent challenge of breaking the cycle of crime." – Community

We received a number of submissions on the need for a fair and humane immigration and asylum policy. There was general support for the scrapping of the failed Rwanda scheme as well as for speeding up asylum applications and reducing use of asylum hotels. There were also submissions supporting government efforts so far to stop criminal smuggling gangs and deter small boat crossings.

BREAK DOWN BARRIERS TO OPPORTUNITY

PLP

Bridget Phillipson *

Neil Coyle

Chris Vince

NEC

Elsie Greenwood *

Ann Black

Gemma Bolton

Jane Thomas

Ann Jones

Ellen Morrison

CLPs, regions and devolved nations

Louise Chinnery – Eastern Region

Rosie Jackson – Eastern Region

Abdi Mohamed – Greater London Region

Pavitar Mann – South East Region

Lundy MacKenzie – South East Region

Judy Wilson – South West Region

Jess Moultrie – Welsh Labour Party

Sian Taylor – Welsh Labour Party

Charlotte Davies – Welsh Labour Party

Trudie McGuinness – West Midlands Region

Kalwinder Sandhu – West Midlands Region

Julia Rockett – Yorkshire and Humber Region

Lucy Hulme – Yorkshire and Humber Region

Margaret Cowie – Scottish Policy Forum

Affiliates

Emma Woodfine – Usdaw

Ruth Cross – Usdaw

Angela Duerden – Unite

Maggie Ryan – Unite

Helen Firman – Unison

Michelle Bailey – CWU

James Wilton – GMB

Stacey Booth – GMB

Eve Navias – Community

Andi Hopgood – Musicians' Union

Liz Hind – Socialist Societies

Sonya Davies – National Women's Committee

Elected representatives and peers

Eamonn O'Brien

Bev Craig

**Co-convenor*

It is a mission of the Labour Party to break the link between background and success. We will give children the best start in life, raise living standards for families and drive down poverty. That means more money in parents' pockets, more children ready to learn in school and more opportunities to get on in life.

During this year's policy cycle, the Break Down Barriers to Opportunity Policy Commission has focused on three areas that are vital to achieving the Government's Plan for Change milestone of giving children the best start in life with a record proportion of children starting school ready to learn by the end of this Parliament: early years education and childcare, social security and family policy, and tackling wider barriers to opportunity.

For each, we have engaged with, and sought evidence from, CLPs, affiliates, experts, stakeholders and government Ministers, to hear the progress that has been made and to help set the longer-term policy direction of The Labour Party.

Unanimously, we have heard that the inheritance received from the last Conservative Government was beyond dire, both economically and socially.

Since then, however, Labour has put the country's public finances on a stable footing and fixed the economic foundations. The Government is delivering on its Plan for Change by investing in Britain's future and making families better off.

The Policy Commission welcomes the action taken by the Labour Government that only a Labour Government could have taken – ending austerity, rebuilding public services, prioritising family finances, strengthening workers' rights and putting children's interests at the heart of policy-making.

Early years and childcare

In January, the Prime Minister welcomed NPF representatives to the first meeting of the new policy cycle and Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson updated the Policy Commission on the progress already made by the Labour Government in boosting children's life chances.

In March and April, we held an evidence session and a roundtable on early years education and childcare, where we heard from the Early Years Alliance, Magic Breakfast, the Early Education and Childcare Coalition, the London Early Years Foundation and the Trades Union Congress (TUC).

Discussions across both meetings centred on closing the opportunity gap during the critical early years of a child's life through high-quality childcare provision, valuing and supporting early years professionals and treating childcare as a key component of our country's social infrastructure.

Stakeholders welcomed Labour's strong focus on early years policy and delivery through the Plan for Change. Commission members discussed the Government's plans for school-based nurseries, as well as family hubs, the roll out of free breakfast clubs and the design and implementation of the free childcare hours offer.

Social security and family policy

In May, the Commission held an evidence session and roundtable on social security and family policy, where we heard from the Child Poverty Action Group, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Trussell Trust and the TUC.

Stakeholders welcomed many of the steps already taken by the Labour Government, including strengthening workers' rights through the Employment Rights Bill, the boost to the National Living Wage and the introduction of a Fair Repayment Rate in Universal Credit.

In the commission meeting, Sir Stephen Timms MP, Minister for Social Security and Disability, set out how the Government is investing an extra £1 billion a year in employment support.

Across both meetings, the Commission also discussed the impact of the Two Child Limit and Benefit Cap, reforms to Personal Independence Payments and sickness benefits and the work that Ministers are undertaking to review Universal Credit.

Barriers to opportunity

There were wide-ranging discussions in our members' event in May. Members raised the positive impact of Sure Start, the nature and scale of issues with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision inherited from the last Conservative Government, unaffordable housing, as well as the role of health visitors and speech and language therapists.

In June, Labour's Opportunity Mission Champion, Sarah Smith MP, updated the Policy Commission on the Government's plans to expand eligibility for free school meals, delivering a free nutritious meal every school day for over half a million more children and lifting 100,000 children in England out of poverty.

There was also an update on the Government's changes to Winter Fuel Payments, which raised the threshold for eligibility to £35,000 and below – meaning nine million pensioners will benefit, over three quarters of those above State Pension age.

We also heard from the Women's Budget Group and Gingerbread in our roundtable. Discussion centred around the interaction between women's poverty and child poverty, the Government's forthcoming Child Poverty Strategy, affordable public transport and parental leave.

Equality and equalities issues are at the heart of Labour's policy-making. Throughout each roundtable, evidence session and members event, the Policy Commission has considered the equalities impact of Government policy.

Notably, given this year's emphasis on early years education and children's life chances, the Commission has focused on the interaction between women's poverty and children's poverty – and how best Labour can tackle the two.

Early years and childcare

During our consultation, stakeholders and members widely welcomed Labour's emphasis on a new child-centred approach to government and the prioritisation of school-readiness in the Government's Plan for Change.

The Policy Commission welcomes the expansion of top-quality childcare through the roll-out of school-based nurseries, which will deliver 6,000 new childcare places and help the Government meet its key milestone of 75 per cent of five-year-olds in England being ready to learn when they start school.

The Commission heard evidence around the design and implementation of the free childcare hours offer. The last Conservative Government made a pledge to expand hours, without a plan to deliver it, leaving behind them a system in chaos.

The Commission welcomes the Labour Government's plans to fix the mess left by the Tories so that every child, regardless of their background, can access high-quality childcare – in addition to plans to deliver accessible, integrated maternity, baby and family support services, which are so crucial to children's early development.

The last Conservative Government also left behind hundreds of schools that were crumbling, exposed to RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete). The Commission welcomes the progress already made and the further commitment made at the Spending Review that will see £2.4 billion a year invested in rebuilding 500 schools.

In June, the Government confirmed that they will bring forward a White Paper on reforming the schools system, including support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in the autumn.

This is an area where the Policy Commission received a number of submissions, and we believe the Government is right to prioritise further reform, because outcomes for children with SEND are not nearly good enough and the existing system too often fails them and their families alike.

The Commission welcomes Labour's plans to deliver 1,000 Best Start Family Hubs, which will bring together the best of Sure Start, health services, community groups and the early years sector, helping to drive up quality in our early years system and strengthen support for families and children.

The Commission also welcomes the progress that the Labour Government has made rolling out free breakfast clubs and expanding eligibility for free school meals, which will mean half a million more children will be eligible and 100,000 schoolchildren in England will be lifted out of poverty.

Both will boost attainment and attendance at school and put money back into parents' pockets, making life easier and more affordable for parents struggling

with the cost of living. Capping the number of branded uniform items required by schools will also save money for the parents of over four million children.

We also welcome the Labour Government's plans to support more children to stay with their wider family through trialling new allowances for kinship carers, involve families in decision-making about children wherever appropriate, tackle the failed children's home places market through driving local authority co-operation and capping excess profit.

Social security and family policy

Throughout this year's consultation, the Commission has heard about the essential role of strong employment rights in bringing about security for families with children, especially during the critical early years of a child's life.

The Commission welcomes the Government's transformative upgrade to workers' rights, which will help parents give their children the best possible start in life.

That includes strengthening the right to request flexible working, making paternity leave and unpaid parental leave a right from day one of employment, introducing mandatory ethnicity and disability pay gap reporting, new protections for pregnant women and a new right to neonatal care leave and pay.

In addition to boosting parental leave rights, Labour welcomes the Government's landmark review of parental leave and pay, which could benefit millions of families, help to close the gender pay gap and boost the economy.

We also welcome the steps taken by the Labour Government to put money in people's pockets and tackle poverty – especially raising the living wage, expanding eligibility for free school meals, Carer's Allowance and the Warm Homes Discount, raising the Standard Allowance of Universal Credit, rolling out free breakfast clubs, reforming crisis support, introducing a Fair Repayment Rate in Universal Credit, investing in employment support and capping school uniform costs.

These measures will drive down poverty and help make sure that no child goes hungry. While the Commission heard and discussed evidence about the impact of the Two Child Limit and the Benefit Cap on child poverty in larger families, we also heard that tackling the devastating increases in child poverty seen under the last Conservative Government requires a wide-reaching approach across government.

We believe that a long-term comprehensive Child Poverty Strategy is needed – one that works across all government departments and which focuses on incomes as well as costs. We welcome the Government's commitment to this end, and to publishing a Child Poverty Strategy in the Autumn.

We also welcome Labour's plans to reform crisis support with £1 billion a year towards a new Crisis and Resilience Fund, which will help ensure that the poorest children don't go hungry during the school holidays, and reforms to the Child Maintenance Service, which will ensure more children get the financial support they need and which will lift 20,000 children out of poverty.

While our consultation focused on giving children the best possible start in life, we also received a number of submissions on eligibility for Winter Fuel Payments.

The Commission welcomes the Government's changes to Winter Fuel Payments, which will see three quarters of all pensioners benefit. Alongside an increase in the number of Pension Credit recipients and the Government's ironclad commitment to the Triple Lock on State Pensions, Labour is ensuring that pensioners have the security and dignity in retirement that they deserve.

Barriers to opportunity

To break the unfair link between family background and future success, the Government will also need to continue to consider wider societal barriers to opportunities that span across government departments.

In doing so, we welcome the Labour Government's commitment to the use of equalities impact assessments throughout the policy development process to look at instances where there may be disproportionate policy impacts, especially for women, disabled people, Black, Asian and minority ethnic people and LGBT+ people.

The Policy Commission welcomes the announcements of record investments in the NHS, in local transport and in social and affordable housing – showing the difference a Labour Government makes. We believe that each will have a transformative impact on society and will help to close opportunity gaps that have persisted for far too long.

Along with the Youth Guarantee – ensuring that every young person is either earning or learning – and £1 billion a year investment in employment support to help sick and disabled people into work, the Labour Government is delivering on its Opportunity Mission – breaking down barriers across society, supporting people into good jobs and boosting life chances for children and young people throughout the country.

Members of this Policy Commission would like to thank all Labour Party members, branches, CLPs, affiliates and stakeholders who have made a submission to this year's consultation. This section is a brief overview of the hundreds of submissions received.

The submissions we received emphasised that breaking down barriers to opportunity and boosting school readiness requires family support from birth and throughout the crucial early years of a child's development.

"If we want a society that works for all, we have to start as soon as a child is born to help all children to succeed." – Wainbody Branch Labour Party

Better integration of early years services was frequently raised as a way of supporting children's development, with the view that the Government should learn from previous successes, notably Sure Start, as well as focusing on long-term interventions and empowering parents through greater information about the support that is available to their family.

"Labour should prioritise the integration of services across health, education, and social care to create a seamless support system that ensures no child falls through the cracks." – Adewale Adewumi, Rugby CLP

"New parents should routinely receive information about typical speech and language development alongside advice on diet and vaccinations, empowering them to support their child's progress from the very beginning." – Speech and Language UK

"We should take best practice from Sure Start and use that to inform and implement initiatives now that focus on providing free early years support that has a long-term impact." – Dulwich and West Norwood CLP

There was a clear consensus from submissions that the last Conservative Government left behind a broken system of early years and childcare, with soaring costs, falling places and a demoralised workforce that for too long had been undervalued and underappreciated.

"Labour must fix the foundations of a broken and dysfunctional model of providing early years and comprehensive education left by the Tories. This means fixing the crisis in funding and employment standards." – GMB

Respondents to our consultation noted that – as a result of the rising costs of childcare under the last Conservative Government – a growing number of parents have been forced to rely on family, especially grandparents, and friends for support with their childcare.

"At present the majority of Usdaw members rely on grandparents (57%) other family members and friends and neighbours as their primary source of childcare." – Usdaw

The Commission wholeheartedly agrees with the submissions that stressed the vital role of early years professionals, who are predominantly women, and who, day-in, day-out, undertake invaluable work caring for, and educating, our country's children in often challenging circumstances.

"Early years professionals have one of the most important jobs in the country. They are crucial in supporting enjoyable, enriching and safe experiences for children in their earliest years."

– *Early Education and Childcare Coalition*

The Commission agrees that a reinstated School Support Staff Negotiating Body working with National Joint Council Unions to deliver national terms and conditions, training, career progression and fair pay rates for support staff will help schools give children the best possible start in life.

Submissions also emphasised the interaction between early years reform, delivering high-quality childcare provision, and the steps needed to tackle poverty – especially child poverty and women's poverty.

"Position early years reform within Labour's wider anti-poverty agenda, recognising it as foundational to reducing inequality and boosting long-term prosperity." – *Oxford & District Labour Party*

"There is a well-established link between women's poverty and child poverty, so both must be addressed in the child poverty strategy."

– *Fabian Women's Network*

A number of respondents focused their submissions on the Government's forthcoming Child Poverty Strategy with suggestions for inclusion. As well as reforms to the Healthy Start programme, Universal Credit, the Two Child Limit and the Benefit Cap, submissions were also received about potential reforms to the Child Maintenance Service.

"Where child maintenance is received, research shows it cuts the child poverty rate by 25%. We are clear therefore that CMS reform must form a central part of the Child Poverty Strategy." – *Gingerbread*

Submissions also raised wider reforms to the design of Universal Credit, including how childcare costs are paid in the system, and measures to reform welfare that are included in the Government's Universal Credit Bill.

As well as early years, childcare and social security, respondents pointed to the vital role of wider public services across communities in ensuring that Labour breaks down barriers to opportunity. In particular, submissions were received on the role of youth services, libraries, leisure centres and sports facilities.

"Youth services are crucial to supporting young people to become adult citizens, helping them to achieve better education and health outcomes."

– *Unite*

"It is specifically the role libraries play in supporting early literacy that means libraries are vital to breaking down barriers to opportunity."

– Rosalind Cloke, Eastern region

The Commission believes that all children should have the opportunity to access books for their learning and enjoyment. We welcome the Government's additional investment in local government, its investment in grassroots sports facilities as well as measures in the National Youth Strategy, which is putting the views of young people at the centre of decision-making and helping to rejuvenate local youth services across the country.

Submissions also raised the need for equality to be at the heart of the Labour Government. The Policy Commission welcomes the newly-established Office for Equality and Opportunity, which is helping to ensure that equality runs through all of the Government's missions.

"Achieving true equality of opportunity necessitates dismantling systemic barriers that hinder individuals based on race, gender, socioeconomic status, or disability." – Paul Donald, North West

A number of submissions raised a ban on conversion practices and the Supreme Court judgment in the case of *For Women Scotland v Scottish Ministers*. We welcome the Labour Government's commitment to delivering a trans-inclusive ban on conversion practices and the clarity that the Supreme Court ruling has provided.

The Commission also welcomes the newly-established Race Equality Engagement Group, chaired by Baroness Lawrence, which will help remove barriers to racial equality and help ensure that the Government's Plan for Change works for everyone across the country.

The Commission supports Labour's work as the Party of equality and shares Labour's belief that everyone in our society deserves dignity and respect. By breaking down barriers across society, tackling the root causes of inequality and boosting opportunities, Labour is driving real, lasting change for people of all backgrounds.

BUILD AN NHS FIT FOR THE FUTURE

PLP

Wes Streeting *

Lewis Atkinson

NEC

Linda Hobson *

Angie Davies

Jackie Baillie

Carol Sewell

Kathy Abu-Bakir

CLPs, regions and devolved nations

Alexander Kyriacou – Eastern Region

Nathalie Nicholas – North West Region

Georgia Jamieson – Northern Region

Melanie Morley – Northern Region

Brooke Ritchie – Scottish Labour Party

Sharon Mintoff – South East Region

Jude Robinson – South West Region

David Smith – Welsh Labour Party

Cathy Parry – West Midlands Region

Carolyn Harris – Welsh Policy Forum

Affiliates

Dave McCrossen – Usdaw

Alison Spencer-Scragg – Unite

Dominic Hook – Unite

John Earls – Unite

Christina McAnea – Unison

Barbara Plant – GMB

Rachel Harrison – GMB

Sara Hyde – Socialist Societies

Kevin Brady – LGBT+ Labour

Elected representatives and peers

Vince Maple

Amanda Serjeant

**Co-convenor*

The scale of the challenge we face to fix our broken NHS is huge. The Labour Government is not only working to get the NHS back on its feet after 14 years of Conservative neglect, but also reforming the service for the long term so that it is fit for the future. Change has already begun, with the Government delivering not just the two million extra appointments promised at the election, but 4.6 million more and counting. Waiting lists are falling to their lowest level in two years. While this demonstrates the Plan for Change is working, we know that we're only just getting started. This is why this Commission consulted on how we can go further and faster to end hospital backlogs by meeting the NHS standard of 92% of patients waiting fewer than 18 weeks from referral to treatment.

The Commission chose to frame this topic through the lens of the 10 Year Health Plan, given the transformative impact this will have on the NHS. Specifically, this Commission looked at the shift of focus out of hospitals and into the community, improving technology across health and social care, and tackling the causes of ill health so people stay healthy for longer. Evidence was also sought on social care and mental health, specifically how wider work on these vital policy areas can help ease pressures on the NHS, as well as how the NHS workforce can be best supported to deliver faster – and better – care.

The 10 Year Health Plan

In government, Labour is developing a 10 Year Health Plan to consider the three big shifts our NHS needs – from analogue to digital, from hospital to community, and from sickness to prevention. As part of the consultation, this Commission held stakeholder roundtables to hear from a range of contributors on how these shifts can help to not only turn the NHS around, but how the Plan can be used to tackle waiting lists in particular.

The first roundtable discussed how to improve technology across health and social care to treat patients more quickly and accurately. Stakeholders set out current challenges, including huge variation across the healthcare system, poor basics like Wi-Fi and IT equipment, and the need for better data and coding. Expert attendees also discussed implementation of this shift, including how to bridge the digital divide, ensuring patient agency, and how the use of digital tools to assess risk and redesign patient pathways can make the system more efficient.

The second roundtable focused on tackling the causes of ill health so people stay healthy for longer, taking pressure off health and care services. Speakers raised the three biggest killers – tobacco, obesity and alcohol – and how levers such as legislation and taxation can be used to tackle them. The wider determinants of health were also raised, as were budgets and financial flows, the management of multiple conditions, and the role of the voluntary sector in providing preventative services.

The final roundtable, held with healthcare workers and union representatives in North East England, discussed the shift of healthcare out of hospitals and into the community to help cut hospital backlogs. Topics raised included the primary care workforce, Hospital at Home, mental health provision, NHS culture and leadership, and technology.

Adult mental health

The Commission held an evidence session on adult mental health, joined by Baroness Merron, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Patient Safety, Women's Health and Mental Health. Expert speakers from the Mental Health Foundation and the NHS Confederation attended to give evidence on how to improve access to and reduce backlogs in adult mental health care. The Commission discussed prevention and public mental health approaches, broadening access to services, workforce challenges, the use of AI, and the link between diet, gut health and mental health.

Social care

The Commission held a further evidence session on adult social care, with attendees from Unison, The Nuffield Trust and the National Care Forum giving expert testimony on how to tackle the crisis in social care to help ease pressures on the NHS to help meet our waiting times target. The Commission discussed a National Care Service, the incoming social care Fair Pay

Agreement, the social care workforce, the role of care workers in prevention, the growing not-for-profit sector in adult social care, and how we can better support unpaid carers.

Members' event

An online members' event was held, where Labour members were joined by Ashley Dalton, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health and Prevention, and members of the Commission. Members discussed a range of topics relating to tackling waiting lists, including adult mental health, diagnostics, staff wellbeing and retention, the NHS App, health literacy, public health, and accessing hard to reach communities.

Analogue to digital

The Commission supports Labour's commitment to bring our analogue health service into the digital age, arming staff with modern equipment and cutting-edge technology. The Government is putting money where its mouth is, with £10 billion invested by the Chancellor in the NHS technology budget at the Spending Review. Not only will this help empower patients to take control of their own health through tools like the NHS App, it will also free up staff time so they can focus on treating patients and getting waiting lists down.

The Commission welcomes measures to improve the NHS App which have been a central plank of the Government's elective reform plan to cut waiting times. Reforms to the App mean that patients across England will be able to manage appointments, view prescriptions and access their GP records at the touch of a button. So far this has saved 1.5 million appointments and 5.7 million staff hours, with trusts using the App more likely to see faster treatment than those who do not.

This Commission believes that digitalisation is also a vital tool in primary care. Agreed reforms to the GP contract – the first deal in four years – will require GP surgeries to allow patients to request appointments online throughout working hours. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly welcomed this measure, in particular the parity with walk-in and telephone access to help bridge the digital divide. Fixing the front door of the NHS and improving access to primary care will in turn help ease pressures on the wider health service, such as A&E.

Hospital to community

As part of the 10 Year Health Plan, the Labour Government is also shifting the focus of healthcare out of hospital and into the community.

The Commission heard the importance of investing in this shift to realise a thriving neighbourhood health service, such as the £889 million funding boost for the GP contract. GPs are also being incentivised to liaise with specialist consultants if unsure about a hospital referral to avoid people being added to waiting lists unnecessarily. The Commission welcomes this investment and reform which is evidence of Labour's commitment to work in partnership with NHS staff to get primary care back on its feet.

Community pharmacists are also at the heart of local healthcare. The Commission supports Labour's vision for pharmacists to play a bigger role in the shift into the community, as shown by the record investment in community pharmacy, the first step in getting pharmacies back on their feet and fit for the future. Funded by an extra £617 million over two years, the deal with Community Pharmacy England will, among a range of measures, see the 'morning after pill' available free of charge, avoiding the need for a GP appointment. As discussed by the Commission, easier access to care and

support through GPs, pharmacists and other local healthcare providers does not just improve access for patients, but also helps reduce backlogs in care.

Respondents supported the NHS remaining a public service, free at the point of use. Labour will always defend our NHS so that everyone can access care within their local communities without worrying about paying the bill.

Sickness to prevention

The Commission welcomes Labour's commitment to shortening the amount of time people spend in ill-health by preventing illnesses before they happen. Bold action has already been taken by the Government to create the first smoke-free generation through the introduction of the Tobacco and Vapes Bill, recognising that smoking is one of the biggest risk factors in driving poor health. Not only does smoking claim around 80,000 lives a year, it also substantially increases the risk of many major health conditions including strokes, diabetes, heart disease, stillbirth, dementia, and asthma. We will also crack down on childhood vaping.

During the consultation, we also discussed how fixing the foundations of good health extends to tackling obesity in childhood and all stages of the life cycle. Around two thirds of adults and more than a third of 11 year olds are now overweight or living with obesity with significant impacts on their health, as well as educational outcomes, and children in deprived areas are more than twice as likely to be living with obesity. The Commission welcomes Labour's commitment to taking action on junk food advertising, ending the targeting of ads at children both on TV and online. The measures should prevent an estimated 20,000 cases of childhood obesity as well as give every child a healthy, happy start to life. Labour will also work with the food industry to promote healthy food choices.

As well as protecting the NHS, preventative approaches also help us to build a healthy society. Smoking alone sees £18.3 billion lost in productivity every year, with smokers a third more likely to be off work sick; obesity costs the NHS over £11 billion a year and also drives economic activity. The Commission heard a wealth of evidence on this link between health and economic growth, and how we can build a healthy economy if people are able to stay in work.

Workforce

Lord Darzi's shocking 2024 report was clear that there are systemic issues across the NHS which have led to poor experiences for staff as well as patients. This view came across strongly in submissions, and in the Commission's discussions, many of which highlighted deep concern about staffing levels, workload and stress as well as the erosion of pay for over a decade by the Conservatives. Despite these challenges, NHS staff work day in, day out and deliver the very best care for their patients. This Commission believes in backing our health workers, who will be central to delivering the Government's Plan for Change on the frontline.

While next steps in reforming the NHS workforce will be set out in the upcoming 10 year NHS Workforce Plan, this Commission welcomes the steps Labour has already taken to drive change. The Government inherited an understaffed primary care sector, where practices were unable to hire newly qualified GPs, despite urgent need for them. By cutting red tape in investing more in general practice, an extra 2,000 GPs have been employed, helping to deliver more appointments. Burdensome bureaucracy has also been scrapped through the new deal for GPs, freeing up GPs from pointless box ticking so they can spend more time treating patients, bringing back the family doctor to ensure greater continuity of care.

As well as recruitment, submissions were clear that staff morale and retention are key issues to be addressed. So far, the Government has delivered two above-inflation pay rises for NHS staff, recognising the outstanding work that they do. It is also bringing in a zero tolerance approach to violence and harassment of staff, alongside measures to ensure staff are being paid correctly for the work they are delivering.

The Commission also heard evidence on the use of physician associates, which has generated some concern over transparency for patients, scope of practice and the substituting of doctors. The Commission supports the independent review by Professor Gillian Leng CBE which will look at how this role – as well as anaesthesia associates – are deployed across the health system to ensure that patients receive the highest standards of care.

Mental health

Labour recognises the enormous impact mental health has not just on people, but on businesses, the NHS and the economy as a whole. The Commission heard evidence on the 1 million backlog in mental health care, and how timely intervention can save anguish and distress further down the line. One way in which we can deliver earlier intervention is to expand the mental health workforce, which is why Labour is committed to delivering 8,500 extra mental health staff to improve access to services and tackle mental ill-health. We have already recruited 6,700.

The Commission discussed reform of care for those already in the system so that the most vulnerable receive the appropriate and compassionate care they need. That's why Labour is modernising the Mental Health Act to ensure that people with the most severe mental health conditions get better, more personalised care, as well as greater choice and enhanced rights and support so that they are treated with dignity and respect. This work will not only provide faster treatment and ease pressure on hospitals, but also ensure that mental health is given the same attention and focus as physical health.

Social Care

The Commission heard how pressures in hospitals are inextricably linked to the current crisis in the social care sector. The crisis in social care is awful for the people being failed, but also piles huge pressures on the NHS, with people unable to be discharged as social care is unavailable for them. This is only going to become more acute in the next few decades, with an aging population meaning real social care costs could almost double by 2038, compared to 2018. Labour has hit the ground running to tackle this crisis, legislating for Fair Pay Agreements so the staggering 131,000 vacancies in social care can be filled. An immediate investment of £86 million has also boosted the Disabled Facilities Grant, meaning that thousands more people can make vital improvements to their homes, enabling them to live more independent lives and keep them out of hospital when they do not need to be there.

Respondents were clear that long-term reform is vital to meeting this challenge. Labour will undertake a programme of reform to create a National Care Service that is able to meet the needs of older and disabled people into the 21st century. Baroness Louise Casey is leading on this work, heading up an independent commission to set out this long-term vision for adult social care, with recommended measures and a roadmap for delivery. The Commission believes that this once in a generation opportunity will lay the foundations for a social care system that's rooted in fairness and equality and properly integrated with the NHS.

The Commission heard evidence on unpaid carers, many of whom have to leave work in order to care for their family members. Labour has increased Carer's Allowance by £2,300 a year – the largest ever increase – so that over 60,000 more people can claim the benefit by 2029/30, helping people to stay in employment.

Hospital to community

Respondents overwhelmingly supported the shift away from hospitals towards care closer to where people live. This was felt to be key to reducing hospital backlogs, as primary care within the community can help relieve pressures in secondary care settings, as well as identify and tackle ill health earlier, reducing the need for more costly and complex care further down the line:

"To effectively reduce these backlogs and restore timely access to essential healthcare services, we must fundamentally shift the center of gravity in our healthcare system—moving more services out of overcrowded hospitals and into local communities. This strategic shift will prioritise early intervention, prevention, and integrated care, ultimately helping to keep individuals healthier for longer periods."

– Adewale, West Midlands

Many submissions argued that GP services play a vital role as the front door of the NHS, and called for continued work to improve access to GPs. Ending the 8am scramble and bringing back the family doctor were two central themes running through submissions in this area:

“Since the start of the Covid Pandemic GP services have rapidly deteriorated, the 8:00am scramble for appointments and the uncertainty between practices on pre bookable appointments has led many to have to rely on A and E to treat conditions that would have historically been handled by a GP.

The government needs to fix the first line defence of the NHS and ensure that patients health is not compromised by failures to the system. This will enable ambulances are available to treat the most urgent in need and free up capacity to A and E departments.” – GMB

“One of the clearest paths to alleviating hospital backlogs and improving patient care lies in revitalising community healthcare—specifically, by strengthening general practice and reinstating the traditional family doctor model.

Continuity of care is central to better outcomes. The longstanding relationship between patients and a single GP enhances trust, reduces unnecessary hospital admissions, improves chronic disease management, and raises satisfaction.” – Sussex Weald CLP

Various submissions also highlighted pharmacies as a vehicle to deliver a raft of community services on local high streets, freeing up GP appointments and reducing waiting lists:

“Community pharmacies are one of the most accessible healthcare settings in the UK, with 85% of the population in England living within a mile of a pharmacy – rising to 93% in areas of highest deprivation. Supporting people to use pharmacy and OTC products as their first port of call for minor ailments offers a safe and convenient alternative to A&E and GP services, helping to reduce hospital pressures.” – PAGB, The Consumer Healthcare Association

Some respondents highlighted this shift as essential to improving access to healthcare in rural areas in particular.

Analogue to digital

A number of submissions focused on technology and digital approaches within both the NHS and social care, and how they can be used to transform care.

Submissions argued that this needs to start with the basics, such as existing equipment and IT systems:

"The classic NHS trope of using Windows 98 late into the 2010s still persists. There are too many data systems within the each hospital trust. Even NHS doctors can feel this with log-ins and training for different systems becoming an overwhelming aspect of their daily work."

– [Bermondsey and Old Southwark CLP](#)

"Poor IT infrastructure is a barrier to a digital NHS and must be addressed urgently – the BMA estimates that millions of clinical working hours are lost each year due to inadequate IT. A 2022 BMA survey found that just 11% of UK Doctors felt they had the right equipment to do their job." – [The BMA](#)

Technologies and digital tools suggested by respondents include electronic health records, wearable tech, patient monitoring tools, and AI (Artificial Intelligence) – both to support patients, and to free up valuable staff time:

"The use of new technologies into the NHS and social care can increase greatly capacity in healthcare, by assisting care workers to monitor patients not just for falls, but heart rate, blood pressure, enuresis, motion (& thus bed sores), in the hospital, care home, or home."

– [Nottingham South CLP](#)

While generally positive about this shift, some submissions highlighted to need to mitigate digital exclusion, such as giving the elderly and more vulnerable patients specialist support to access online health services:

"In particular, the transition from analogue to digital services could further marginalise those with limited access to technology – especially in deprived and older populations." – [Socialist Societies](#)

"Integrating technology, such as electronic health records and telemedicine, can enhance efficiency and patient care. However, it's vital to ensure that digital advancements do not exacerbate health inequalities, necessitating inclusive design and accessibility." – [Paul, North West](#)

Sickness to prevention

Many respondents called for more action to be taken to prevent illnesses before they happen, not only to shorten the amount of time that people spend in ill-health, alleviating pressures on NHS services; but also so that people can live active and fulfilling lives:

“Expanding well-evidenced preventative interventions would shift the system away from reacting to crisis, instead anticipating and preventing them, thus reducing demand on acute services.”

– [The Richmond Group of Charities](#)

Submissions focused on the biggest killers, including smoking, alcohol and obesity. Respondents emphasised the link between poor diet and nutrition and public health in particular, and called for continued action in this area:

“Continue with education about, and promotion of, healthy diets, and with disincentives to consume unhealthy food, and restrictions on availability where justified.” – [New Malden Branch, Kingston and Surbiton CLP](#)

“The announcement of a new food strategy that will bring together food experts in advising the government to make healthy food more accessible is a positive step that will help reduce diet-related illnesses and nutritional inequality.” – [NHS Confederation](#)

The wider determinants of health were also stressed in numerous submissions, including the impact of poverty, housing, air pollution, and work:

“Reorienting health services involves shifting the focus from solely treating diseases to emphasising prevention, health promotion, and broader social determinants of health.” – [Sabrina, London](#)

Mental health

Respondents felt that mental health was a particularly important issue, with a shift towards prevention key to tackling backlogs and improving overall wellbeing too:

“Prevention of mental health crises and reducing the need to access clinical services requires early support – particularly through services that do not necessarily carry a “mental health” label. This includes provision – often through Third Sector and community organisations – that addresses issues such as abuse, isolation, loneliness, stress, self-esteem and relationships.” – [Guiseley and Rawdon BLP](#)

The need to improve access to mental health care was also highlighted, such as mental health crisis centres and talking therapies:

“Need to drastically improve access to talking therapies via primary care, to prevent problems escalating.” – [South Shropshire CLP](#)

Submissions were in strong agreement that mental health care be given the same focus and attention as physical health:

“Government should show leadership in destigmatising mental illness to help reduce barriers to access; and create genuine “parity of esteem” between mental and physical health services.”
– [Socialist Health Association](#)

Social care

Many submissions felt that tackling the crisis in social care is critical to ending hospital backlogs, with delayed discharges causing knock on effects throughout the NHS:

“Fourteen years of Conservative austerity and chronic underfunding have pushed England’s adult social care system to a critical breaking point, urgently requiring reform. This crisis places significant strain on the NHS, as delayed hospital discharges caused by insufficient social care capacity lead to increased costs and bed shortages.” – [Community](#)

The social care workforce was raised by a number of respondents, in particular vacancies in the sector, pay and training. The Fair Pay Agreement was seen as a crucial tool to improving pay and conditions across the social care workforce:

“The social care system is also facing crisis after years of underfunding, with increased pressure placed both on unpaid and informal carers but also emergency local authority and health services. Low wages and insecure contracts exacerbate a staffing crisis, and the governments Fair Pay Agreement for social care must tackle this.” – [Unite](#)

“Care workers’ pay and status, even after years of experience, is on a par with relatively unskilled and disrespected manual workers such as cleaners, contributing to appalling difficulties with recruitment and retention.” – [Hornsey and Friern Barnet CLP](#)

Unpaid carers were also raised in submissions, many of which called for increased support, particularly through benefits like Carer’s Allowance:

“Family carers (of all ages) carry a significant burden of care for people who would otherwise need more professional care. Yet their own physical and mental health can be neglected due to the demands of caring for their loved ones and the difficulties of finding and funding alternative care at home.” – [South Suffolk CLP](#)

BRITAIN RECONNECTED

PLP

David Lammy *

Tracy Gilbert

Ellie Reeves

Luke Akehurst

NEC

David Agbley *

Yasmine Dar

Mike Payne

Ian Murray

Isabelle Gutierrez

CLPs, regions and devolved nations

Neghat Khan – East Midlands Region

Ruby Simpson – East Midlands Region

Richard Howitt – Eastern Region

Bora Kwon – Greater London Region

Luke Henman – Northern Region

Michael Mordey – Northern Region

Christopher Cuddihee – South West Region

Luke John Davies – West Midlands Region

Alice Smart – Yorkshire and Humber Region

Katherine Sangster – Scottish Policy Forum

Boyd Black – Northern Ireland Labour Party

Andrew Hopper – Labour International

Affiliates

Emily Rowles – Usdaw

Susan Donaldson – Usdaw

Sarah Carpenter – Unite

Sharon Graham – Unite

Liz Snape – Unison

Marz Colombini – ASLEF

Martin Walsh – CWU

Ross Holden – GMB

Roulin Khondoker – Socialist Societies

Ruby Herbert – National Committee of Labour Students

Elected representatives and peers

Mary Ann Brockelsby

Gurpreet Singh Johal

**Co-convenor*

This year, the Britain Reconnected Policy Commission has met at a time of heightened global instability and growing international tensions. The war in Ukraine has entered its fourth year, conflict in the Middle East has continued to escalate, and tariffs threaten to disrupt international trade.

The Labour Government has taken concrete action in response, including vital steps to shore up our defences, grow our economy and protect our citizens. Driven by the commitment to increase defence and security spending to 5% of GDP by 2035, Labour is making Britain secure at home and strong abroad.

In support of this, the Britain Reconnected Commission have focused their work around a consultation on resilience and national security, one of the foundations of Labour's Plan for Change.

The workplan for 2025 has included a range of activities, such as policy roundtables and evidence sessions, on a range of key topics around national security, including the armed forces, cybersecurity and energy security.

These events have provided an important opportunity for the Commission to reflect on the work the Labour Party has already taken in government to boost our national security, while providing an insight into the scale of the challenges ahead.

This year, the Britain Reconnected Commission began its work on the new cycle of the NPF process.

At a series of commission meetings, evidence sessions and policy roundtables, the Commission were pleased to receive updates from the Cabinet and ministerial teams on the Labour Government's work, including a report from the Foreign Secretary on the UK's relationship with the United States and the Government's approach to the conflict in Gaza including the actions the Government has taken in support of an immediate ceasefire, the release of all the hostages and the lifting of all restrictions on humanitarian aid. At this meeting, the Commission discussed funding for international aid, noting the vital role of humanitarian support in conflict areas such as Ukraine, Gaza and Sudan, and raised the importance of remembering other conflicts such as Kashmir.

At a later commission meeting, Minister Stephen Doughty outlined the importance of the Government's support for Ukraine and the success of the recent EU summit, which fixed major issues with the Conservatives' botched Brexit deal. The Commission also discussed the effect of sanctions against Russia, ethical procurement standards and arms export licenses, noting that Labour had suspended 30 licenses to Israel.

At the first evidence session of the consultation, the Commission were joined by Minister Abena Oppong-Asare alongside experts from Chatham House for a discussion on the broad aspects of resilience, including societal resilience, and recognising that national security includes the economy, energy, supply chains, and the exploitation of marginalised communities by hostile actors.

The next evidence session focussed specifically on cybersecurity. Experts from Virtual Routes and Binding Hook presented key findings from their research, which covered the recent examples of cyber-attacks on major British retailers. Discussion focussed on different types of malicious actors, the threat to our critical national infrastructure and the lessons we can draw from the war in Ukraine.

Many of these themes were also reflected in this year's online roundtable, where over 50 members joined us to share their thoughts on the consultation questions. Comments covered a broad range of topics, including raising defence spending to 2.6% of GDP by 2027, international development spending, the UK's response to the conflict in Gaza, lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Prime Minister's role as a global leader.

This year's workplan included a series of policy roundtables with stakeholders from across the country, with the first focussing on how Labour can support our armed forces. Minister for Veterans and People Al Carns joined representatives from the armed forces families' federations, Help for Heroes and Women in Defence to hear the challenges facing serving personnel, veterans and military families across the forces.

The second roundtable took place in Aberdeen and focussed on energy security. Held in conjunction with the Clean Energy Policy Commission, this roundtable brought together a range of experts from industry, trade unions and think tanks for a hugely insightful discussion on the role that renewable energy can play in boosting our national security, making us less reliant on imported energy.

The final roundtable convened representatives from small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across the UK defence sector to explore defence as an engine for growth across the UK, in conversation with Minister for Defence Procurement and Industry Maria Eagle.

The Commission were extremely grateful to all those that took part in this year's activities, including politicians that gave updates on their work, experts from external organisations that gave evidence and attended policy roundtables, and the hundreds of people that made submissions to the consultation.

The following conclusions have been drawn from across this year's consultation. The Commission would like to reiterate their support to all the organisations that offered their insight, thoughts and perspectives.

Broadening our approach to resilience

From the first evidence session, it was clear that threats to our national security are growing and are more diverse than ever. The increase in defence spending was consistently highlighted as an essential step in making the UK safer, and Labour was encouraged to ensure that the UK's resilience strategy was much broader.

The Commission discussed the importance of adopting a whole of society approach, ensuring individuals, communities, businesses and government all worked together to better prepare for and recover from future crises, which was reflected in the Strategic Defence Review. Issues such as food security, pandemic preparedness and housing were all identified as key factors which influence the resilience of the population. It was also important to ensure that Labour's defence and industrial strategies, including R&D spending, help support UK-based manufacturing.

The Commission heard how individuals and communities that felt left behind were often more exposed to exploitation, particularly online. Maintaining the strength and stability of our democratic institutions was considered a key way to counter this, while Labour's commitment to lower the voting age to 16 was highlighted as an example of including more people in the democratic process.

Local government was also identified as a major player in boosting local resilience, with members at the online roundtable highlighting how the Conservatives had failed to utilise local authorities effectively during the pandemic.

Protecting our cyber infrastructure

The Commission recognised how cyber-attacks represent one of the most significant threats to our national security, pointing to the recent example of high profile attacks on British retailers. The Commission heard how these attacks had involved customer data being stolen and caused widespread disruption for consumers.

The Commission agreed that building international cooperation was vital, given the international element of cybersecurity risks. This should involve concerted efforts to protect Transatlantic and Baltic Sea cables.

There were also lessons to be learnt from the war in Ukraine regarding cybersecurity and tackling misinformation. These were highlighted as new and increasingly prevalent considerations in future conflict.

Evidence focused on how malicious actors often relied on gaining access to systems through social engineering, or manipulating users into giving away

sensitive data. As technology continues to progress at pace, it was highlighted that public awareness of the latest security measures could easily fall behind. The Commission agreed that education for the public around cyber-security should be a priority.

The Commission heard how the Cyber Security and Resilience Bill marked a major step in tackling threats to our cyber-security, and noted the importance of continuing to work on this across government departments.

Securing our energy supply

Rising geopolitical tensions have hugely impacted the energy sector in recent years, especially since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Disruption to infrastructure and supply chains caused by conflict has driven huge increases in costs for consumers, while highlighting the UK's exposure to imported fossil fuels.

From the policy roundtable in Aberdeen, it was clear that renewable energy sources such as offshore wind have a major role to play in boosting our national security, in addition to the huge potential for new jobs. Yet supply chain costs and trade uncertainties have also unsettled the offshore wind market. It was highlighted that UK windfarms continue to rely on imported components, despite the size of the UK offshore wind fleet.

The inconsistency of the Conservative Government's approach to China over the last decade was highlighted as a major issue for the renewable energy sector that had caused huge uncertainty for business and delayed investment. In response, Labour was urged to provide consistency and clarity on China through its upcoming audit. This would help protect our national security and promote our economic interests.

Recognising that it would be extremely difficult to base entire energy supply chains in the UK, Labour was encouraged to focus on utilising our international partnerships and alliances to shore up global supply chains and boost their resilience to future shocks. Labour's Global Clean Power Alliance, a manifesto commitment, launched at the G20 Summit in Brazil in December 2024, will help efforts to build resilience in clean power supply chains.

Supporting our armed forces

Against a backdrop of growing international tension and global conflict, the armed forces remain at the heart of our approach to national security. The Commission recognised the extraordinary sacrifice that serving personnel, veterans and military families make to keep us safe, and welcomed Labour's commitment to renew the nation's contract with those who serve and improve service life across the armed forces.

The Commission noted Labour had made major progress in the drive to tackle issues in recruitment and retention, including the biggest pay rise for service personnel in 20 years, legislation to create a new Armed Forces Commissioner

passing through Parliament, and bringing over 36,000 military homes back into public ownership. Further innovation in defence should be developed in support of the UK's wider resilience.

Conclusions from the armed forces policy roundtable focused heavily on additional steps that Labour could take to support armed forces families. It was highlighted that movement between military bases in and outside of the UK involved major upheaval for families, leading to concerns over consistent schooling and healthcare provision. Issues such as isolation and bereavement were also commonplace, with partners of military personnel often finding it hard to find support.

The Commission were encouraged to consider how health and education services across the devolved nations could be better equipped to deal with the inward and outward flow of serving personnel and their families. To ease the transition for veterans out of military life, the Commission were also asked to consider incentives for businesses to employ veterans and reservists.

It was noted that Labour's plans to implement the Armed Forces Covenant into law will help address these issues by ensuring veterans and their families receive better support around mental health, employment, and housing.

Defence spending and jobs

The evolving global security landscape and ongoing conflicts have ushered in a new era of defence strategy and readiness. With the Government's historic uplift in defence spending, the Commission acknowledged the pivotal role of the defence sector at the core of British manufacturing.

In light of the recently published Strategic Defence Review, the Labour Government is pursuing procurement reform aimed at opening up opportunities for smaller firms and prioritising British businesses – recognising their capacity to contribute fresh thinking and accelerate innovation across the sector.

Key conclusions from the defence jobs roundtable included a strong consensus on the need to adopt and adapt battlefield innovations seen in Ukraine, and to place greater emphasis on supporting UK-based defence companies.

Participants welcomed Labour's commitment to increasing SME participation in government defence contracts, viewing it as a critical step toward driving domestic growth and strengthening sovereign capability.

During this year's consultation, the Britain Reconnected Commission was pleased to receive a significant number of contributions from the general public and across the Labour movement. A summary of these submissions is included below.

Identifying threats

This year, the Commission received a large number of submissions highlighting the diversity of the threats to our national security. Many reflected on the changing security context and the new realities of global politics.

"The main threats to our national security, geopolitical instability, the rise of international actors who disregard international law and global pandemics, require a united and strategic response."

– South East Cornwall CLP

"The security environment has been transformed beyond recognition over the last decade." – Rother Valley CLP

Given the direct impact of the war in Ukraine on energy prices in the UK, many submissions agreed that energy security should be a key priority for Labour.

"The main threats to UK security are energy shortages which threaten national security." – Frankie, Labour International

Unite highlighted the impact that high energy costs are having on industry, drawing a link to defence.

"UK manufacturing – which must be the bedrock of a defence strategy – is being held back by high industrial energy costs." – Unite

The threat of climate change was a recurring theme, with submissions highlighting the potential impact in the future:

"Climate change will lead to conflicts over resources, people and alliances. This requires a systematic approach to resilience at national and community level." – South Northamptonshire CLP

Following the recent cyber-attacks on British retailers, submissions also acknowledged the significant threat from hostile actors that operate online.

'As we have seen in recent weeks, large organisations including retailers have been subject to hostile action through breaches in their security. The Government will need to refine the strategy around and dealing with their approach to hacking.' – Usdaw

It was noted how disinformation promoted by malicious actors had the potential to destabilise the population and provoke unrest.

"Serious threats include cyber threats and propaganda, leading to an increase in domestic terrorism and radicalisation."
– Rosalind, Louth and Horncastle CLP

The Commission were encouraged to take a whole-of-society approach to resilience, with government working in coordination with health providers, local authorities and business to build a comprehensive approach.

“These threats cannot be countered by security services alone; they demand a whole-of-government, whole-of-society response that invests in the health, prosperity, and resilience of our global partners and our own democratic institutions.” – Labour Socialist Societies

Supply chain resilience

British defence manufacturing has a major role to play in growing the UK economy and building the UK's resilience to global shocks. Submissions from the trade unions focused on the key link between our national security and industrial strategy.

“Beyond external threats to national security, Unite is concerned about the threats posed by eroding the UK's ability to act. This is why the question of national security and defence cannot be separated from industrial strategy, which must ensure sovereign capability, manufacturing capacity and resilience.” – Unite

The submission from Airbus explained that more resilient supply chains could play an important role in ensuring that the UK was able to respond more rapidly to future threats.

“To allow the UK to respond effectively to future threats and rapidly changing global events it is imperative that the UK has a resilient supply chain and skills base to respond at pace.” – Airbus

Steel was identified as a key component of the UK's national defence. Community explained that offshoring aspects of steel supply chains exposed them to risk.

“Relying on steel imports from outside Europe, such as from China or India, increases the UK's vulnerability to supply chain disruptions in a conflict.” – Community Union

Their submission highlighted how imports from our allies may not be enough in times of conflict, and recommended bolstering domestic steel production in the UK.

“As most European steel-producing nations are NATO members, a major conflict would likely see their steel industries prioritise domestic defence needs, limiting exports to the UK.” – Community Union

Unite outlined how previous governments had been slow to recognise the strategic importance of UK steel production, and welcomed the Labour Government's swift action to protect the steelworks at Scunthorpe in April.

"Unite welcomes the quick actions of the Labour Government to step in and save British Steel from the brink of collapse." – Unite

GMB also highlighted the need for UK defence procurement policies to factor in the risks of offshoring aspects of the manufacturing supply chain process, noting the specific examples of naval shipbuilding and aircraft production in the UK. The Commission were encouraged to consider awarding contracts to UK companies in order to mitigate these risks.

"GMB believes that central planning is key; that UK defence contracts should, by default, be awarded to UK companies and consortia." – GMB

Global conflicts

With the war in Ukraine and the conflict in the Middle East continuing to escalate, submissions highlighted how global conflict was impacting lives in the UK, undermining our security and driving up the cost of living.

On Ukraine, it was recognised that there were huge implications for Europe's future peace and prosperity. Submissions welcomed Labour's commitment to provide continued military and economic support to the war in Ukraine.

"We need to continue to back Ukraine, while striving to support efforts to bring the war to an end, recognising that any outcome that can be portrayed by Russia as a success for its war aims will embolden the Putin regime to threaten other states on its borders, notably the Baltic States."

– South Shropshire CLP

Other submissions agreed that our support for Ukraine was essential to our own national security.

"Russia's war in Ukraine threatens UK national security and European stability, marking one of the most significant challenges to European security since the Cold War." – Community Union

"Britain's security today is exposed to risks from involvement in conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East, in Asia or even over the Arctic."

– Tim, Labour International

Submissions from trade unions reflected on some of the lessons to learn from Ukraine, especially around defence procurement and the use of drones.

"Russia's use of drones, airstrikes, and missile attacks on infrastructure in Ukraine demonstrates the real threat posed by its extensive missile arsenal." – Community Union

"The war in Ukraine must be a wakeup call for the government as it has exposed the UK's inability to reliably service and deliver support for frontline forces in combat." – Unite

With the conflict in the Middle East continuing to escalate, the Commission received a number of submissions encouraging Labour to work to bring an end to the suffering, devastation and loss happening across the region.

The Commission had welcomed the update from the Foreign Secretary during the consultation, and noted the Labour Government's work to lead international calls for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the release of hostages cruelly held by Hamas, and for Israel to protect civilians and lift unacceptable restrictions on the flow of aid. The immediate restoration of funding to UNRWA was widely welcomed as a key part of Labour's commitment to providing humanitarian support in Gaza, which reached over £200 million by July 2025.

Many submissions acknowledged the joint declaration from Britain, France and Canada in May 2025 that called for Israel to lift all restrictions on humanitarian aid in Gaza, as well as the Foreign Secretary's statements that the blockade was 'morally wrong, unjustifiable and needs to stop'. This has since been supported with further concrete action, including sanctions on Israeli ministers and the suspension of trade negotiations.

Noting the impact of global conflict on women, the Commission were encouraged to consider the invaluable role that women's organisations play in promoting women's roles in conflict resolution:

"Women are often both the greatest victims of conflict and those most keen to seek to build bridges [...] Womens' organisations can therefore be used as a great force for good in the world." – Naomi, London

Britain reconnected

After 14 years of the Conservatives, the submissions overwhelmingly supported Labour's efforts to rebuild Britain's reputation as a reliable and trusted partner on the world stage.

It was recognised that this approach in itself helped boost our national security and resilience.

"Our national security and resilience is supported significantly by the way other countries see us." – South Northamptonshire CLP

Labour's new approach has helped drive a complete reset with the European Union, leading to the success of the recent EU summit and the signing of the new EU-UK deal.

"We support the Labour Government's efforts to reset the UK's relationship with Europe, not through rejoining the EU, but by forging closer ties on defence, trade, and diplomacy to ensure Britain is once again a reliable partner, a dependable ally, and a good neighbour on the global stage."
– South East Cornwall CLP

The Commission recognised that submissions covered a range of perspectives on the future on the UK's relationship with the EU, but acknowledged the clear red lines set out in Labour's manifesto. Submissions highlighted how the UK-EU relationship can continue to grow, particularly around defence and security.

"Closer links to the EU would improve our security, and Labour needs to confidently explain why Europe is so important to our defence strategy."

– High Peak Labour Party Women's Branch

A number of submissions raised the important issue of international development, noting the Labour Party's proud record. The Commission reflected on the current international climate, where defence spending was rising across Europe, and acknowledged that Labour remained committed to providing humanitarian support in conflict areas including Gaza, Ukraine and Sudan.

Overall, Labour's understanding of the new global security context and its commitment to the defence of our country was widely praised amongst the submissions.

"I have been impressed with the rapidity in which the government has begun to reposition the UK strategically in respect of the new international circumstances we find ourselves." – Simon, South East

"Labour's recognition of the importance of national security is clear in its commitment to the biggest sustained increase in defence spending since the Cold War, and its unshakeable commitment to NATO and international partnerships." – Lesley, Bassetlaw CLP

Other issues

The Commission received a number of submissions covering topics outside the scope of this year's consultation.

Many of these focussed on relative strengths and weaknesses of different voting methods, although there was no clear consensus.

Other submissions focussed on constitutional reform, including the future of the House of Lords, lowering the voting age to 16, and automatic voter registration.

ANNEX

(CLP) East Midlands Region – Kelly Duddridge
(CLP) East Midlands Region – Neghat Khan
(CLP) East Midlands Region – Nathan Oswin
(CLP) East Midlands Region – Rory Palmer
(CLP) East Midlands Region – Ruby Simpson
(CLP) Eastern Region – Louise Chinnery
(CLP) Eastern Region – Adam Fox
(CLP) Eastern Region – Richard Howitt
(CLP) Eastern Region – Rosie Jackson
(CLP) Eastern Region – Alexander Kyriacou
(CLP) Greater London Region – Rezina Chowdhury
(CLP) Greater London Region – Sara Conway
(CLP) Greater London Region – Bora Kwon
(CLP) Greater London Region – Abdi Mohamed
(CLP) Greater London Region – Hollie Wright
(CLP) North West Region – Sam Corcoran
(CLP) North West Region – Connor Dwyer
(CLP) North West Region – Nathalie Nicholas
(CLP) North West Region – Antonia Shipley
(CLP) Northern Region – Luke Henman
(CLP) Northern Region – Georgia Jamieson
(CLP) Northern Region – Michael Mordey
(CLP) Northern Region – Melanie Morley
(CLP) Northern Region – Jacob Cousens
(CLP) Scottish Labour Party – Heather Brannan-McVey
(CLP) Scottish Labour Party – Stuart MacLennan
(CLP) Scottish Labour Party – Michelle McGinty
(CLP) Scottish Labour Party – Ben Procter
(CLP) Scottish Labour Party – Brooke Ritchie
(CLP) South East Region – Parmjit Dhanda
(CLP) South East Region – Duncan Enright
(CLP) South East Region – Pavitar Mann
(CLP) South East Region – Sharon Mintoff
(CLP) South East Region – Lundy MacKenzie
(CLP) South West Region – Christopher Cuddihee
(CLP) South West Region – Jude Robinson
(CLP) South West Region – Ashley Smith
(CLP) South West Region – Judy Wilson
(CLP) South West Region – Ada Gravatt
(CLP) Welsh Labour Party – Chris Carter
(CLP) Welsh Labour Party – Jess Moultrie
(CLP) Welsh Labour Party – David Smith
(CLP) Welsh Labour Party – Sian Taylor
(CLP) Welsh Labour Party – Charlotte Davies
(CLP) West Midlands Region – Luke John Davies

(CLP) West Midlands Region – Trudie McGuinness
(CLP) West Midlands Region – Cathy Parry
(CLP) West Midlands Region – Kalwinder Sandhu
(CLP) West Midlands Region – Niamh Iliff
(CLP) Yorkshire and Humber Region – Salma Arif
(CLP) Yorkshire and Humber Region – Lisa Banes
(CLP) Yorkshire and Humber Region – Julia Rockett
(CLP) Yorkshire and Humber Region – Alice Smart
(CLP) Yorkshire and Humber Region – Lucy Hulme
(TU) Usdaw – Chris Morris
(TU) Usdaw – Dave McCrossen
(TU) Usdaw – Emily Rowles
(TU) Usdaw – Emma Woodfine
(TU) Usdaw – Joanne Cairns
(TU) Usdaw – Paddy Lillis
(TU) Usdaw – Ruth Cross
(TU) Usdaw – Susan Donaldson
(TU) Unite – Alison Spencer-Scragg
(TU) Unite – Andy Green
(TU) Unite – Angela Duerden
(TU) Unite – Dominic Hook
(TU) Unite – Hannah Reed
(TU) Unite – John Earls
(TU) Unite – Maggie Ryan
(TU) Unite – Oliver Richardson
(TU) Unite – Sarah Carpenter
(TU) Unite – Sharon Graham
(TU) Unite – Simon Cox
(TU) Unite – Siobhan Endean
(TU) Unite – Steve Turner
(TU) Unite – Susan Mathews
(TU) Unison – Katrina Gilman
(TU) Unison – Ash Silverstone
(TU) Unison – Christina McAnea
(TU) Unison – Helen Firman
(TU) Unison – Karen Atkinson
(TU) Unison – Linda Hobson
(TU) Unison – Liz Snape
(TU) ASLEF – Collette Gibson
(TU) ASLEF – Marz Colombini
(TU) CWU – Dave Ward
(TU) CWU – Martin Walsh
(TU) CWU – Michelle Bailey
(TU) CWU – Tracey Fussey
(TU) GMB – Barbara Plant

(TU) GMB – Dean Gilligan
(TU) GMB – Finbar Bowie
(TU) GMB – Gary Smith
(TU) GMB – James Wilton
(TU) GMB – Jo Pitchford
(TU) GMB – Michelle Gordon
(TU) GMB – Rachel Harrison
(TU) GMB – Ross Holden
(TU) GMB – Stacey Booth
(TU) GMB – Thomas Carr-Pollock
(TU) Community – Helen Avis
(TU) Community – Eve Navias
(TU) Fire Brigades Union – Steve Wright
(TU) Fire Brigades Union – Val Hampshire
(TU) Musicians' Union – Andi Hopgood
(TU) Musicians' Union – Xenia Horne
(TU) National Union of Mineworkers – Chris Kitchen
(TU) TSSA – Andi Fox
(TU) TSSA – Jayson-Mark Gill
Scottish Policy Forum – Karen Whitefield
Scottish Policy Forum – Katherine Sangster
Scottish Policy Forum – Heather Doran
Scottish Policy Forum – Margaret Cowie
Welsh Policy Forum – Jenny Ann Rathbone
Welsh Policy Forum – Carolyn Harris MP
(Local Government) Association of Labour Councillors – Vince Maple
(LG) Association of Labour Councillors – Sharon Thompson
(LG) Association of Labour Councillors – Eamonn O'Brien
(LG) Association of Labour Councillors – Mary Ann Brockelsby
(LG) Local Government Association – Bev Craig
(LG) Local Government Association – Bella Sankey
(LG) Local Government Association – Amanda Serjeant
(LG) Local Government Association – Peter Marland
(LG) Confederation Scottish Local Authorities – Gurpreet Singh Johal
(LG) Welsh Local Government Association – Nathan Yeowell
Socialist Societies – Chris Wongsosaputro
Socialist Societies – Liz Hind
Socialist Societies – Melanie Smallman
Socialist Societies – Roulin Khondoker
Socialist Societies – Sara Hyde
Disability Labour – Jonathan Farr
LGBT+ Labour – Kevin Brady
LGBT+ Labour – Miriam Mirwitch
National Women's Committee – Sagal Abdi Wali
National Women's Committee – Sonya Davies

National Committee of Labour Students – Ruby Herbert
Northern Ireland Labour Party – Boyd Black
Labour International – Andrew Hopper
Parliamentary Labour Party – Jess Asato
Parliamentary Labour Party – Lewis Atkinson
Parliamentary Labour Party – Nesil Caliskan
Parliamentary Labour Party – Neil Coyle
Parliamentary Labour Party – Catherine Fookes
Parliamentary Labour Party – Tracy Gilbert
Parliamentary Labour Party – Chris Vince
Parliamentary Labour Party – Steve Yemm
House of Lords – Baroness Glenys Thornton
House of Lords – Baroness Rosie Winterton
Cabinet – Ed Miliband
Cabinet – Rachel Reeves
Cabinet – Yvette Cooper
Cabinet – Wes Streeting
Cabinet – Bridget Phillipson
Cabinet – David Lammy
Co-operative Party – Lucy Naylor
Co-operative Party – Jamie McMahon
Co-operative Party – Joe Fortune
National Executive Committee – Abdi Duale
National Executive Committee – Angie Davies
National Executive Committee – Ann Black
National Executive Committee – Cat Arnold
National Executive Committee – Gemma Bolton
National Executive Committee – Jane Thomas
National Executive Committee – Jessica Barnard
National Executive Committee – Peter Mason
National Executive Committee – Yasmine Dar
National Executive Committee – Angela Rayner
National Executive Committee – Alan Campbell
National Executive Committee – Claire Holland
National Executive Committee – Peter Wheeler
National Executive Committee – Keir Starmer
National Executive Committee – Jessica Morden
National Executive Committee – Gurinder Singh Josan
National Executive Committee – Luke Akehurst
National Executive Committee – Melanie Onn
National Executive Committee – Jackie Baillie
National Executive Committee – Ellie Reeves
National Executive Committee – Jonathan Reynolds
National Executive Committee – Shabana Mahmood
National Executive Committee – Carol Sewell

National Executive Committee – Anu Prashar
National Executive Committee – Hollie Ridley
National Executive Committee – Mike Payne
National Executive Committee – David Agbley
National Executive Committee – Gavin Sibthorpe
National Executive Committee – Ian Murray
National Executive Committee – Isabelle Gutierrez
National Executive Committee – Jane Jones
National Executive Committee – Joanne Thomas
National Executive Committee – Karen Rose
National Executive Committee – Kathy Abu-Bakir
National Executive Committee – Maggi Ferncombe
National Executive Committee – Mary Williams
National Executive Committee – Mick Whelan
National Executive Committee – Nicola Jukes
National Executive Committee – Linda Hobson
National Executive Committee – Ann Jones
National Executive Committee – Elsie Greenwood
National Executive Committee – Ellen Morrison

ABTA
Airbus
All Party Parliamentary Group for Fair Elections
ALLMEP – the Alliance for Middle East Peace
Ambitious about Autism
Another Europe is Possible
ASLEF

Baby Milk Action
Best for Britain
Bitcoin Policy UK
BMA
Botanical Garden Village Ltd
BPI (British Recorded Music Industry) Ltd
British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
British Insurance Brokers Association
British Private Equity and Venture Capital Association
BWF consultancy

CBI
Chartered Institute of Housing
Citizens UK
City of London Corporation
Collective Voice
Community
Company Chemists Association
Co-operative Party
Covid 19 Bereaved Families for Justice UK
Cranstoun
Creative UK
Credit Union Solutions

Detention Forum
DraughtBusters

E3G
Early Education and Childcare Coalition
Elibraries for Schools
Emergent
End Furniture Poverty
Energy Saving Trust
Equinor

First Steps Nutrition Trust
Fisher Darville Holdings Ltd
Fuel Poverty Action

Geothermal Engineering Ltd
Gingerbread
GMB Union
Good Turns Foundation
Greenly's

Haringey Economics Forum
Haringey Health & Care Group (members drawn from Hornsey & Friern Barnet
and Hampstead and Highgate CLPs)
Haringey Labour Climate Action
HCA Healthcare UK
Highbury Group on Housing Delivery
Home Builders Federation
Humanists UK

IPPR

Labour & Palestine
Labour Business
Labour Campaign for Council Housing
Labour Campaign for Electoral Reform
Labour Campaign for Free Movement
Labour Campaigns for International Development
Labour Women Avon and Somerset
Labour Women's Declaration
Lambeth Living Streets
Leicester and Rutland Bat Group, affiliated to Leicester & Rutland Wildlife Trust
and Bat Conservation Trust
LGBT Foundation
Live Comedy Association
Lloyds Banking Group

Make UK
Maternity Action
Mencap
Migrant Democracy Project
Mitie
Music Venue Trust
Nationwide Foundation
New Visions for Education Group
Newark Sports Association
News Media Association
NHS Confederation
North East Child Poverty Commission

Oxford Brookes University/Sex Ed Matters

PAGB, the consumer healthcare association
Primark

R3
Recruitment & Employment Confederation
Reliance Precision
Rose Network
Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

SERA – Labour's Environment Campaign
SERA South West
Single Parent Rights
Skills Builder Partnership
Social Market Foundation
Socialist Health Association
Socialist Societies
Society of Labour Lawyers
Southall Black Sisters (SBS)
Speech and Language UK
Speech, Language and Communication Alliance
State Capture Accountability Project
Surviving Economic Abuse

The Association of Convenience Stores
The Children's Society
The Investment Association
The Scout Association with St John Ambulance, Sea Cadets and Girlguiding
Trades Union Congress

Unite
University of the Arts London
Unlock Democracy
Usdaw

Vodafone

Waterside Changemakers
Wimbledon District Woodcraft Folk
Women of Wandsworth
Women's Budget Group

YMCA England & Wales

Alexandra Park BLP (Hornsey and Friern Barnet CLP)

Amber Valley CLP

Arundel, Walberton & Barnham BLP

Bath CLP

Battersea CLP

Berkhamsted & Tring BLP

Bermondsey and Old Southwark CLP

Beverley and Holderness CLP

Bexleyheath and Crayford CLP

Birmingham Selly Oak CLP

Bracknell CLP

Brentwood & Ongar CLP

Cambridge CLP

Central BLP of Oxford

City of Durham CLP

Clapham and Brixton Hill CLP

Congleton CLP

Coventry South CLP

Dulwich & West Norwood CLP

Dunblane and Bridge of Allan BLP

Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard CLP

Ealing Central & Acton CLP

Ely and East Cambridgeshire CLP

Evesham BLP (Droitwich and Evesham CLP)

Felixstowe BLP (Suffolk Coastal CLP)

Fortis Green BLP

Gateshead Central and Whickham CLP

Gosport CLP

Great Ayton and Stokesley BLP

Greenhill and Beauchief BLP

Greenock & Inverclyde CLP

Greenwich & Woolwich CLP

Guiseley and Rawdon BLP

Harpenden & Berkhamsted CLP

Haverstock BLP

Hayes and Harlington CLP

High Peak Labour Party Women's BLP

Hamble Valley CLP

Hornsey & Friern Barnet CLP

Horsforth & Rawdon BLP

Hove & Portslade CLP

Huntingdon CLP

Isle of Wight, East and West CLPs

Kensington & Bayswater CLP

Kilburn (Brent) BLP

Knight's Hill and St.Martin's East BLP

Labour International CLP

Labour International Southern France and Ireland

Leeds West and Pudsey CLP

Leeds North West CLP

Leicester South CLP

Leighton Lincolne BLP (Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard CLP)

Lewisham West & East Dulwich CLP

Loughborough CLP

Meanwood and Moortown BLP

New Forest East CLP

New Malden BLP of Kingston and Surbiton CLP

North-East Somerset and Hanham CLP

Northern Ireland BLP

Nottingham South CLP

Oldham East and Saddleworth CLP

Orpington CLP

Oxford & District CLPs

Oxford East / Oxford West & Abingdon CLP

Peninsula BLP

Penrith and Solway CLP

Reading West and Mid Berks CLP

Richmondshire BLP

Romsey and Southampton North CLP

Rother Valley CLP

Rugby CLP

Rutland and Stamford CLP

Skipton and Ripon CLP

Smithills BLP

South Dorset CLP

South East Cornwall CLP

South East Wales Co-operative Party

South Leicestershire CLP

South Northamptonshire CLP

South Shropshire CLP
South Suffolk CLP
South Woodford BLP
Southgate Oakwood and Cockfosters BLP (Southgate and Wood Green CLP)
Stockport CLP
Streatham and Croydon North CLP
Stretford and Urmston CLP
Suffolk Coastal CLP
Sussex Weald CLP
Sutton and Cheam CLP
Sutton Coldfield CLP
Swansea West CLP

Taunton and Wellington CLP
Torridge and Tavistock CLP and Exeter & Devon Co-operative Party

Warwick and Leamington CLP Women's Forum
Welwyn Hatfield CLP
Westmorland and Lonsdale CLP
West Northants BLP, Co-operative Party
Weston Super Mare CLP
Wilmslow BLP (Tatton CLP)
Wirral West CLP
Witney CLP

Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)

Ada Lovelace Institute

Alan Turing Institute

Alison Lowe OBE, Deputy Mayor for Policing & Crime for West Yorkshire

Alison Smith, Nature-based Solutions Initiative, University of Oxford

Analox

Army Families Federation

ASB Help

Association for Convenience Stores

British Retail Consortium

BT

Bute Energy/Windward

CBI

Centre for Sustainable Energy

Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation

Chatham House

Child Poverty Action Group

E3G

Early Education and Childcare Coalition

Early Years Alliance

Ember Energy

Emily Spurrell, Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside

EnBW

Energy & Climate Intelligence Unit

Energy Saving Trust

Evolve Dynamics

Federation of Small Businesses

Future Governance Forum

Gingerbread

GMB

Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment

Green Alliance

Help for Heroes

IfG

IPPR

IPPR Scotland

Jaltek

John Tizard, Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

STAKEHOLDERS WHO GAVE EVIDENCE

Labour Climate and Environment Forum

LGA

London Early Years Foundation

Macquarie Group

Magic Breakfast

Make UK Defence

Marine Conservation Society

Mental Health Foundation

MI Vehicle Integration

National Care Forum

National Police Chief's Council

Needles and Pins

Nesta

NHS Confederation

Octopus Energy

Police Digital Service

Police Foundation

Port of Aberdeen

Prof. Emmeline Taylor, Professor of Criminology, School of Policy and Global
Affairs City St George's

Professor Paul Cheshire, Emeritus Professor of Economic Geography,
Department of Geography and Environment, LSE

RAF Families Federation

Recruitment and Employment Confederation

Reliance Precision

RenewableUK

Resolution Foundation

Resolve

Retail Trust

Royal College of Physicians

Royal Society for Public Health

RUSI

Shoreham Port

Social Enterprise UK

Social Market Foundation

SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity

Tech UK

The City UK

The King's Fund

The Nuffield Trust

The Patients Association

STAKEHOLDERS WHO GAVE EVIDENCE

The Productivity Institute
The Richmond Group
Trades Union Congress
Trussell Trust

Unison
Unite
Usdaw

Virgin Media
Virtual Routes

What works centre for local economic growth
Women in Defence
Women's Budget Group

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Labour's National Policy Forum