

## General Election 2017: Main political party manifestos

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

### Conservatives:

- continue to ensure residents can veto high increases in council tax via referendum.
- give local government greater control over the money they raise and address concerns about fairness of current funding distributions.
- consolidate approach to devolution, providing clarity on what devolution means for different administrations so all authorities operate in a common framework.
- support authorities that wish to combine to serve their communities better.
- continue to support the adoption of elected mayors for combined authorities based around cities, but not support them for the rural counties.
- enact a Great Repeal Bill and determine the level best placed to take decisions, ensuring that power sits closer to the people.
- take steps to enhance the provision of public services in rural areas.
- widen the role of police and crime commissioners.
- deliver reforms proposed in the Housing White Paper.

### Labour:

- give local government extra funding next year, properly resource planning authorities with fuller powers and devolve powers over economic development,
- initiate a review into reforming council tax and business rates.
- give communities more power to shape their town centres, strengthening powers to protect post offices, pubs and independent shops.
- establish a Constitutional Convention and consult on its form and terms of reference and invite recommendations on extending democracy.
- reduce the voting age to 16.
- create a role for a Minister for England, who will sit under the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.
- be guided by public opinion when determining whether to include directly elected mayors in future devolution deals.

### Liberal Democrats:

- increase the number of neighbourhood, community and parish councils
- remove the requirement to hold local referenda for council tax changes.
- create a community right of appeal where planning decisions go against local plan.
- scrap exemptions on smaller housing development schemes from their obligation to provide affordable homes.
- introduce votes at 16 and the Single Transferable Vote and trials weekend voting.
- establish a UK constitutional convention, tasked with producing a full, codified constitution for the UK, to report within two years.
- introduce 'devolution on demand', enabling even greater devolution of powers from Westminster to councils or groups of councils working together.

A more detailed summary of each of the manifestos continues below for your information and use.

## Conservatives

### **A strong economy that works for everyone**

- continue to restore the public finances over the course of the next parliament including continuing with the fiscal rules announced by the chancellor in the autumn statement last year, to a balanced budget by the middle of the next decade.
- continue to ensure that local residents can veto high increases in Council Tax via a referendum.
- not increase the level of Value Added Tax.
- ensure the system is sustainable for the future we will also conduct a full review of the business rates system to make sure it is up to date for a world in which people increasingly shop online.
- increase the National Living Wage to 60 per cent of median earnings by 2020 and then by the rate of median earnings, so that people who are on the lowest pay benefit from the same improvements in earnings as higher paid workers
- deliver the infrastructure – the road, rail, airports and broadband – that businesses need.
- support small businesses through business rate relief and low taxation, and by reducing the bureaucracy and regulation that prevents small businesses from flourishing.
- develop the shale industry in Britain; legislate to change planning law for shale applications – non-fracking drilling will be treated as permitted development, expert planning functions will be established to support local councils, and, when necessary, major shale planning decisions will be made the responsibility of the National Planning Regime; set up a new Shale Environmental Regulator, which will assume the relevant functions of the Health and Safety Executive, the Environment Agency and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy; change the proposed Shale Wealth Fund so a greater percentage of the tax revenues from shale gas directly benefit the communities that host the extraction sites – where communities decide that it is right for them, we will allow payments to be made directly to local people themselves, significant share of the remaining tax revenues will be invested for the benefit of the country at large.
- continue to support local authorities to expand cycle networks and upgrade facilities for cyclists at railway stations.
- support local growth through combined authorities, mayoralities and local enterprise partnerships; make each partnership and combined authority responsible for co-ordinating their own local industrial strategy in alignment with our national industrial strategy, bringing together local businesses, political and public sector leaders to drive growth and economic regeneration; wherever possible deliver growth funding through these organisations; give local enterprise partnerships greater weight by backing them in law.
- introduce a new cultural development fund to use cultural investment to turn around communities.
- ensure that 1 million more trees are planted in our towns and cities, and place new duties on councils to consult when they wish to cut down street trees.

- encourage the very best practice in the design of buildings and public spaces.
- do more to reduce litter, including by supporting comprehensive rubbish collection and recycling, supporting better packaging, taking new powers to force councils to remove roadside litter and prosecuting offenders.
- do more to improve the quality of road surfaces, filling potholes – especially in residential areas – and reducing road noise.
- bring sustainable growth to the rural economy and boost our rural areas, so that people who live in the countryside have the same opportunities as those who live in our towns and cities.
- deliver on our commitment to improve natural flood management, such as improving the quality of water courses to protect against soil erosion and damage to vulnerable habitats and communities; continue to ensure that public forests and woodland are kept in trust for the nation, and provide stronger protections for our ancient woodland.
- take steps to enhance the provision of public services in rural areas; safeguard the post office network, to protect existing rural services and work with the Post Office to extend the availability of business and banking services to families and small businesses in rural areas; support pharmacies and village schools in rural areas.
- continue to work to ensure coastal communities enjoy the vitality and opportunity they deserve; in England extend our successful Coastal Communities Fund to 2022, helping our seaside towns thrive.

### **A strong and united nation in a changing world**

- continue to give local government greater control over the money they raise and address concerns about the fairness of current funding distributions.
- with devolution now established in London and other parts of England, consolidate our approach, providing clarity across England on what devolution means for different administrations so all authorities operate in a common framework.
- support those authorities that wish to combine to serve their communities better; for combined authorities that are based around our great cities, we will continue to support the adoption of elected mayors, but we will not support them for the rural counties.
- starting with the UK Government's arm's-length bodies, start moving significant numbers of UK Government civil servants and other public servants out of London and the south-east to cities around the UK; ensure senior posts move too, so that operational headquarters as well as administrative functions are centred not in London but around Britain; encourage the development of new clusters of public services, private businesses and, where appropriate, universities.
- use the structural fund money that comes back to the UK following Brexit to create a United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund, specifically designed to reduce inequalities between communities across our four nations to help deliver sustainable, inclusive growth based on our modern industrial strategy; consult widely on the design of the fund, including with the devolved administrations, local authorities, businesses and public bodies.
- enact a Great Repeal Bill – our laws will be made in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, and interpreted by judges across the United Kingdom, not in Luxembourg.

- As powers return from the EU, we will be able to determine the level best placed to take decisions on these issues, ensuring power sits closer to the people of the United Kingdom than ever before.
- continue to modernise and improve our electoral registration process, making it as accessible as possible so that every voice counts; continue with the current boundary review, enshrining the principle of equal seats, while reducing the number of MPs to 600, similar to other Western democratic chambers; retain the first past the post system of voting for parliamentary elections and extend this system to police and crime commissioner and mayoral elections; repeal the Fixed-term Parliaments Act.
- legislate to ensure that a form of identification must be presented before voting, to reform postal voting and to improve other aspects of the elections process to ensure that our elections are the most secure in the world; retain the traditional method of voting by pencil and paper, and tackle every aspect of electoral fraud.
- ensure the House of Lords continues to fulfil its constitutional role as a revising and scrutinising chamber which respects the primacy of the House of Commons; continue to ensure the work of the House of Lords remains relevant and effective by addressing issues such as its size.
- establish in law the freedom for employees to mutualise, where appropriate, within the public sector.
- review the honours system to make sure it commands public confidence, rewards genuine public service and that recipients uphold the integrity of the honours bestowed.
- continue to modernise our courts, improving court buildings and facilities and making it easier for people to resolve disputes and secure justice.
- widen the role of police and crime commissioners to help them cut crime for their local communities; ensure that commissioners sit on local health and wellbeing boards, enabling better co-ordination of crime prevention with local drug and alcohol and mental health services; build on the Policing and Crime Act, which introduced better co-ordination of policing and fire and rescue services, with greater devolution of criminal justice responsibility and budgets to local commissioners.

### **The world's great meritocracy**

- deliver our commitment to create 3 million apprenticeships for young people by 2020 and in doing so drive up the quality of apprenticeships to ensure they deliver the skills employers need.
- in the next parliament produce the best programme of learning and training for people in work and returning to work in the developed world; help all workers seeking to develop their skills in their existing jobs by introducing a new right to request leave for training for all employees.
- break down the barriers to public sector workers taking on more qualified roles because of their prior educational attainment – for instance, ensure teaching assistants can become qualified teachers and healthcare assistants can become nurses via a degree apprenticeship route, in addition to other routes.
- equip people with the digital skills they need now, and in the future, by introducing a right to lifelong learning in digital skills, just as we have done for literacy and numeracy.

- support the public sector and civil society in identifying extremists, countering their messages and promoting pluralistic, British values.
- amend health and safety regulations so that employers provide appropriate first aid training and needs assessment for mental health, as they currently do for risks to physical health, and extend Equalities Act protections against discrimination to mental health conditions that are episodic and fluctuating.
- as we did with Dementia Friends, we will train one million members of the public in basic mental health awareness and first aid to break the stigma of mental illness.

### **A restored contract between the generations**

- deliver the reforms proposed in our Housing White Paper to free up more land for new homes in the right places, speed up build-out by encouraging modern methods of construction and give councils powers to intervene where developers do not act on their planning permissions; and we will diversify who builds homes in this country.
- help councils to build, but only those councils who will build high-quality, sustainable and integrated communities; enter into new Council Housing Deals with ambitious, pro-development, local authorities to help them build more social housing; work with them to improve their capability and capacity to develop more good homes, as well as providing them with significant low-cost capital funding; build new fixed-term social houses, which will be sold privately after ten to fifteen years with an automatic Right to Buy for tenants, the proceeds of which will be recycled into further homes; reform Compulsory Purchase Orders to make them easier and less expensive for councils to use and to make it easier to determine the true market value of sites.
- work with private and public sector house builders to capture the increase in land value created when they build to reinvest in local infrastructure, essential services and further housing, making it both easier and more certain that public sector landowners, and communities themselves, benefit from the increase in land value from urban regeneration and development; continue our £2.5 billion flood defence programme that will put in place protection for 300,000 existing homes by 2021.

### **Prosperity and security in a digital age**

- ensure consumers and businesses have access to the digital infrastructure they need to succeed.
- by the end of this year, 19 out of 20 premises will have access to superfast broadband and our Universal Service Obligation will ensure that by 2020 every home and every business in Britain has access to high speed broadband.
- work to provide gigaspeed connectivity to as many businesses and homes as possible.
- introduce a full fibre connection voucher for companies across the country by 2018 and by 2022 we will have major fibre spines in over a hundred towns and cities, with ten million premises connected to full fibre and a clear path to national coverage over the next decade.
- by 2022 we will extend mobile coverage further to 95 per cent geographic coverage of the UK; by the same date, all major roads and main line trains will enjoy full and

uninterrupted mobile phone signal, alongside guaranteed WiFi internet service on all such trains.

- continue to release more spectrum from public sector use to allow greater private sector access and begin the roll-out of a new 5G network, providing gigaspeed connection to your smart phone; have the majority of the population covered by a 5G signal by 2027.
- create a new presumption of digital government services by default and an expectation that all government services are fully accessible online, with assisted digital support available for all public sector websites.
- publish far more information about public services online, including relevant information about local issues and public transport so that every person can find out up to date information about roadworks, planning applications and bus routes online, without the hassle and delay that currently exists.
- publish operational performance data of all public-facing services for open comparison as a matter of course – helping the public to hold their local services to account, or choose other better services if they prefer. In doing so, central and local government will be required to release information regularly and in an open format, and data will be aggregated and anonymised where it is important to do so
- continue the drive for open data, maintaining our position as the world leader.
- use common platforms across government and the wider public sector. That must start with the way we identify ourselves online, so that people have one single, common and safe way of verifying themselves to all parts of government. That is why we shall roll out Verify, so that people can identify themselves on all government online services by 2020, using their own secure data that is not held by government. We will also make this platform more widely available, so that people can safely verify their identity to access non-government services such as banking.
- combine the relevant parts of HM Land Registry, Ordnance Survey, the Valuation Office Agency, the Hydrographic Office and Geological Survey to create a comprehensive geospatial data body within government, the largest repository of open land data in the world – this new body will set the standards to digitise the planning process and help create the most comprehensive digital map of Britain to date.

## Labour

### Creating an economy that works for all

- no increases in personal National Insurance contributions or the rate of VAT.
- deliver universal superfast broadband availability by 2022.
- improve mobile internet coverage and expand provision of free public wi-fi in city centres and on public transport.
- improve 4G coverage and invest to ensure all urban areas, as well as major roads and railways, have uninterrupted 5G coverage.
- on day one instruct the National Infrastructure Commission to report on how to roll out ultrafast' 300bps across the within the next decade.
- take a new approach to the publicly-owned BS, and launch a consultation on breaking up the bank to create new local public banks that are better matched to their customers' needs.

- introduce a package of reforms to business rates – including switching from RPI to CPI indexation, exempting new investment in plant and machinery from valuations, and ensuring that businesses have access to a proper appeals process – while reviewing the entire business rates system in the longer run.
- supporting the creation of publicly owned, locally accountable energy companies and co-operatives to rival existing private energy suppliers, with at least one in every region.
- ban fracking because it would lock us into an energy infrastructure based on fossil fuels, long after the point in 2030 when the Committee on Climate Change says gas in the UK must sharply decline.

### **Negotiating Brexit**

- drop the Conservatives' Great Repeal Bill, replacing it with an EU Rights and Protections Bill that will ensure there is no detrimental change to workers' rights, equality law, consumer rights or environmental protections as a result of Brexit.
- seek a Brexit deal that delivers for all regions and nations of the UK; introduce a 'presumption of devolution' where devolved powers transferred from the EU will go straight to the relevant region or nation.
- for many people and for much of our country, power can feel just as remote and unaccountable in Westminster as it does in Brussels, so a Labour government will seek to put powers as close to communities as possible.
- We will ensure there is no drop in Structural funding as a result of Brexit until the end of the current EU funding round in 2019/20.

### **Towards a national education service**

- ensure all schools are democratically accountable, including appropriate controls to see that they serve the public interest and their local communities.
- maintain the apprenticeship levy while taking measures to ensure high quality by requiring the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to report on an annual basis to the Secretary of State on quality outcomes of completed apprenticeships to ensure they deliver skilled workers for employers and real jobs for apprentices at the end of their training.

### **A fair deal at work**

- give all workers equal rights from day one, whether part-time or full-time, temporary or permanent – so that working conditions are not driven down.
- repeal the Trade Union Act and roll out sectoral collective bargaining – because the most effective way to maintain good rights at work is collectively through a union.
- guarantee trade unions a right to access workplaces – so that unions can speak to members and potential members.
- raise the Minimum Wage to the level of the Living Wage (expected to be at least £10 per hour by 2020) – for all workers aged 18 or over, so that work pays.
- end the Public Sector Pay Cap – because public sector workers deserve a pay rise after years of falling wages.

- roll out maximum pay ratios of 20:1 in the public sector and in companies bidding for public contracts – because it cannot be right that wages at the top keep rising while everyone else's stagnates.
- enforce all workers' rights to trade union representation at work – so that all workers can be supported when negotiating with their employer.
- double paid paternity leave to four weeks and increase paternity pay – because fathers are parents too and deserve to spend more time with their new babies.
- set up a dedicated commission to modernise the law around employment status. New statutory definitions of employment status would reduce the need for litigation and improve compliance.

### **Secure homes for all**

- overhaul the Homes and Communities Agency to be Labour's housing delivery body, and give councils new powers to build the homes local communities need.
- By the end of the next Parliament we will be building at least 100,000 council and housing association homes a year for genuinely affordable rent or sale.
- establish a new Department for Housing to focus on tackling the housing crisis.
- prioritise brownfield sites and protect the green belt.
- start work on a new generation of New Towns to build the homes we need and avoid urban sprawl.
- make the building of new homes, including council homes, priority through our National Transformation Fund, as part of a joined-up industrial and skills strategy that ensures a vibrant construction sector with a skilled workforce and rights at work.
- ensure local plans address the need for older people's housing, ensuring that choice and downsizing options are readily available.
- Keep the Land Registry in public hands, where it belongs, and make ownership of land more transparent.
- give local people buying their first home first dibs' on new homes built in their area to give them confidence that new homes will be available to them and their families.
- remove government restrictions that stop councils building homes and begin the biggest council building programme for at least 30 years.
- suspend the right-to-buy policy to protect affordable homes for local people, with councils only able to resume sales if they can prove they have a plan to replace homes sold like-for-like.

### **Healthcare for all**

- work towards a new model of community care that takes into account not only primary care but also social care and mental health.
- increase funding to GP services to ensure patients can access the care they need.
- halt pharmacy cuts and review provision to ensure all patients have access to pharmacy services, particularly in deprived or remote communities.
- create a more equal society for the many by working with communities, civil society and business to reduce loneliness.
- commit to over £30 billion in extra funding over the next Parliament through increasing income tax for the highest 5 per cent of earners and by increasing tax on private medical insurance

- increase the social care budgets by a further £8 billion over the lifetime of the next Parliament, including an additional £1 billion for the first year.

### **Safer communities**

- champion community policing policies and incentivise good policing practice, working with Police and Crime Commissioners throughout the country on strategies to prevent crime.
- recruit 10,000 more police officers to work on community beats, equivalent to at least one more for every neighbourhood in the country.
- reinstate separate governance arrangements for Fire and Police Services.
- give the Fire and Rescue Services a statutory duty to coordinate and respond to floods.
- reintroduce funding for the preparation of judicial review cases; judicial review is an important way of holding government to account.

### **Leading richer lives**

- give local government extra funding next year.
- initiate a review into reforming council tax and business rates and consider new options such as a land value tax, to ensure local government has sustainable funding for the long term.
- Labour is the party of devolution and we believe in handing back power to communities; we will devolve powers over economic development, complete with the necessary funding.
- properly resource and bolster planning authorities with fuller powers to put people and communities at the heart of planning.
- update compulsory purchase powers to make them more effective as a tool to drive regeneration and unlock planned development.
- end the cuts to youth services.
- ensure libraries are preserved for future generations and updated with wi-fi and computers to meet modern needs.
- reintroduce library standards so that government can assess and guide councils in delivering the best possible service and end the closure of Crown Post Office branches, which play a major role in serving their communities.
- set up a commission to establish a Post Bank, owned by the Post Office and providing a full range of banking services in every community.
- give communities more power to shape their town centres, by strengthening powers to protect post offices, community pharmacies, high street banks, sports clubs, pubs and independent shops, and promote measures to decrease high-street vacancies.
- set up a national review of local pubs to examine the causes for their large-scale demise, as well as establishing a joint taskforce that will consider future sustainability.
- invest in broadband, housing and transport to create jobs and ensure that the nation's prosperity is felt beyond our large towns and cities. Labour's national investment plans include coastal protections, better flood management and the broadband and 4G extensions that will underpin the future success of rural small businesses.

- rural councils deliver public services differently, and this needs to be reflected in funding allocation mechanisms. We will consider these differences in our re-evaluation of the business rate schemes.
- Introduce a rural-proofing' process so that all our laws, policies and programmes consider their impact on rural communities.
- introduce a £1 billion Cultural Capital Fund to upgrade our existing cultural and creative infrastructure to be ready for the digital age and invest in creative clusters across the country, based on a similar model to enterprise zones.
- end cuts to local authority budgets to support the provision of libraries, museums and galleries.
- review extending the £1,000 pub relief business rates scheme to small music venues.

### **Extending democracy**

- establish a Constitutional Convention to examine and advise on reforming of the way Britain works at a fundamental level; consult on its form and terms of reference and invite recommendations on extending democracy.
- seek to end the hereditary principle and reduce the size of the current House of Lords as part of a wider package of constitutional reform to address the growing democratic deficit across Britain.
- reduce the voting age to 16.
- safeguard our democracy by repealing the Lobbying Act, which has gagged charities, and introduce a tougher statutory register of lobbyists.
- create a role for a Minister for England, who will sit under the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, and will work with the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- restore regional offices to increase contact between central and local government on the ground.
- be guided by public opinion when determining whether to include directly elected mayors in future devolution deals.

### **Liberal Democrats (100 pages)**

#### **Protect Britain's Place in Europe**

- when the terms of our future relationship with the EU have been negotiated (over the next two years on the Government's timetable), put that deal to a vote of the British people in a referendum, with the alternative option of staying in the EU on the ballot paper.

#### **Save our NHS and Social Care Services**

- an immediate 1p rise on the basic, higher and additional rates of Income Tax to raise £6 billion additional revenue, which would be ringfenced to be spent only on NHS and social care services.
- establish a cross-party health and social care convention, bringing together stakeholders from all political parties, patients groups, the public and professionals from within the health and social care system to carry out a comprehensive review of the longer-term sustainability of the health and social care finances and

workforce, and the practicalities of greater integration; we would invite the devolved administrations to be a part of this work.

- our longer-term objective will be to bring together NHS and social care into one seamless service – pooling budgets in every area by 2020 and developing integrated care organisations.
- ensure that all front-line public service professionals, including in schools and universities, receive better training in mental health.
- move towards single place-based budgets for health and social care by 2020, allowing local areas to decide how best to provide the full spectrum of care for their community.
- publish a National Wellbeing Strategy, which puts better health and wellbeing for all at the heart of government policy.
- keep public health within local government, where it is effectively joined up with preventive community services, and reinstate the funding cut from public health budgets by the Conservatives.

### **Put Children First**

- introduce a curriculum entitlement – a slimmed down core national curriculum, which will be taught in all state-funded schools; this will include Personal, Social and Health Education: a ‘curriculum for life’ including financial literacy, first aid and emergency lifesaving skills, mental health education, citizenship and age-appropriate Sex and Relationship Education (SRE).
- aim to double the number of businesses which hire apprentices, including by extending apprenticeships to new sectors of our economy such as creative and digital industries.

### **Build an Economy that Works for You**

- new direct spending on housebuilding to help build 300,000 homes a year by 2022
- a programme of installing hyperfast, fibre-optic broadband across the UK
- capital investment in schools and hospitals to support capacity increases and modernisation.
- significant investment in road and rail infrastructure, including a continued commitment to HS2, Crossrail 2 and rail electrification.
- additional funding to bring more private investment into renewable energy.
- £5 billion of initial capital for a new British Housing and Infrastructure Development Bank, using public money to attract private investment for these priorities.
- ensure that the National Infrastructure Commission takes fully into account the environmental implications of all national infrastructure decisions.
- devolve significant infrastructure spending to local areas.
- end the 1% cap on pay rises in the public sector, and uprate wages in line with inflation.
- introduce a National Wellbeing Strategy covering all aspects of government policy, including health, housing and the environment.
- aim in the long term, and as resources allow, to raise the employee national insurance threshold to the Income Tax threshold, while protecting low earners’ ability to accrue pension and benefit entitlement.

- review Business Rates to reduce burdens on small firms, and make them the priority for any future business tax cuts.
- invest to ensure that broadband connections and services to be provided before 2020 have a speed of 2 Gbps or more, with fibre to the premises (FTTP) as standard and unlimited usage by 2020 across the whole of the UK. SMEs should be prioritised in the roll-out of hyperfast broadband.
- encourage the creation and widespread adoption of a 'good employer' kitemark covering areas such as paying a living wage, avoiding unpaid internships and using name-blind recruitment to make it easier for customers and investors to exercise choice and influence.
- 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.
- continue to champion the Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Engine initiatives and invest significant capital resources in infrastructure projects across the north of England and the Midlands.
- devolve further revenue-raising powers away from Westminster, to regions from Cornwall to the north-east. We will 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, housing and skills.

### **Keep our Country Green**

- oppose 'fracking' because of its adverse impact on climate change, the energy mix, and the local environment.
- expand community energy schemes, encourage councils to develop community energy-saving projects and local electricity generation, and promote city-scale demonstration projects in electric vehicles and clean energy.
- establish a £2 billion flood-prevention fund focused on providing support for small community and council-led schemes to reduce upstream flooding, and the knock-on effects in downstream and coastal areas, in addition to improving flood defences, and introducing high standards for flood resilience for buildings and infrastructure in flood-risk areas.
- significantly increase the amount of accessible green space, including completion of the coastal path, and create a new designation of national nature parks to protect up to one million acres of accessible green space valued by local communities.
- protect and restore England's lakes, rivers and wetlands, including through reform of water management and higher water-efficiency standards, and establish a 'blue belt' of protected marine areas.
- reverse the current sharp decline in the rate of woodland creation by aiming to plant a tree for every UK citizen over the next 10 years, and protect remaining ancient woodlands.
- establish a statutory waste recycling target of 70% in England and extend separate food waste collections to at least 90% of homes by 2022.

### **Support Families and Communities**

- directly build homes to fill the gap left by the market, to reach our housebuilding target of 300,000 homes a year, through a government commissioning programme to build homes for sale and rent. We will ensure that half a million affordable, energy-efficient homes are built by the end of the parliament.
- create at least 10 new garden cities in England, providing tens of thousands of high-quality, zero-carbon homes, with gardens and shared green space, jobs, schools and public transport.
- set up a new government-backed British Housing and Infrastructure Development Bank with a remit including providing long-term capital for major new settlements and helping attract finance for major housebuilding projects.
- end the Voluntary Right to Buy pilots that sell off housing association homes and the associated high value asset levy.
- lift the borrowing cap on local authorities and increase the borrowing capacity of housing associations so that they can build council and social housing.
- scrap exemptions on smaller housing development schemes from their obligation to provide affordable homes, and strengthen the hand of local government to prevent large developers reneging on their commitments.
- require local plans to take into account at least 15 years of future housing need – focusing on long-term development and community needs.
- create a community right of appeal in cases where planning decisions go against the approved local plan.
- enable local authorities to: Levy up to 200% council tax on second homes and ‘buy to leave empty’ investments from overseas; enforce housebuilding on unwanted public sector land; penalise excessive land-banking when builders with planning permission have failed to build after three years; end the Right to Buy if they choose.
- halt the decline in bus services and carry out a review of bus funding and bus policies. We will give principal local authorities the power to run, commission and regulate the bus network in their area.
- provide local authorities and communities with the powers to improve transport and ticketing with the ability to introduce network-wide and smart ticketing systems.
- design towns and cities as safe and attractive walking spaces and implement the recommendations of the Get Britain Cycling report.
- drastically reduce the powers of central government ministers to interfere in democratically elected local government.
- remove the requirement to hold local referenda for council tax changes, ensuring that councillors are properly accountable for their decisions by introducing fair votes.
- aim to increase the number of neighbourhood, community and parish councils and promote tenant management in social housing.
- establish a government process to deliver greater devolution of financial responsibility to English local authorities and any new devolved bodies in England, building on the work of the Independent Commission on Local Government Finance; any changes must balance the objectives of more local autonomy and fair equalisation between communities.
- support social investment, ensuring charities and social enterprises can access the support and finance they need to strengthen their governance and deliver innovative, sustainable solutions to challenges in their communities.

- ensure that every property in the UK is provided, by 2022, with a superfast broadband connection with a download speed of 30Mbps, an upload speed of 6Mbps, and an unlimited usage cap.
- invest £2 billion in innovative solutions to ensure the provision of high-speed broadband across the rural UK, working with local authorities and providing grants to help areas replicate the success of existing community-led projects.
- set up a £2 billion Rural Services Fund of capital investment to enable communities to establish a local base from which to co-locate services such as council offices, post offices, children's centres, libraries and visiting healthcare professionals.
- work with Ofcom to ensure that mobile phone companies provide fast and reliable coverage in rural areas.
- commit to preventing Post Office closures and protect Royal Mail's Universal Service Obligation to deliver across the UK for the same price.
- work with local authorities to deliver a significant increase in social and affordable housing in rural areas.

### **Defend Rights, Promote Justice and Equalities**

- end the ministerial veto on release of information under the Freedom of Information Act, and take steps to reduce the proportion of FOI requests where information is withheld by government departments.
- increase community policing in England and Wales by giving an additional £300 million a year to local police forces to reverse the increase in violent crime, boost community confidence and increase the flow of community intelligence.
- replace Police and Crime Commissioners, elected at great expense in elections with very low turnout, with accountable police boards made up of local councillors.

### **Fix a Broken System**

- introduce votes at 16 for all elections and referendums across the UK.
- ensure that every reasonable effort is made to ensure that those people legally entitled to vote are included on the electoral registers, with far greater efforts in particular to register under-represented groups such as young people qualifying for the first time and students moving to universities.
- introduce the Single Transferable Vote for local government elections in England and for electing MPs across the UK.
- enable all UK citizens living abroad to vote for MPs in separate overseas constituencies, and to participate in UK referendums.
- reform the House of Lords with a proper democratic mandate.
- cancel the boundary review due to report in 2018.
- introduce trials of weekend voting to help raise turnouts in elections.
- establish a UK constitutional convention, made up of representatives of the political parties, academia, civic society and members of the public, tasked with producing a full, codified constitution for the UK, to report within two years.
- work with devolved parliaments and assemblies to allocate to them any powers repatriated as a result of Brexit in their areas of responsibility, and ensure that the devolution of any repatriated powers or responsibilities does not disadvantage the nations of the UK.

- in some areas of England there is a greater appetite for powers, but not every part of the country wants to move at the same speed and there cannot be a one-size fits-all approach. All areas should however have access to the same opportunities and mayoral authorities should not be ranked higher in terms of the powers with which they can be granted. We will therefore introduce 'devolution on demand', enabling even greater devolution of powers from Westminster to councils or groups of councils working together – for example to a Cornish Assembly or a Yorkshire Parliament.