

# BRITAIN RECONNECTED

**Global partnerships for a new era**

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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 has our international engagement already strengthened our national security in the changing global security situation?
2. How can we build on our improved relationship with the EU, while upholding the commitments set out in our manifesto?
3. How is Labour's new approach to the Global South, moving the UK from donor to a genuine partner, helping develop more resilient economies?
4. How do our plans to boost defence spending benefit our standing among global partners?
5. How can the UK use digital innovation to help boost our engagement with international partners?
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?

*This consultation document was drafted before the recent escalation in the Middle East, but this conflict is important context within which this consultation is taking place.*

**Since the last Britain Reconnected consultation, the global security situation has continued to evolve at pace.**

In 2025, Russia intensified its campaign in Ukraine, with Europe taking on an increased military and financial role. In Gaza, the US-brokered ceasefire secured the release of the remaining hostages and a peace plan but the humanitarian situation remains dire.

In the wider Middle East, tensions spilled out into open conflict between Israel and Iran, while Syria navigated the aftermath of the Assad regime and an end to 13 years of civil war. In Sudan, the ongoing war is having a devastating impact on civilians, causing widespread famine and mass displacement.

International trade faced growing threats from protectionism, causing huge uncertainty and volatility across global markets and supply chains, while international institutions came under increasing pressure.

Globally, the evolution and widespread adoption of AI is impacting our broader security environment, giving malicious actors new and increasingly sophisticated means of threatening our interests and heightening calls for international cooperation.

These global events are not detached from us. They are having a real impact on the security and prosperity of all of us across Britain.

In the first year of this NPF cycle, the Britain Reconnected Policy Commission's work closely reflected these priorities. With a remit covering foreign affairs and defence, the Commission led a timely consultation on fixing the foundation of national security.

Through a range of roundtables and evidence sessions, the Commission heard how threats to our national security had diversified significantly since Labour was last in government. New challenges included threats to our energy supply and increasingly sophisticated cyber threats. Members heard how the whole-of-society approach, as outlined in the Strategic Defence Review, was essential to building our national resilience.

This year, the Commission is building on these findings by looking in depth at the global partnerships that will support Labour's plans for national renewal.

Drawing on the broad remit of the Commission, this year we will also consider our work to modernise and streamline public access to government services, to consider how innovation can support our ambitions to break down barriers for British people and support deeper cooperation.

**With the leadership of our Prime Minister, the UK has found a new voice on the world stage, and our allies and partners are warmly welcoming us back. Across government, Labour ministers are working to make Britain secure at home and strong abroad.**

Our internationalist approach underpins our commitment to deliver economic growth, improved public services and a decade of national renewal, and we are already seeing the results.

In 2025, the Labour Government secured three new major trade deals with India, the United States and the European Union, driving economic growth and boosting jobs right across the country.

We have fundamentally reset our relationship with Europe. In the last year, this has continued to grow through deeper cooperation on defence and national security, on tackling immigration and on removing trade barriers for UK business. At the end of 2025, the Labour Government announced that the UK would rejoin Erasmus, giving young people from all backgrounds the opportunity to live and work abroad.

Our relationship with the United States has remained strong in response to global events. The Prime Minister has stood firm on our principles reiterating the importance of the special relationship and the huge benefit it brings to UK business, jobs and growth.

On China, we have set a clear and consistent direction after years of upheaval. As the Prime Minister demonstrated during his recent visit to Beijing, we have raised concerns over areas of disagreement while also maximising the opportunities that our relationship with the world's second largest economy presents. Labour is clear that pragmatic cooperation is in our national interest, and is vital for British business, jobs and growth.

In response to the appalling situation in Gaza, we have taken concrete steps to alleviate the suffering and tackle the ongoing humanitarian crisis, including the restoration of funding to UNRWA. We have taken tough measures against the Israeli government, including suspending negotiations on a new trade deal, banning export licenses for arms that could be used in Gaza, and sanctioning far-right members of the Israeli cabinet.

In step with our closest allies, the Labour government has taken the historic step of recognising the state of Palestine, fulfilling one of our key manifesto pledges. This is an essential means of safeguarding the two-state solution, the only path to justice for Palestinians and enduring security for Israelis.

We have subsequently welcomed the progress made towards a ceasefire and the UN Security Council's resolution to endorse the Peace Plan for Gaza, key steps in securing a lasting peace for both Palestinians and Israelis. We are working closely with partners in the region to drive progress, and we have pushed consistently for the unrestricted flow of aid into Gaza.

Labour has been clear that the defence and security of the British people is the first duty of any government. In 2025, we announced the biggest increase in defence spending since the end of the Cold War and stepped up Britain's support for Ukraine. As well as signing an historic 100-year partnership with Kyiv, we established the Coalition of the Willing to support Ukraine's security and led the world in new sanctions to tackle the Kremlin's war machine and target Putin's shadow fleet.

Our unshakeable commitment to NATO remains at the heart of our approach. We are taking a leading role in the alliance through increasingly uncertain times, including securing a commitment for members to spend 5% of GDP on defence and national security, a major uplift that will help secure the foundations of the alliance in years to come.

This uplift is bringing huge benefit to jobs and security in Britain. The new Defence Industrial Strategy set out how the defence dividend will boost economic growth across the country, while the boost in support we have given our Armed Forces and their families is helping to keep us safe from increasingly diverse threats to our national security.

Meanwhile, our work around digital and technological transformation is helping improve and simplify the British public's interactions with government services. As our closest allies pull ahead with their own initiatives, including the European Digital Identity being developed in the EU, we can work together and learn from our international partners. The opportunities for the British public are potentially huge, as we consider best practice and how these systems could work together in the future.

**Since the election, the difference that Labour can make in government has been evident across the globe.**

With Keir Starmer's leadership, the UK has made significant progress in rebuilding its global reputation. Our voice is once again heard and respected on the world stage, and British interests are better served as a result.

The difference with the previous 14 years is stark. The Conservatives' reckless approach to our long-standing global partnerships, most notably with our close partners in the European Union, left us increasingly isolated and alone, with our voice unheard. Our reputation as a reliable partner was tarnished and our influence weakened.

By hollowing out and underfunding our Armed Forces, the Conservatives left us vulnerable and exposed as new global threats began to emerge. Defence spending fell below 2% of GDP by 2018, and they left office with no credible plan to step up. Our historic role as a leading member of NATO was under threat.

Meanwhile, Reform threaten to reverse the huge progress we have made on the world stage. Their hostile approach to the EU threatens to undermine the huge benefits we have made through our reset, including the removal of trade barriers for British exporters and the progress on Erasmus.

On national security, they pose an even more significant threat. The alarming conviction of a former Reform politician for taking bribes to spread pro-Kremlin propaganda, and Nigel Farage's self-proclaimed admiration for Putin, prompts major concerns around the extent of foreign influence. Reform's refusal to conduct an independent investigation across the party into the matter only leads to more questions.

Just as the world becomes more dangerous, we have seen the Green Party calling for American allies to be expelled from UK military bases and the leader suggesting the UK should pull out of NATO completely, positions that play directly into our enemies' hands.

It is clear the opposition parties cannot be trusted to stand up for British interests or protect our interests abroad. It is Labour in government that is delivering for the British people.

Labour recognises that our global standing is at the heart of our Plan for Change, providing a catalyst for economic growth and for our mission-led government. In this way, our global partnerships are key to our plans to get Britain back on track.

The Britain Reconnected Policy Commission invites submissions on the questions outlined in this document, and looks forward to working with a range of stakeholders on this year's consultation.

