

KICKSTART ECONOMIC GROWTH

Bringing back pride in our communities

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

In the face of the toxic division being peddled by other parties, we need to work together to stand up for unity so we can continue delivering the change our country needs. Labour chooses renewal over grievance, and every day we are getting on with the job of turning our country around.

Already with Labour, NHS waiting lists are down by more than 330,000. Inflation is falling, and interest rates have been cut six times, meaning new mortgages are almost £1500 cheaper a year on average. This is because we made the tough but fair decisions to invest in public services, help people with the cost of living, and restore our public finances.

2026 is the year that Britain turns a corner and that people will start to feel that change. After years of decline and drift under the Tories, 2026 is the year renewal becomes real:

- ✔ Thousands more free breakfast clubs will open giving children a better start to the day and saving parents £450 a year;
- ✔ 3,000 more neighbourhood police officers are on our streets from March making our communities safer;
- ✔ Almost 120 community diagnostic centres will be open 7 days a week across the country by April – as we bring down waiting lists and fix our NHS for the future;
- ✔ New rights for renters and workers will deliver greater security for millions;
- ✔ And inflation, interest rates and mortgage costs are forecast to keep on falling helping to keep costs down .

Many of the policies that are going to make a real difference to people's lives this year came from the work of the National Policy Forum– so thank you.

This year, the National Policy Forum is continuing this important work, supporting our Labour Government and looking ahead to the next General Election. We look forward to hearing from you and invite you to get involved and play your part in our country's renewal.

Keir Starmer
Leader of the Labour Party
Prime Minister



After two decades on the National Policy Forum, I am delighted to continue my work as NPF Chair as we enter the second year of the cycle. It is a privilege to lead the NPF as we shape the next stage of Labour's work in Government.



Since the Labour movement's historic General Election victory, this Government has delivered major action across all six missions.

We are tackling the cost of living and delivering major planning reforms to kickstart economic growth and build 1.5 million homes. We are speeding ahead with our mission to secure home-grown energy and deliver clean energy jobs. We are restoring neighbourhood policing and making communities safer. Our Child Poverty Strategy, including scrapping the two-child benefit limit, will lift around 550,000 children out of poverty and break down barriers to opportunity. We promised 2 million extra NHS appointments and delivered 5.2 million in our first year as part of our work to build an NHS fit for the future. Our VAWG Strategy will put into action our plan to halve violence against women and girls in a decade. The Employment Rights Act represents the biggest transformation of workers' rights in a generation, and we have reset our relationship with the EU.

Last year's consultation focused on 'Fixing the Foundations to Deliver Change', looking at how the Labour Government can deliver the milestones set out in the Plan for Change, on the path to delivering the decade of national renewal that we promised in the 2024 Manifesto.

This year, our focus moves firmly to the delivery of national renewal.

The 2026 consultation will look at some of the vital areas we must continue to focus on if we are to deliver Labour's decade of national renewal, making working people feel more secure.

This means bringing back pride in our communities, restoring our natural world, supporting young people to get on in life, bringing health services closer to people, securing our borders and restoring Britain as a respected partner in the world.

As Party members, supporters and stakeholders, your voice is imperative to this work. Your lived experience, expertise and insight help ensure a strong link between the Party in Government and the Party across the country.

I encourage you to take part in this consultation, submit your views individually or through your CLP or organisation, and join one of our online members' events to hear directly from Cabinet colleagues.

Together, our long-term work will get Britain back on track to deliver the change and national renewal we promised, as well as looking ahead to future challenges.

Ellie Reeves
NPF Chair and Solicitor General

Thank you to everyone who got involved in the previous cycle of the National Policy Forum (NPF). The new cycle of the NPF was launched in January 2025 following the 2024 General Election. We are now in the second year of the policy development cycle.

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

This year's consultation runs from 5 March to 11 June 2026.

The theme of this year's consultation is national renewal. Over the spring, each commission will consult on renewing Britain to support the Labour government in delivering the change we promised, while also looking ahead to future challenges. Through this consultation, commissions will consider evidence, review submissions, and develop policy recommendations as part of the ongoing policy development cycle.

Each commission has produced a set of questions to guide discussions, as well as details on the policy context, and some steps Labour has already taken to deliver on our promise of change and get Britain back on track.

You don't need to answer every one of the questions in the document, nor answer them in a specific way. These questions are intended as a guide to stimulate discussions on what you think the main issues are in each policy area.

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

Please submit your responses on our website here:

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

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

Finally, we recommend looking at our FAQs here

<https://nationalpolicyforum.labour.org.uk/about/> and we will be sending a 'How to guide' out to roleholders if you have any questions.

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

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1. How can Labour best ensure that communities which saw underinvestment under the last Conservative Government are now supported to become engines of economic growth, reduce economic inequalities, and deliver higher living standards?
2. How can we enable local high streets to thrive?
3. What are the key challenges in delivering meaningful devolution to strategic and local authorities in England, and how can these challenges be overcome?
4. What should the Government consider in implementing and taking forward its Make Work Pay plan?
5. How can Labour build on its pro-business, pro-worker approach to delivering security and dignity for people in work, at the same time as boosting employment and skills and supporting people to start businesses?
6. What are the specific implications of policy proposals in this area for (a) women, (b) Black, Asian and minority ethnic people (c) LGBT+ people, (d) disabled people and (e) all those with other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010? What are the implications of these proposals on reducing the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage?
7. What consideration would need to be given to policy proposals in this area when collaborating with devolved administrations and local government in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland?

Boosting economic growth to cut the cost of living is the number one mission of this Labour Government. A stable and productive economy is needed to create good jobs and increase wages, delivering higher living standards for families.

Growth is the prerequisite to many of Labour's other aims too. A strong economy drives higher tax revenues to pay for better public services, and enables investment in housebuilding, transport and clean energy infrastructure – so that Labour can deliver the national renewal it promised at the 2024 general election.

It also means more money for communities across Britain. Many areas saw decay and decline over the Conservatives' 14-year period in office. Communities have been struggling, and more deprived areas have gone for too long without the investment they need. The UK faces large regional and local economic inequalities, with big gaps in productivity and family incomes. These gaps drive unfair variation in opportunity between people living in different parts of our country.

Last year, the Kickstart Economic Growth Policy Commission consulted on how Labour can deliver higher living standards and 1.5 million new homes. It concluded that all regions and nations must benefit from economic growth, in line with the Government's Plan for Change – and that Labour's local investment and devolution plans would be vital to achieving that. The Commission also concluded that achieving higher living standards depends on Labour maintaining a strong grip on the public finances, and that those with the broadest shoulders should contribute properly to Britain's renewal.

On employment rights, the Commission found strong support for Labour's Make Work Pay agenda. Implementation and enforcement of new rights will be key, as will a continuing focus on ensuring workers are not left behind by technological change. The Commission heard about the need for regulatory reform to spur business activity. It also supported Labour's intention to continue to identify barriers to development which act as a brake on building homes and infrastructure – and therefore on economic growth and living standards.

The Commission will this year build on these emerging findings. Labour is investing in places that were neglected by the Tories, putting police back on our streets, fixing local transport and rolling out new community-based services. We know that people feel proud of their local communities, but the Conservatives failed to back their ambition. This Commission will look at how Labour can go further, giving power back to local people who know their communities best. In addition, the Commission will look at the implementation of the Employment Rights Act, exploring how the landmark legislation and the Government's wider agenda can boost security at work, increase living standards, and support productivity growth.

Labour has set off down the path of national renewal, taking measures to grow our economy in a way that is felt by local communities across the country. In aiming for the highest sustained growth in the G7, the result will be more people in good jobs, higher living standards, and productivity growth in every part of the United Kingdom.

We have already seen significant progress towards these ends. The UK is the fastest growing G7 economy in Europe. By the end of the year, there were almost 270,000 more people in employment than at the start of the year. And real wages grew more in Labour's first year in office than they did in the first ten years of the Conservatives.

Labour has wasted no time in pursuing measures necessary to boost growth and expand opportunities for working people. This includes ensuring that people are equipped with the skills they and employers need in a changing economy. The 2025 Spending Review allocated an extra £1.2 billion a year to the skills system, and £625 million to train up to 60,000 skilled construction workers. Our Youth Guarantee is delivering £820 million to upskill our young people with training or placements in sectors including construction, health and social care and hospitality. And our £725 million apprenticeships package will mean 50,000 more young people benefit, and SMEs will be supported by the Government covering the full cost of apprenticeships.

These measures complement Labour's Modern Industrial Strategy. The Strategy sets out how this Government is backing the UK's highest-potential sectors to generate economic growth, and – crucially – how they can spread prosperity to communities throughout the country.

The Government has also taken bold action to power growth over the long term by getting Britain building. The Planning and Infrastructure Act will speed up and streamline the delivery of new homes and critical infrastructure. A record £39 billion investment has been committed to build social and affordable housing, on top of measures to boost all forms of housebuilding for example by making it easier to approve homes near existing public transport. And in its first year, the Government approved 21 major infrastructure projects, the most ever in the first year of a Parliament. Projects that this Government is supporting – like the Lower Thames Crossing and a third runway at Heathrow – will make substantial contributions to economic growth. According to the Office for Budget Responsibility, Labour's planning reforms are set to lead to the biggest increase in growth that they have ever forecast from a zero-cost policy.

Delivering for communities has been at the heart of Labour's record so far. The Pride in Place programme is handing £5 billion to local areas across the UK to revive high streets, parks and public spaces – with local people in the driving seat to decide how the funding is spent. This builds on Labour's Growth Mission Fund, which is providing capital funding for projects that enable local job creation and regeneration.

The Government is also acting to clean up our high streets. New measures have been introduced to clamp down on illegal high street activity in places like barbershops, vape shops and car washes – through a new taskforce to tackle money laundering, as well as more funding for trading standards enforcement against organised crime. In addition, Labour is developing a High Streets Strategy to address the long-term challenges that our retail, leisure and hospitality businesses have faced.

Local government is a key part of Labour's efforts to restore pride to our communities. We are taking action to rebuild council finances, with a 23% boost to core spending power. And we have reformed the way local government is funded, so that money is redistributed to places with the greatest need and highest deprivation. This will be transformational in allowing local authorities to bring back the libraries, youth services, clean streets, and community hubs that help neighbourhoods to thrive.

We are empowering communities to be the drivers – as well as the beneficiaries – of growth, with new powers to boost their economies. The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill will ensure there are strategic authorities for every area in England, making it quicker and easier to devolve powers away from Westminster to local government. Mayoral strategic authorities will produce Local Growth Plans that set out how and where they can support economic growth in their regions. And the Government is pursuing reorganisation of local councils, ending the two-tier system which slows down decision making and delivery, leads to fragmented public services, sees money wasted on duplication and makes it unclear where accountability lies.

Labour's mission to boost living standards will also be advanced by the huge strides we have made on workers' rights. The landmark Employment Rights Act is now law. That means that much of the Tories' regressive trade union legislation from the last decade has already been repealed, restoring the ability of workers to take industrial action without excessive legal barriers. And further improvements will come into force in April, including day one rights to statutory sick pay and paternity leave, as well as the launch of the Fair Work Agency.

Renewing Britain, kickstarting growth and improving living standards takes time, but Labour has made significant inroads – and has set in motion the fundamental reform needed to bring back pride in our communities.

The last Conservative Government oversaw the worst Parliament on record for living standards. Economic growth and family incomes both stagnated, while inflation skyrocketed to a 40-year-high. The Tories lost control of the cost of living, and working people and our communities are still feeling the pain caused by their failure.

But Britain is turning a corner with Labour. Average wages have been rising in real terms, meaning families are better off than they were before the general election, even after inflation. And, crucially, Labour has created the stable economic conditions for the Bank of England to cut interest rates six times, resulting in average mortgage costs falling by almost £1,500 a year.

It is not just the Tories who cannot be trusted on the economy and living standards. Reform poses a grave threat to Britain's prosperity. In Parliament they continually vote against the progressive changes we are making to boost growth, and they are fast becoming a retirement home for the same Tory politicians who crashed the economy under the last government. Reform have indicated that, in government, they would slash the state just like the Tories did – returning Britain to austerity, with the declining public services and crumbling infrastructure that follow.

Labour is also showing how Government can provide real support to communities, in stark contrast to the Tories' neglect and underinvestment. As well as improving local authorities' funding across the board, Labour's Fair Funding Review has redesigned the way that councils are allocated money – so that places with higher levels of deprivation and social need get a better deal.

The Tories and Reform have made clear that they would wind back the clock on workers' rights. Both parties opposed the Employment Rights Act at every step, and both have pledged to scrap Labour's legislation. That would mean millions of working people losing out on protections which include the end of exploitative zero-hours contracts, day one rights for paternity, parental and bereavement leave, and stronger statutory sick pay.

Labour is the only party capable of delivering not only national renewal, but renewal of our local communities – all with a view to boosting the living standards of working people across our nations and regions.

