

6 DECEMBER 2019

BRIEFING | GENERAL ELECTION 2019 MANIFESTOS SUMMARY

Summary of measures of interest to the local (parish and town) council sector on communities, local government and public services:

[Conservatives](#)

We Will Focus On Your Priorities

- Within the first three months of our new term, we will enshrine in law our fully funded, long-term NHS plan.
- We will extend social prescribing and expand the new National Academy of Social Prescribing.
- We will commit to urgently seek a cross-party consensus in order to bring forward the necessary proposal and legislation for longterm reform.
- We also want to save millions of people, and their families, from suffering the agony of a slow decline due to dementia. We will make finding a cure one of our Government's biggest collective priorities – one of the 'grand challenges' that will define our future along with the impact of climate change or artificial intelligence. This will include doubling research funding into dementia and speeding up trials for new treatments.
- We promise not to raise the rates of income tax, National Insurance or VAT. This is a tax guarantee that will protect the incomes of hard-working families across the next Parliament.
- We not only want to freeze taxes, but to cut them too. We will raise the National Insurance threshold to £9,500 next year – representing a tax cut for 31 million workers. Our ultimate ambition is to ensure that the first £12,500 you earn is completely free of tax – which would put almost £500 per year in people's pockets.

- We will strengthen the accountability of elected Police and Crime Commissioners and expand their role. People must have an accountable local leader delivering on their crime and justice priorities, who they can vote out.
- We will back the National Citizen Service and promote it in schools as a way of bringing communities together. The Youth Futures Foundation will invest at least £90 million to improve employment outcomes for young people.

We Will Unleash Britain's Potential

- Our new Towns Fund will help communities make sure their towns are safe to walk in and a pleasure to be in. We want there to be things to do, great places to shop and eat and transport to be easy. Above all, we want the town's future to be in the hands of the people who live there.
- Regenerating towns. The Towns Fund will go to an initial 100 towns to improve their local economy – and they and only they will make the choice about what improvements their local area needs.
- Thriving high streets. We will cut taxes for small retail businesses and for local music venues, pubs and cinemas.
- Giving young people a future. As well as our investment in schools and technical education, we will invest £500 million in new youth clubs and services.
- Safer streets, safer towns. A new Safer Streets Fund will invest in preventative measures like new CCTV or community wardens.
- New civic infrastructure. We have announced the largest cultural capital programme in a century, of £250 million. This will support local libraries and regional museums.
- Community ownership. We will establish a £150 million Community Ownership Fund to encourage local takeovers of civic organisations or

community assets that are under threat – local football clubs, but also pubs or post offices. We will set up a fan-led review of football governance, which will include consideration of the Owners and Directors Test, and will work with fans and clubs towards introducing safe standing. And we will help communities that want to create ‘pocket parks’ and regenerate derelict areas.

- Community spirit. Through the Cultural Investment Fund, outlined above, we will also support activities, traditions and events that bring communities together. We will support local and regional newspapers, as vital pillars of communities and local democracy, including by extending their business rates relief.
- To underpin this national renewal, we will invest £100 billion in additional infrastructure spending – on roads, rail and other responsible, productive investment which will repair and refurbish the fabric of our country and generate greater growth in the long run. For example, flood defences will receive £4 billion in new funding.
- Connectivity is not just about the UK’s great cities. To help communities across the country, we will restore many of the Beeching lines, reconnecting smaller towns such as Fleetwood and Willenhall that have suffered permanent disadvantage since they were removed from the rail network in the 1960s.
- We will invest in superbuses with lower fares – flat fares in urban areas – and increased frequency. We will keep bus fares low, bring back and protect rural routes, and speed up your journeys. We will invest in electric buses, developing the UK’s first allelectric-bus town.
- We will launch the biggest ever pothole-filling programme as part of our National Infrastructure Strategy – and our major investment in roads will ensure new potholes are much less likely to appear in the future.
- Local people will continue to have the final say on council tax, being able to veto excessive rises. This does not prevent councils raising more – but it

does ensure that they will need to have solid and convincing reasons for doing so.

- We remain committed to devolving power to people and places across the UK. Our ambition is for full devolution across England, building on the successful devolution of powers to city region mayors, Police and Crime Commissioners and others, so that every part of our country has the power to shape its own destiny. We will publish an English Devolution White Paper setting out our plans next year.
- We will offer more homes to local families, enabling councils to use developers' contributions via the planning process to discount homes in perpetuity by a third for local people who cannot otherwise afford to buy in their area. Councils could use this to prioritise key workers in their area, like police, nurses and teachers.
- Infrastructure first. We will amend planning rules so that the infrastructure – roads, schools, GP surgeries – comes before people move into new homes. And our new £10 billion Single Housing Infrastructure Fund will help deliver it faster.
- Beautiful, high-quality homes. We will ask every community to decide on its own design standards for new development, allowing residents a greater say on the style and design of development in their area, with local councils encouraged to build more beautiful architecture.
- Community housing and self-build. We will support community housing by helping people who want to build their own homes find plots of land and access the Help to Buy scheme. We will also support communities living on council estates who want to take ownership of the land and buildings they live in.
- The Green Belt. We will protect and enhance the Green Belt. We will improve poor quality land, increase biodiversity and make our beautiful countryside more accessible for local community use. In order to safeguard our green spaces, we will continue to prioritise brownfield development, particularly for the regeneration of our cities and towns.

- We will cut the burden of tax on business by reducing business rates. This will be done via a fundamental review of the system. As a first step, we will further reduce business rates for retail businesses, as well as extending the discount to grassroots music venues, small cinemas and pubs. That means protecting your high street and community from excessive tax hikes and keeping town centres vibrant.
- We will encourage flexible working and consult on making it the default unless employers have good reasons not to.
- We want to roll out gigabit broadband across the country by 2025, with £5 billion in funding already promised, and provide greater mobile coverage across the country.
- We will protect the integrity of our democracy, by introducing identification to vote at polling stations, stopping postal vote harvesting and measures to prevent any foreign interference in elections.
- We will ensure that no one is put off from engaging in politics or standing in an election by threats, harassment or abuse, whether in person or online.
- In our first year we will set up a Constitution, Democracy & Rights Commission that will examine these issues in depth, and come up with proposals to restore trust in our institutions and in how our democracy operates.

[Green Party](#)

The Green New Deal:

- Enable communities to develop their own renewable energy projects, so that the benefits of locally generated energy can stay local.
- Transform the planning system so that it works to support a massive increase in wind power and other renewable generation.
- Encourage greater energy efficiency across the economy, including by providing energy efficiency training for businesses and public bodies, emphasising the need for behavioural change – we all need to value energy

as we value money. Small businesses and co-ops will receive this training for free.

- Ban fracking, and other unconventional forms of fossil fuel extraction, now and forever.
- Empower local authorities to bring empty homes back into use and create a total of 100,000 new homes for social rent (council homes) a year, built to the Passivhaus or equivalent standard. This standard will see these new homes use 90% less energy for space heating than the average home, significantly reducing household bills.
- Allocate funding to local authorities for council home creation based on the needs of their area. We expect much of the need to be concentrated in areas where Green New Deal jobs will be created. We will incentivise local authorities to spread small developments across their areas, rather than building huge new estates, and to build, renovate and convert to high quality designs that respect local architectural heritage. The new council homes will offer secure, lifetime tenancies.
- Ensure all new developments will be located and designed to ensure that residents do not need cars to live a full life, either having safe pedestrian access to local shops and schools, or are within 1km of a local rail, tube or tram station, or 500m of a high frequency bus service.
- Insulate non domestic buildings, addressing the large amounts of energy lost from offices and public buildings.
- Transform the planning system and building regulations, so that all new buildings built by private developers are built to the Passivhaus standard (or to a standard that delivers energy efficiency at an equivalent or better level). We will enable self-build development that meets the same standards.
- Change the planning system to incentivise renovation, extension and improvement of existing buildings, rather than relying on new build, to reduce the use of steel, concrete, cladding and finishes, which produce

massive amounts of carbon in their manufacture. Similarly we will incentivise the use of sustainable materials.

- Giving responsibility for running short-distance passenger rail franchises to councils, or groups of councils that come together to work on local transport. This will give local communities a greater say in the running of the rail services they rely on. We will bring all railways back into public ownership over ten years.
- Giving all local authorities control over bus services (as London currently has) and supporting local authorities to restore lost bus routes and open new ones. Local authorities serving urban areas will be encouraged to explore tramways as an additional public transport option.
- Funding local authorities to improve the appearance and facilities of bus stops, bus stations and train stations, to make them more user-friendly and convenient for both passengers and transport staff. This includes the provision of more public toilets, and ensuring full accessibility for disabled people.
- Create a network of electric vehicle charging points across the country, by requiring their construction through the planning system and encouraging the private sector to deliver them. We will ensure that these charging points are located in public places, and do not take up pavement and cycling space.
- Ensure through the planning system that all new housing is served by high quality walking and cycling routes and much improved bus, tram and local rail services.
- Incentivise changes to travelling behaviour by promoting more stay at home working (with working hours' heating, electricity and Wi-Fi costs reimbursed by employers for low income workers working from home), more business teleconferencing, more local work station hubs and more car club schemes. We will also encourage more domestic holiday travel, through removing VAT from UK hotel and holiday home stays and attractions.

- Give local authorities the power to direct the newly created training and skills programmes. National government will provide the funding and democratically elected local authorities will be given the power to decide how it should be spent, to help residents' access new jobs.
- Encourage the renovation of non-domestic buildings, through making planning consent harder to achieve for new commercial property.
- Better connect rural communities through reliable broadband and mobile internet, delivered through councils who understand local connection needs.
- Encourage, through changes to the planning system, the 'rewilding' of spaces to provide new habitats for wildlife. An ecological crisis is happening – we must tackle it by restoring, expanding and joining up the wild spaces nature needs to thrive.
- Deploy environmentally friendly flood management measures to protect communities from flooding. These measures, which include tree planting and soil restoration in upland catchment areas to tackle excess water at source, are cheaper and more effective than the traditional approach of simply covering river banks in concrete.
- We will change the planning system to prevent building on floodplains, to further reduce the flooding risk communities face.
- Launch a public information campaign to educate the public about the biodiversity loss and other Climate Emergency threats we face, and encourage the behaviour change needed in response.

Growing democracy:

- Replace the First Past the Post system for local government with a fair and proportional voting system. Voters will be asked to elect half the Council every two years to ensure that fast changing local concerns and priorities can be expressed at the ballot box on a regular basis.
- Give 16- and 17-year-olds the right to vote and have a say on their future. We will also allow people to stand for Parliament and all other elected

offices from the age of 16, offering support to elected young people so that they can combine their duties with studying.

- Introduce job-sharing, at all levels of government, to make politics more accessible, especially for disabled people and people with caring responsibilities.
- We will expand the Access to Elected Office Fund to support disabled people to stand for election, and support women, non-binary people and those from minority ethnic backgrounds to stand.
- Require all political parties to report the diversity of their candidates, so that progress in selecting more women and minorities to contest Westminster and local government seats can be monitored. This was set out in Section 106 of the Equality Act 2010 but has yet to be implemented.
- Back a Citizens Convention and citizens assemblies to examine further ways to strengthen democracy, including developing a written People's Constitution and Bill of Rights, and ensure the proposals come before Parliament. This will enshrine genuine democracy at the core of our political system, making sure that ultimate power will always rest with the people.
- Tackle our toxic political culture, by exploring measures such as new codes of conduct to embed compassion and co-operation in all aspects of public life.
- Increase central government funding to councils by £10 billion a year. This funding, combined with the local council revenue raising, will enable local government to improve the frontline services they provide and which local people need and want. We will support councils to also use this funding to nurture arts and culture in their areas, keeping local museums, theatres, libraries and art galleries open and thriving.
- Ensure councils can plan with financial certainty by committing to annual, rolling multi-year financial settlements.
- Give councils access to an additional £3 billion a year Climate Adaption Fund. Bids from councils facing the greatest threat from climate chaos, and

councils with the high levels of poverty, will be prioritised as money is distributed from the Fund.

- Give all councils power over bus services in their area, and over franchises for local train services.
- Fund councils to deliver new training and skills for residents, to equip them for jobs created by the Green New Deal.
- Give councils the power to set their own housing targets, and to strike the right balance between local housing need and the need to preserve the local environment.
- Expand the powers of councils to prevent land banking through mechanisms including charging developers who sit on land where permission has been granted or using compulsory purchase powers to accelerate appropriate development where development is stalled or slow.
- Give councils the ability to set planning fees locally. Tax payers are subsidising developers for the costs of their planning applications to the tune of £200 million a year – councils need the power to meet these planning costs not from central funds, but from charging developers realistic fees for the planning services councils provide for them.
- Fund councils to deliver additional social housing in their area (over 100,000 new homes a year nationally) through sustainable construction, renovation and conversion, and to improve and insulate existing homes (over 1 million homes a year).
- Give councils clearer guidance and better training on helping homeless people, including support for the Housing First approach, a widening of the grounds on which councils can offer help to people without a home, and the provision of social services once a person is housed.
- Task the Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government with reviewing on a rolling basis which powers can be further devolved from central government to local government.

- Replace the First Past the Post system for local government with a fair and proportional voting system. Voters will be asked to elect half the Council every two years to ensure that fast changing local concerns and priorities can be expressed at the ballot box on a regular basis.
- Support councils to further democratise their own processes, including introducing more participatory democracy, allowing residents to form panels and assemblies to directly input into council decision making.
- Introduce participatory budgeting, to enable local citizens to decide how to allocate part of the council budget, through identifying, discussing and prioritising public spending projects, and having real power to decide how money is spent.
- Support councils to promote waste prevention innovations and to increase recycling.
- Give councils new powers and resources to deliver environmental improvements and increase biodiversity, as well as tackling flooding and coastal erosion locally.

Quality of life guarantee

- Legislating to ensure the maximum wage paid to any member of staff in an organisation should not exceed ten times that paid (pro rata) to the lowest paid worker in the same organisation. We will also ban any bonuses exceeding the annual wage of the lowest paid worker in the organisation granting the bonus.
- Requiring all employers, no matter their size, to legally recognise any union chosen by their workforce to represent them.
- Give communities the first chance to buy local land that comes up for sale by extending Scotland's Community Right to Buy policy to England and Wales.
- We will support employers to explore four day working weeks in their workplace, driving up productivity as well as boosting the wellbeing of staff.

- Increase funding for the NHS by at least £6 billion per year each year, until 2030 (a 4.5% increase on the 2018/2019 NHS Budget), and a further £1 billion a year in nursing higher education, allowing for nursing bursaries to be reinstated. This will constitute a programme of sustained investment, bringing spending of health services in the UK up to northern European averages.
- Replace private sector involvement in the NHS with community leadership. We will allow local authorities to lead a 'bottom up' process, and services will be planned and provided without contracts through Health Boards, which could cover more than one local authority area if there were local support.
- Provide stronger powers to Health and Wellbeing boards to represent the interest of the public in the NHS.
- Focus funding to enable the construction of new community health centres, bringing health services closer to people's homes. These health centres will pioneer preventative healthcare, helping people live healthier lifestyles so that they are less likely to fall ill.
- Strengthen the link between schools and the communities they serve, by ending academisation and bringing all schools back into the control of democratically elected local authorities, not private companies, and empowering local authorities with the responsibility and accountability for education within their communities.
- Amend the National Planning Policy Framework so it no longer imposes centrally set development targets on local councils. We will allow councils to develop their own planning policies, based on genuine local housing need and their requirement to contribute to the creation of at least 100,000 new council homes a year nationally. Councils will be required to deliver these new homes in a way that preserves local ecology and creates new green spaces.

- Strengthen Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Sites of Special Scientific Interest protections, with development in these areas only being permitted in exceptional circumstances.
- We will give local communities a say in National Park governance, though creating new democratically elected positions on National Park boards.
- Restore access to the countryside by re-opening lost public rights of way and creating new ones.
- Invest in youth services and centres, to help turn at-risk children away from crime. All the evidence shows the cuts in youth services have increased crime, especially knife crime. To end knife crime once and for all we need to invest in specialist programmes provided through youth centres.
- Integrate police forces more closely with the communities they serve by creating new community liaison and equality officers to work on positive relations and by putting more police on the beat.

The new deal for tax and spend

- Merge Employees National Insurance, Capital Gains Tax, Inheritance Tax, Dividend Tax and Income Tax into a single Consolidated Income Tax. This closing of loopholes will bring in an estimated £20 billion extra per year into the public purse. It will mean that all income is treated the same way for tax purposes.
- Abolish Council Tax and Business Rates, replacing them with an LVT. The LVT will also absorb National Non-domestic Rates, Stamp Duty on Land, Annual Tax on Enveloped Dwellings, Capital Gains Tax on land sales, Inheritance Tax on land and Income Tax on land for owneroccupiers. The new LVT will charge the landowner a proportion of the capital value of the land each year (estimated to be around 1.4% of current values).
- Ensure LVT is paid by landowners regardless of whether or not they live on the land. This will incentivise those who own empty properties to release them back into the housing market.

- Phase in the changes over ten years, with reliefs on offer. This will ensure that the vast majority of homeowners will face similar or lower levels of tax to that which they pay now.
- Give small businesses access to lending at affordable rates, by helping to establish a network of regional mutual banks. These new banks will be created specifically to provide funding for locally led economic initiatives and opportunities, including cooperatives, community interest companies and other non-profit businesses.
- Promote and support an increase in co-operatives and community interest companies. Education about these forms of communal enterprise would start in school.
- Roll out high speed broadband.
- Scrapping the doomed HS2 rail line. The funds freed up will be spent on more effective sustainable public transport options, as part of the Green New Deal. This will enable an increase in rail capacity in regions that desperately need more investment, including the creation of three electrified rail lines running from Liverpool and Manchester to Sheffield, Hull and the Tees Valley. These three newly electrified lines will run through Bradford and Leeds, creating new rail hubs in the heart of Yorkshire.

Labour

A Green industrial revolution

- We will bring about a radical decentralisation of power in Britain so that local people and communities are given far greater control over their own lives and prospects.
- A Local Transformation Fund in each English region will be used exclusively to fund infrastructure projects decided at a local level, as will devolved governments in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Our Regional Development Banks will be governed by boards made up of key local

stakeholders such as local chambers of commerce, trade unions and councillors

- Labour will ensure that councils can improve bus services by regulating and taking public ownership of bus networks, and we will give them resources and full legal powers to achieve this cost-effectively, thereby ending the race to the bottom in working conditions for bus workers. Where councils take control of their buses, Labour will introduce free bus travel for under-25s.
- We will provide an extra £5.6 billion in funding to improve the standard of flood defences and respond to the increased risk of flooding, prioritising areas at risk in North West England, Yorkshire and the East Midlands that have been neglected by Conservative investments.
- We will embark on an ambitious programme of tree planting, with both forestry and native woodland species.

Rebuild our public services

- Public services must also be accountable. Labour will end the current presumption in favour of outsourcing public services and introduce a presumption in favour of insourcing. And we will stop the public getting ripped off by taking back all PFI contracts over time
- We will repair the damage the Tories have done to our social fabric, with a £150 billion Social Transformation Fund to replace, upgrade and expand our schools, hospitals, care homes and council houses. Public buildings will be modernised to ensure a reduction in their carbon footprint.
- Labour will restore public sector pay to at least pre-financial crisis levels (in real terms), by delivering year-on-year above-inflation pay rises, starting with a 5% increase, to reward and retain the people who do so much for us all.
- A Labour government will build a comprehensive National Care Service for England. We will provide community-based, person-centred support, underpinned by the principles of ethical care and independent living. We

will provide free personal care, beginning with investments to ensure that older people have their personal care needs met, with the ambition to extend this provision to all working-age adults.

- We will end the fragmentation and marketisation of our school system by bringing free schools and academies back under control of the people who know them best – parents, teachers and local communities.
- We will rebuild our youth services and guarantee young people's access to youth workers. We will invest in a youth justice system in which schools, local authorities, health authorities and youth services work together to divert young people away from the pathways towards crime.
- We will rebuild the whole police workforce, recruiting more police officers, police community support officers and police staff. We will re-establish neighbourhood policing and recruit 2,000 more frontline officers than have been planned for by the Conservatives.
- We will retain local democratic accountability for police forces and reform the police funding formula to ensure sufficient, sustainable resources are fairly allocated. We will agree resources with the police authorities to combat crime and restore community policing by consent.
- We will act to bring services – from bin collections to management of local leisure centres – back in-house within the next Parliament, improving service quality, saving money and ensuring the people who deliver vital local services are treated decently.
- We will introduce a 'ruralproofing' process so that all our laws, policies and programmes consider their impact on rural communities.
- We will revive high streets by stopping bank branch closures, banning ATM charges and giving local government new powers to put empty shops to good use.
- Pubs are community hubs but 18 are closing each week in Britain. Labour will list pubs as Assets of Community Value so community groups have the first chance to buy local pubs when they are under threat.

- We will ensure libraries are preserved for future generations and updated with Wi-Fi and computers. We will reintroduce library standards so that government can assess and guide councils in delivering the best possible service.
- we will build community wealth by giving communities the powers and resources they need to keep public spending circulating in the local economy
- We will rebalance power in the planning system by giving local government greater freedom to set planning fees and by requiring the climate and environmental emergency to be factored into all planning decisions.
- Labour will deliver free full-fibre broadband to all by 2030.
- We will establish British Broadband, with two arms: British Digital Infrastructure (BDI) and the British Broadband Service (BBS). We will bring the broadband-relevant parts of BT into public ownership, with a jobs guarantee for all workers in existing broadband infrastructure and retail broadband work.
- BDI will roll out the remaining 90-92% of the full-fibre network, and acquire necessary access rights to existing assets. BBS will coordinate the delivery of free broadband in tranches as the full-fibre network is rolled out, beginning with the communities worst served by existing broadband networks.
- We will invest in the towns and communities neglected for too long, with a £1 billion Cultural Capital Fund to transform libraries, museums and galleries across the country.
- We will make the distribution of National Lottery funding more transparent to help communities get their fair share of project funding.
- In the years of austerity it was non-government organisations that often held the social fabric of our society together, protecting our communities from even greater harm and providing precisely targeted support. As we

rebuild our public services, we will support and maintain the social capital values of these organisations.

Tackle poverty and inequality

- Giving all workers the right to flexible working.
- Within a decade we will reduce average full-time weekly working hours to 32 across the economy, with no loss of pay, funded by productivity increases.
- Labour will create a new Department for Housing, make Homes England a more accountable national housing agency and put councils in the driving seat.
- Developers will face new 'use it or lose it' taxes on stalled housing developments. We will keep the Land Registry in public hands, and make ownership of land more transparent. We will make brownfield sites the priority for development and protect the green belt.
- Labour will deliver a new social housebuilding programme of more than a million homes over a decade, with council housing at its heart. By the end of the Parliament we will be building at an annual rate of at least 150,000 council and social homes, with 100,000 of these built by councils for social rent in the biggest council housebuilding programme in more than a generation. We will establish a new duty on councils to plan and build these homes in their area, and fund them to do so, with backing from national government.
- We will scrap the Conservatives' bogus definition of 'affordable', set as high as 80% of market rents, and replace it with a definition linked to local incomes. These council and housing association homes will be more affordable than market housing and built to higher standards. We will end the conversion of office blocks to homes that sidestep planning permission through 'permitted development'.
- Labour will end rough sleeping within five years, with a national plan driven by a prime minister-led taskforce.

- The renewal of our Parliament will be subject to recommendations made by a UK-wide Constitutional Convention, led by a citizens' assembly. This Convention will answer crucial questions on how power is distributed in the UK today, how nations and regions can best relate to each other and how a Labour government can best put power in the hands of the people.
- Labour will decentralise decision-making and strengthen local democracy. We reiterate our commitment to One Yorkshire, and will make directly elected mayors more accountable to local councillors and elected representatives.
- We will oversee the largest extension of the franchise in generations, reducing the voting age to 16, giving full voting rights to all UK residents, making sure everyone who is entitled to vote can do so by introducing a system of automatic voter registration,

[Liberal Democrat Party](#)

Our plan for a stronger economy

- Give local authorities and regions the power to make decisions about their areas.
- Introduce a capital £50 billion Regional Rebalancing Programme for infrastructure spend across the nations and regions of the UK, with local and devolved authorities given a say in how it is used, reinforced by a Just Transition Fund to support communities negatively affected by policies to tackle the climate emergency.
- Continue to champion investment in the Northern Powerhouse and the Midlands Engine, putting significant capital resources into infrastructure projects across these regions.
- Work with the major banks to fund the creation of a local banking sector dedicated to meeting the needs of local small and medium-sized businesses.
- Enabling local authorities to bring in tourist levies to fund local tourism infrastructure.

- A programme of installing hyper-fast, fibre-optic broadband across the UK – with a particular focus on connecting rural areas.
- New direct spending on housebuilding to help build 300,000 homes a year by 2024, including 100,000 social homes.
- Reform building standards to ensure that all new homes built from 2022 have full connectivity to ultra-fast broadband and are designed to enable the use of smart technologies.
- Finance the transformation of town centres by expanding the Future High Streets Fund.
- Help protect our high streets and town centres by scrapping the rule which allows developers to convert offices and shops into residential properties without planning permission.
- Replace Business Rates in England with a Commercial Landowner Levy based solely on the land value of commercial sites rather than their entire capital value, thereby stimulating investment, and shifting the burden of taxation from tenants to landowners.
- Establish an independent review to consult on how to set a genuine Living Wage across all sectors. We will pay this Living Wage in all central government departments and their agencies, and encourage other public sector employers to do likewise.
- Change the law so that flexible working is open to all from day one in the job, with employers required to advertise jobs accordingly, unless there are significant business reasons why that is not possible.
- End the continual erosion of local government funding and commit to a real increase in local government funding throughout the Parliament.
- Prioritise government spending on the things that matter most to people's wellbeing – both now and in the future – including community services that tackle loneliness and prevent isolation.

- Ensure that the environment is protected for future generations with clean air to breathe and urgent action to tackle the climate emergency.

Our plan for better education and skills

- Give local authorities with responsibility for education the powers and resources to act as Strategic Education Authorities for their area, including responsibility for places planning, exclusions, administering admissions including in-year admissions, and SEND functions.
- Protect sports and arts funding via the National Lottery.
- Examine the available funding and planning rules for live music venues and the grassroots music sector, protecting venues from further closures.

Our plan for a green society and green economy

- Establish UK and local Citizens' Climate Assemblies to engage the public in tackling the climate emergency.
- Create a statutory duty on all local authorities to produce a Zero Carbon Strategy, including plans for local energy, transport and land use, and devolve powers and funding to enable every council to implement it.
- Expand community and decentralised energy, support councils to develop local electricity generation and require all new homes to be fitted with solar panels.
- Ban fracking because of its negative impacts on climate change, the energy mix and the local environment.
- Empower councils to develop community energy-saving projects, including delivering housing energy efficiency improvements street by street, which cuts costs.
- Require all new homes and non-domestic buildings to be built to a zero-carbon standard (where as much energy is generated on-site, through renewable sources, as is used), by 2021, rising to a more ambitious ('Passivhaus') standard by 2025.

- Combat climate change, and benefit nature and people by coordinating the planting of 60 million trees a year and introducing requirements for the greater use of sustainably harvested wood in construction.
- Establish a £5 billion fund for flood prevention and climate adaptation over the course of the parliament to improve flood defences, and introduce high standards for flood resilience for buildings and infrastructure in flood risk areas.
- Accelerate the rapid take-up of electric vehicles by reforming vehicle taxation, cutting VAT on EVs to 5 per cent and increasing the rate of installation of charging points, including residential on-street points and ultra-fast chargers at service stations. We will ensure that, by 2030, every new car and small van sold is electric.
- Give new powers to local authorities and communities to improve transport in their areas, including the ability to introduce network-wide ticketing, like in London.
- Implement, in cooperation with local authorities, light rail schemes for trams and tram-trains where these are appropriate solutions to public transport requirements.
- Restore bus routes and add new routes where there is local need; we will provide £4.5 billion over five years for this programme.
- Build on the successful Local Sustainable Transport Fund established by the Liberal Democrats when in government, and workplace travel plans, to reduce the number of cars – particularly single-occupancy cars – used for commuting, and encourage the development of car-sharing schemes and car clubs and autonomous vehicles for public use.
- Amend planning rules to promote sustainable transport and land use.

Our plan for health and social care

- Raise £7 billion a year additional revenue which will be ring-fenced to be spent only on NHS and social care services. This revenue will be generated

from a 1p rise on the basic, higher and additional rates of Income Tax (this revenue will be neither levied nor spent in Scotland.)

- Establish a cross-party health and social care convention that builds on the existing body of work from previous conventions, select committees and the 2018 citizens' assembly to reach agreement on the long-term sustainable funding of a joined-up system of health and social care. We will invite patients' groups, professionals, the public and the governments of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to be a part of this work. Introducing a cap on the cost of care as provided for in the Care Act but not so far delivered by the Conservatives would be a key starting point for Liberal Democrat participants.
- Develop a scheme to reward employers who invest in the mental wellbeing of their employees, piloting reduced business rates for employers who support employees' mental wellbeing and provide mental health first aid training to staff.
- Publish a National Wellbeing Strategy, which puts better health and wellbeing for all at the heart of government. Ministers from all departments will be responsible for implementing the strategy.
- Keep public health within local government, where it is effectively joined-up with preventive community services. We will re-instate the funding that was cut from public health budgets by the Conservatives and join up services across public health and the NHS.

Our plan to build a fair society

- Build at least 100,000 homes for social rent each year and ensure that total housebuilding increases to 300,000 each year.
- Help finance the large increase in the building of social homes with investment from our £130 billion capital infrastructure budget.
- Build new houses to zero-carbon standards and cut fuel bills through a ten-year programme to reduce energy consumption from all the UK's buildings.
- Devolve full control of Right to Buy to local councils.

- Allow local authorities to increase council tax by up to 500 per cent where homes are being bought as second homes with a stamp duty surcharge on overseas residents purchasing such properties.
- Urgently publish a cross-Whitehall plan to end all forms of homelessness.
- Ensure sufficient financial resources for local authorities to deliver the Homelessness Reduction Act and provide accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse.
- Set up a £2 billion Rural Services Fund to enable the co-location of services in local hubs around existing local infrastructure.
- Substantially increasing funding for buses, enabling local authorities to restore old routes and open new ones
- Supporting rural bus services and encouraging alternatives to conventional bus services where they are not viable
- Encouraging local authorities to use their new powers under the Bus Services Act, including franchising powers and repealing the rule preventing local councils from running their own bus companies.
- Providing funding to accelerate the transition to electric buses.
- Ensure that all households and businesses have access to superfast broadband (30Mbps download and 6Mbps upload).
- Invest £2 billion in innovative solutions to ensure the provision of high-speed broadband across the UK, working with local authorities and providing grants to help areas replicate the success of existing community-led projects.
- Invest in mobile data infrastructure and expand it to cover all homes.
- Launch a National Fund for Coastal Change, to enable local authorities to properly manage their changing coastlines.
- Reform planning to ensure developers are required to provide essential local infrastructure from affordable homes to schools, surgeries and roads alongside new homes.

- Invest £1 billion to restore community policing, enough for two new police officers in every ward.
- Invest in youth services. We will provide a £500m ringfenced youth services fund to local authorities to repair the damage done to youth services and enable them to deliver a wider range of services, reach more young people and improve training for youth workers.

Our Plan for Freedom, Rights and Equality

- Increase statutory paternity leave from the current two weeks up to six weeks and ensure that parental leave is a day-one right, and address continuing inequalities faced by same-sex couples.
- Require organisations to publish parental leave and pay policies.
- Extend the use of name-blind recruitment processes in the public sector and encourage their use in the private sector.

Our Plan for Better Politics

- Put an end to wasted votes, by introducing proportional representation through the Single Transferable Vote for electing MPs, and local councillors in England.
- Give 16- and 17-year olds the right to vote in elections and referendums.
- Extend the right to full participation in civic life, including the ability to stand for office or vote in UK referendums, Local Elections and General Elections, to all EU citizens who have lived in the UK for five years or more.
- Introduce a legal requirement for local authorities to inform citizens of the steps they must take to be successfully registered with far greater efforts in particular to register under-represented groups; and ensure that the UK has an automatic system of inclusion in elections.
- Bring into force Section 106 of the Equality Act 2010, requiring political parties to publish candidate diversity data.
- Decentralise decision-making from Whitehall and Westminster, by inviting local areas to take control of the services that matter to them most.
- Give democratic local government enhanced powers to call on new income sources appropriate to their area to support local services and investment.

- Give people more power, with customers holding companies delivering services to account for their failures, and with communities able to take charge of aspects of their own local development – through, for example, establishing local banks and community energy cooperatives.
- Devolve further revenue-raising powers away from Westminster, to regions from Cornwall to North East England. We will legislate to empower groups of authorities to come together to establish devolved governance and ensure that any powers devolved are matched by the funding to deliver on the needs of local people.
- Devolve more decision-making power over key levers of economic development including transport, energy, housing and skills.
- Establish UK and local citizens' assemblies to ensure that the public are fully engaged in finding solutions to the greatest challenges we face, such as tackling the climate emergency and the use of artificial intelligence and algorithms by the state.
- We will enact permissive legislation to empower groups of authorities to come together to establish devolved governance – for example to a Cornish Assembly or a Yorkshire Parliament, building on the One Yorkshire campaign. We will proceed by consensus as far as possible but will not allow one local authority to veto a coherent proposal.