



UK **Reform**
Party

The UK Reform Party Policy Proposals

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SECTION 1 - Introduction

The Expenses Scandal sent shocks rippling through the nation. Yet most shocking was the inadequate response by the mainstream parties. Rather than simply a new face on the 'Old Politics', we act on the principles we believe in.

We have a country to be proud of. Yet thousands of voices around the country are shouting out in frustration, anger or depression. Their shouts are for their voices to be heard! Their shouts are for reform! From a global population of 3 billion in 1960 to 9 billion by 2045, and from the world's first commercial computer in the late 40s to the World Wide Web in the early 90s, it's clear that we're living in an era of change. Yet the political institutions and main political parties have failed to keep up, and grown out of touch with the people. We, the British public, are not apathetic. We just want to see real reform, and for once have a real say!

The people below are the UK Reform Party Committee, all of whom believe we need a reformist, honest and transparent approach to our future



From left to right, and arranged in no particular order, since we believe each Party Member is equal, the Committee is comprised of Ben Lille, Adam Lotun, Robert Battison (Party Leader), Tim Perkins (Deputy Leader), Clare Appleyard, and Simon Stirling.

The UK Reform Party exists to build and secure a proud, prosperous and happy nation, where all citizens have the opportunities they deserve, and every community flourishes. We're a liberal and social democratic party, who believe in democracy, honesty, transparency, equality of opportunity, social justice and freedom with responsibility under the law. We always put the people before the party, and despite being idealistic are realistic too. If we can better help by doing so, we're open to a merger with either Labour or the Liberal Democrats in the future. However we would only do so subject to a member's vote, and if they: reform, become more progressive, embrace some of our manifesto proposals, allow the UK Reform Party to continue within their party, give party members a real voice, and give the people a real voice within the country as a whole!

We aim to make the UK the world's foremost democratic role model. We deserve more of a say in our political parties, and hence we discuss all prospective manifesto policies with anyone who wants to get involved, and let Party Members vote on what actually enters the manifesto. We deserve more of a say in how our country is governed as a whole and so we need much wider usage of referenda. We need to know what our rights are, and hence we need a written Constitution. We need to know what decisions are being taken in our name, and so we favour making everything more transparent, including party finances, governmental legislation, and everything else within reason. Our democratic approach is the reason why we're the party of innovation. If you have ideas, we're the party who will discuss them with you. We're for complete honesty, transparency and freedom of expression, so no matter what you think we'll always discuss it. Read through some of the ideas in the following pages and see what you think. If you have some thoughts then get in touch. We look forward to hearing from you.

SECTION 2 – Equality of Opportunity

Inequality of wealth grew under the UK's left wing party. Now it seems likely to grow even further. We want to reverse the trend!

2.1 End Homelessness



For one of the richest countries in the world it's disgusting to know that 400,000 of us are homeless. We will do everything we can to end homelessness once and for all. This does not mean massive tax increases. It means giving a helping hand, and letting homeless people themselves get back on their feet. It means: working with charities and organisations; empowering the homeless to choose how they build a new life; tackling the causes with long term guidance, counselling, support, education and training; tax relief schemes for construction companies who can provide low cost accommodation for the homeless and having the guts to do the plain obvious, like putting empty homes to use. Yet it also means wider reforms to the system. GDP is only one contributing factor to happiness and quality of life. Introducing more effective measures of welfare would insist that politicians act to help the most vulnerable within our society, and recognise how rising living costs are affecting people.

2.2 Increase Opportunities for Women



We recognise that despite the Equal Pay Act many women still suffer pay disadvantages, and so we seek to remedy this through various means. One method will be to press for automatic pay reviews for those returning from maternity leave.

We recognise that women are underrepresented in our political system today, and want to work to empower women. This does not mean positive discrimination however. Rather, it means that we stand against all forms of arbitrary discrimination, and want to bring about social changes that promote equal opportunities for all.

2.3 End Slavery



In 2006 Labour proposed to rescind the rights of migrant domestic workers, and refused to sign the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings. In 2010 the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats refused to endorse an EU directive seeking to tackle sex slavery. Slavery is alive and well today, and we intend to fight for its abolition. There are 27 million slaves in the world today, more than at any time in human history, and 15,000 of those are in the UK!

To abolish slavery we need to act together with other nations around the world (for example by endorsing the EU directive referred to above) to tackle trafficking, and we also need to ensure that more people know that this is an issue, and more police have the expertise to act.

2.4 End Poverty



Persistent poverty – defined as living at least three years out of the last four in poverty – is high in the UK compared to the rest of Europe. Between 1998 and 2001, 11% of UK citizens lived in persistent poverty, compared to 5 per cent in the Netherlands, 6% in Germany, and 9% across Europe as a whole. We aim to tackle this persistent poverty, and especially structural poverty that is passed down generations, through: job creation, micro-credit programmes, giving more educational options to those with need, especially to adults willing to study in their

spare time, creating a minimum pension through minor redistribution, developing a new system of child benefits that gives money not only to struggling parents, but also to the children when they enter adulthood, supporting ex-offenders into work, improving community facilities, and improving infrastructure. Ending poverty will create wealth and increase economic productivity in the long term. But in the short term costs will be covered through changes in our tax system, cracking down on tax avoidance and evasion, and reducing the size of our bureaucracy through scrapping New Labour's top down targets and decentralising power.

2.5 Help the Sick and Disabled

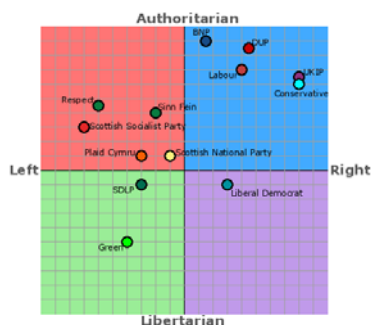


There are many chronic and degenerative medical conditions that are not officially recognised by the Department of Work and Pensions, despite being recognised by the majority of first world countries. We would accept, and formally recognise all medical conditions that have been documented by the medical community, and where these have not yet been recognised, but where evidence suggests their existence, the party would discuss their inclusion.

SECTION 3 – Democracy

A new politics – whether in the form of new parties or the genuine revival of existing parties – will only be born once the structural problems within the current system are addressed

3.1 Introduce Proportional Representation



The current "winner takes all" system of First-Past-The-Post, which we use in the UK parliament, produces unfair and frequently absurd results, in which the number of seats a party wins in Parliament does not reflect the number of votes received at the polls. Elections are often decided by just a few thousand voters in "marginal" seats where the MP has a small majority. Voters in "safe" seats, where the MP has a large majority, can be safely ignored. The system often throws up huge majorities based on a minority of the vote. In 2001 Labour won nearly two-thirds of seats in parliament with well under half the overall vote in the polls.

A proportional system ties a party's share of seats to its share of votes across the country. It would ensure everyone's vote counts; it would offer voters more choice; and it would produce a government and parliament that actually represents British society, rather than only mainstream parties, who have been drifting to the right in recent years.

It is the intention of the UK Reform Party to hold a Citizen's Convention on the appropriate electoral system for the UK Parliament. A referendum would then be held, in which people get a real choice, not only between AV and First Past the Post, but also Proportional Representation.

3.2 Campaign for a Yes Vote in May



In May 2011 we have a choice between keeping the current electoral system, and adopting AV. AV would give every voter the ability to vote for the party they want, rather than making tactical votes. And it would give elected MPs a majority of over 50% of the vote from their constituents, which would give them a much greater mandate to make decisions on our behalfs. We believe that this is an opportunity for improvement that cannot be missed.

3.3 Increase the Use of Referenda and Local Decision Making



We would devolve political decision making to the lowest possible level, introduce more consultation and transparency, hold referenda once a year for our first Parliament on Constitutional matters, and generally encourage and facilitate more involvement of the people in politics. The referenda put forward would be on constitutional matters, and decided by public deliberation and online polls.

3.4 Introduce a Fully Elected Second Chamber of Parliament



In its current form the House of Lords is an elitist and out-dated institution, which doesn't represent the diversity of the UK population. It's essential for democracy that those who make law should be accountable to the people i.e. we should be able to vote them in and vote them out. We have been promised such reform in the past, but the mainstream parties have failed to deliver.

There is a current plan by the coalition government to begin to reform the House of Lords, which will result in at least a majority of them being elected. Therefore our plan will be to improve on any changes already made, rather than tearing down whatever improvements, if any, have taken place.

We wish to see the second chamber elected fully by a system of STV (Single Transferrable Vote). All previous lords will keep their titles, but will no longer have the ability to vote in the house, receive expenses or any other monetary supplement. Lords in the new system will represent a much larger area than current constituencies, and multiple lords will be elected from each of these areas, as is the case with European elections.

We will also consider other ideas on the House of Lords, such as indirect elections by civil societies, and random selection as with jury duty, over the next five years, taking into account changes made in the Lords.

3.5 Empower the People



We favour a rebalancing of power away from the Executive and unaccountable bodies towards Parliament and local government.

This means:

- Reducing the Prime Minister's powers to ensure that he/she is 'first among equals', as was originally intended.
- Ensuring that all MPs have the chance to discuss all legislative proposals before they're pushed through by the Executive.
- Ensuring that all MPs are equally able to put forward legislative proposals.
- Greater clarity, transparency and accountability should be introduced into the relationship between the Executive and supra-national bodies, quangos, businesses, and interest groups.
- Reviewing the case for abolishing Party Whips.
- Reviewing the case for electing Ministers, and moving away from Prime Ministerial appointments.
- Ensuring that whenever the number of MPs changes, the size of the Executive changes proportionally.

3.6 Hold a Referendum on whether we should become a Republic



We would hold a referendum on whether we should become a Republic, and campaign in favour. We believe all institutions of the UK should be democratically elected, accountable, and transparent in what they do. Abolishing the monarchy would not do away with our heritage and/or tradition. The monarchy is an important part of our history; and we would ensure that this history is preserved. But the British people deserve the best, and we cannot leave that to an accident of birth. Democratic values are part of what defines our country. It is time we end the hypocrisy and give the people a choice about our future.

3.7 Create an English Assembly

Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales each have their own Parliament or Assembly with powers over education, health and other areas. But MPs from these devolved nations can still vote on laws that apply solely in England, where English MPs cannot do the reverse. Controversial laws on top up fees for English universities, foundation hospitals and the third runway at Heathrow have been passed thanks to the votes of non-English MPs.

We propose that only those who represent England should have a say on English Parliamentary matters, which would in Scotland, Northern Ireland or Wales go to the Regional Assemblies. Hence we favour the creation of an English Regional Assembly to work parallel to their equals in other regions of our country.

This is not about breaking up our union; it's about making it stronger, fairer and more balanced. All representatives should vote upon issues where their constituents are affected, and should not be able to cast a vote for legislation of which they have no responsibility for.

3.8 Lower the Voting Age



At 16 you can get a job, move into your own accommodation, pay tax, and be treated as an adult. It is right that you should also be able to vote! We would lower the voting age, and encourage 16-18 year olds to have a say in matters that affect them most such as education and tuition fees. Evidence shows that the earlier people start voting the more likely they are to continue doing so.

3.9 Reform the System of Party Funding and Election Finances



Party funding is out of control. We have individuals and organisations bank rolling election campaigns, pouring money into marginal seats in order to get into power. The level of corruption within this system has been proven countless times: when the Labour Party had to apologize for accepting a £1m donation from one man; when high ranking Conservatives, who have donated millions in funding, were shown to be non-doms; and when large donations to the Liberal Democrats jumped as soon as they entered government.

The system not only permits corruption; it's unfair on small and new parties, and it's unfair on the rest of the country. As part of our wide ranging reforms we propose a cap on party donations at £10,000 for individuals and £100,000 for organisations per year.

We would also initiate a fund for parties taken from tax income, and given out proportionally to the percentage of the national vote parties achieve at general elections.

SECTION 4 – Rights & Freedoms

We need to rethink the relationship between citizen and state

4.1 Introduce a Written Constitution



Our "unwritten constitution" has allowed those in power to set the rules, and generally do as they wish. A written constitution is about taking power back from the elite, and setting down the rights and liberties we have as citizens.

We would call Citizen's Conventions, involving people from across the UK to decide what kind of democracy we should have and what kind of society we want to be. These Conventions will decide the content of the written constitution. They will allow us to re-think our politics

from top to bottom, set clear rules for government, and protect our rights from interference by the state.

This constitution would include articles of democratic rights and elections, justice and law, freedom of speech and expression, and human rights, where the Human Rights Act of 1998 and European Convention on Human Rights are built upon.

We would strive to create a document that is both a redoubt of the freedom of the citizens of the United Kingdom, and flexible enough that changes can be made as ideas and political thought evolve in the years to come. Such a constitution would allow for a reformist state, meanwhile ensuring that proper scrutiny and democratic processes take place.

4.2 Review and Simplify the Judicial Process and existing law

In addition to the introduction of a Written Constitution we propose to modernise the judicial process, scrapping useless laws, and sorting out contradictions and irregularities.

4.3 Ensure People are Looked After When They're Sick

No one should be forced to work when sick or on holiday. It is up to employers to find solutions, and this includes public institutions like schools, where teachers currently have to send in lesson plans even if they're on death's door.

4.4 Protect Parental Rights

At present parents have only 13 weeks parental leave to split between them, and employers don't legally have to pay them during this time. 13 weeks is less than the minimum called for by the European Parliament, and that minimum is about to be raised to 20 weeks. We propose a new system of flexible parental leave, where parents have 26 weeks to split however the couple wants between them. And both parents should also be entitled to at least one month each on half pay if they have worked with their employer for over 2 years.

4.5 Review the Case for Reform of Copyright and Patent Law

We believe that there is a strong case for reforming copyright and patent law to legalise non-commercial file sharing, reduce the excessive length of copyright protection, and prevent patents being used to stifle innovation or manipulate prices. Artists' rights to be the only ones making money from their work must be retained, but that needs to be balanced by 'fair use' rights for the public, and this area therefore needs substantial review.

4.6 Protect You While at Work

The EU Working Time Directive should be enforced, and strengthened, so that work at home is taken into account, and employers cannot require their employees to sign contracts in which they say they will work longer than 48 hours in a week, unless the job pays over £30,000PA.

4.7 Strengthen Freedom of Expression

Our rights to freedom of expression have been under attack for some time. We endeavour to ensure that this key part of our cultural heritage is protected. As such we favour a major review into libel law, legalising Cannabis, and devolving more power to people on the ground. The original laws pertaining to Health and Safety regulations contained the line "so far as is reasonably practicable". Yet local officials again and again feel they need to apply such regulation as if that line did not exist. This is a fear that we need to fight. We need to be able to exercise judgement. One way in which we can start this reverse is to get rid of the "no win no fee" offers enticing people to sue. Those who can't afford legal fees, but have a valid case to make, will be helped appropriately, but giving help to everyone only encourages a culture of suing.

We also need to challenge the current trend in double standards in political correctness. As just one example I have spoken to teachers who were told they had to find other words for a blackboard for risk of it offending black people. The term whiteboard is not deemed offensive and neither should blackboard be.

SECTION 5 – Society, Culture & The Arts

Our Social Structure is evolving fast. We have to ensure that the State is in sync.

5.1 Hold a Citizen's Convention on National Identity



We're proud of our diversity, and that England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland all make up the country we belong to. As such we want to foster a greater sense of unity by reflecting not simply what our forbears decided, but what Britons feel today. We will hold a Citizens' Convention on National Identity. In this convention, and in local communities across the country, people will make decisions like

whether they want a Welsh dragon on the Union Jack, whether we need a new national anthem, and how important is the matter of improving infrastructure between each region.

5.2 Protect our Community Services

We aim to promote and protect community services such as pubs, post offices, and other places where community members can get together to meet. If we want to grow as a society then it is crucial that we foster a sense of community spirit, and get people talking with their neighbours once again.

5.3 Tackle the Causes and Effects of our Social Problems



Elsewhere in the world people can walk around cities with their children at night, and not fear violence. Policemen no longer tackle minor offences in cities like Cardiff on a Friday night, because there are simply too few officers to enforce order. We therefore seek to raise the legal age requirement for buying alcohol to 21 in supermarkets and off-licenses, but keep it at 18 in bars, pubs, clubs and other such centres where landlords are able to control behaviour and refuse to serve those who have had too much.

However we understand that alcohol is only a very small part of the problem, and as such seek to: expand local community facilities to encourage community involvement and give young people other things to do; tackle mental illness; invest in lowering unemployment; and to promote community service for small time offenders, so that those who do break the law pay the community back. We must become once more a "can do" society, where people take responsibility to drive the country forward together.

5.4 Strengthen the Third Sector



Our country is one of the most charitable nations in the world, and our people should be commended for this. But there is still a lot more we can do. At present it often takes months to go through the selection process for voluntary posts like helping in a soup kitchen. Charity managers spend many hours a week supplying different sets of similar information for central and local government regulators. Yet the Coalition wants them to supply more information! We simply want to cut the red tape, recognize the great work they're doing, and give them a helping hand.

5.5 Build a Knowledge Economy

All parties agree that in the future our know-how, and level of education will be crucial to our ability to compete in the world. Yet schools and universities are only one aspect of education. It makes us proud to be British to know that the UK houses the world's most spectacular museums and galleries, and often allows free entry. These centres are a source of free education for all people, no matter what age or class. And not only do they educate; they also make people happy. We therefore seek to protect and expand our countries' treasures, ensuring that year by year more of our citizens can enjoy them, and learn from them.

5.6 Strengthen our Democracy and Decentralise Power to the Lowest Possible Level

We want to see power devolved to the lowest possible level. Activists within the mainstream parties frequently say things like this: "I joined the party to be an influencer, but I am not naive enough to think that by being part of the political process, even running as a candidate in a local election, that I have any real power." People in local councils know a lot better what is happening in their communities, so why shouldn't they be making more decisions? We will enforce decentralisation through a written constitution, and thus ensure that as society changes the state has to change along with it.

SECTION 6 – Economy

We need a long term solution to create growth; not just a short term deficit reduction plan

6.1 Grow our Way Out of the Recession

Labour cut debts during the boom, which had risen under the previous Conservative governments. But they also hugely increased expenditure. This has meant that the recession found us with high levels of debt and no funds 'for a rainy day'. The best way of fighting a recession is to act before it occurs. Unfortunately this action was not taken and now difficult decisions need to be made. The following steps are a summary of ours.

- Step 1: Rather than cutting investment we should increase long term investment so that we can grow out of the recession, alongside implementing structural reforms to aid medium term growth. No country has ever cut its way out of a recession this big. The last time it was tried by the US in the 1930s they launched themselves into a double dip recession. Simply put, and as Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz has repeatedly explained to the Coalition, if too many countries cut back on spending too fast, and the private sector isn't able to pick up the tabs, then demand will fall, growth will stagnate (the most likely result of the Coalition's plans), and we even risk a double dip recession.
- Step 2: Alongside an economically sound growth strategy the markets also need to see a credible deficit reduction plan to reduce uncertainty. Our deficit is the highest among big economies, at 12%. Significant differences between our economies mean that we do not suffer the same risks as Greece and Ireland. However the Coalition is right to highlight the importance of the deficit. We should call for a referendum on the best proposals that the Government can put forward to lower the deficit, and let the public give us the mandate to make the big cuts/tax increases. Economic decision making is an area where expertise is needed. Yet there are value judgements between many different choices. If the government is given a mandate to take certain actions then economic actions, along with market expectations, become more predictable, which will encourage private investment.
- Step 3: We would then decide on a time frame to put the deficit reduction strategy into place and reassure the financial markets. Based on current estimates for the economy, we should take around 8 years to eliminate the deficit. In the ten largest consolidations of debt since the late 1970s (and the UK would count among them), the average pace of deficit cutting was 1.9% a year. Based on that estimate we would take 6 years. But taking into account the current fragility of the British and world

economy this time needs to be extended. In addition, it is ludicrous to believe there are any more than a few million pounds of actual “waste” to be cut. Cuts are going to hurt people, and in order to avoid hurting the worst off these cuts need to take place over a long time period.

6.2 Facilitate Greater Financial Transparency



Unlike centuries past almost everything that is sold is now recorded, except financial goods like derivatives. We will work within the country, and internationally to ensure that all sizeable financial transactions are recorded, and the information is made available.

6.3 Find the Right Balance for Regulation

Regulation needs to be applicable to all financial services, including derivatives and complex financial instruments, and should be related to the level of systemic risk implicit within the business. The Central Bank also needs the power to issue rules that all firms must follow. And we must recognise that internationally standardised regulations such as the Basel Accords are far more effective than national efforts alone. We must therefore actively promote international cooperation and further reform of the Basel Accords. Northern Rock held an 11.3% capital reserve relative to risk weighted assets just before its crash. Yet the newest Basel Accord has failed to reform this system of risk weights, meaning that until further reform is realised Northern Rock can happen again.

6.4 Clamp Down on Tax Avoidance and Tax Evasion



Our shadow economy (sectors of our economy that are deliberately concealed from Public Authorities) has been growing for decades. Today, 13.5% of our economy is acting in the shadows. At a minimum this is a GDP of £197 billion. Taxes collected on this sum should have been £73 billion, and yet in reality are £0! We need to act tough. We need to be prepared to name and shame those firms that avoid paying tax, close the tax loopholes, crack down on illegal immigration, increase funding to HMRC so that they can strengthen tax administration and enforcement, and increase cross border cooperation to ensure that nobody can get out of paying tax by through transferring funds to

offshore financial centres.

6.5 Move Britain towards a Fairer, more Progressive System of Taxation



We want to see a system of taxation where ability to pay takes a much greater role. One example of this would be to introduce more bands within the Council Tax to ensure that those who earn less pay less.

6.6 Introduce a Land Value Tax to Replace Less Progressive Taxes

FAIRER TAX

We would implement an annual tax on the market rental value of land, which studies have shown to help the economy grow. And we would abolish Stamp Duty, which taxes the aspirations of young people to put down roots and get on with life. At present 158 thousand families own 41 million acres of the 61 million acres of the UK, while 28 million families are squeezed onto just 4 million acres! In Europe only Spain has a more unequal share of land ownership. It is not wrong that people are able to buy land, and land redistribution is both unfair and generally unsuccessful. But it is wrong that the true value of that land goes untaxed, and is henceforth often under-utilised.

We advocate a review of who holds what land (some land is currently excluded from the Land Registry Data), and a tax on its market value, with certain exemptions such as land available for public use. If land is unused and/or not used to achieve its full value e.g. empty urban sites, then this would incentivize landholders to sell the land so that it might be better used by another. This would increase the supply of land and thereby prevent urban sprawl, while cutting land prices and hence cutting accommodation costs for homes and business premises. Land taxes are cheap to collect, and are a form of immobile taxation, meaning that they're hard to evade, and don't distort resource allocation as landholders can't export their land to an offshore tax haven. It is also a progressive tax, meaning that the burden of tax could be lifted from the poor.

6.7 Re-Distribute Wealth



We favour introducing a more progressive system of taxation, so that those at the bottom pay less, and those at the top pay more. For instance we would start the top rate of tax at £100,000 rather than £150,000, tax bank bonuses, and temporarily increase the bank levy. We would not however adopt a strategy of 'bashing the rich'. The rich do work hard for their money, and we should be grateful that they give more. But we must remember that they give more because they can, and they can still give more. Recent psychological studies have shown that although money does buy happiness for the poor, once you're freed from basic needs and have entered the middle class the relationship between wealth and happiness plummets. This means that not only is it fair to re-distribute wealth; it's right to do so.

6.8 Tackle our Debts



When the Great Depression began in the US, the average American family owed one third of its annual income in debt. According to one source in 2007 the average level of debt for an American family was 130% of its annual income. Yet in the UK it was 170%! Going through a recession with debts this high is bound to have an impact, and we have no past experience with anything like this, meaning that we don't know how long or deep this recession is going to be. We need to stop the relentless progression of credit card companies, and encourage individuals to borrow less. We therefore favour: introducing an interest rate cap on loans and credit and store cards; introducing counter-cyclical capital buffers, such that leverage is capped so that financial assets cannot exceed 20 times their base capital during booms, but that capital levels are allowed to decrease during economic downturns; and requiring that everyone who takes out a mortgage worth more than 80% of the value of their property must take out insurance against default.

SECTION 7 – Employment

What good's an education without a job?

7.1 Create Jobs in the Private Sector



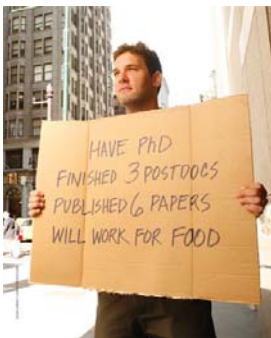
Labour and raw materials are far cheaper now than they will be in coming years. And interest rates will never be lower. We should therefore use this time to hire people to get jobs done. Learning from FDR's example, and also Obama's; rather than enlarging government to create jobs, we would stimulate the economy by investing in private companies with strong growth prospects, who would employ people to: build roads, bridges, airports and high speed railways; repair our infrastructure, parks and public buildings; invest in clean energy solutions; clean our streets and cities; nurture and protect our wildlife; teach adults new skills; and lay the foundations of a stronger, and more prosperous UK. Not only will these companies create jobs and fuel economic growth; they will also help to pay off our debts in the future.

7.2 Support the Businesses of Tomorrow



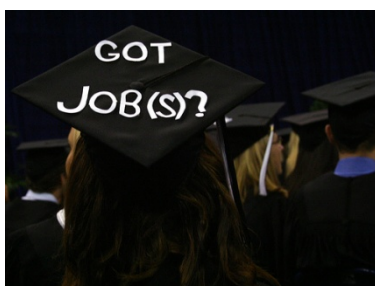
50% of new businesses fail within the first five years. During a recession that number is higher. So we need to provide new businesses with a helping hand by helping with the burden of regulation, making the first year tax free for all start up companies, and encouraging businesses to develop Brown field sites with start up assistance, temporary tax advantages, and government equity purchases.

7.3 Tackle the Causes of Unemployment



Before you can tackle unemployment you have to look at all the causes behind it. That's why our approach to unemployment recognises, and seeks to address, mental health problems, poor social housing provision, regional development, education, training, childcare, transport links, disabilities, poor internet connection, high university fees, and many other things.

7.4 Invest in the Young



Around 2 and a half million jobseekers are at this moment without a job. And among the worst off are our young graduates. According to the Centre for Cities over half of all recent UK graduates work in the public sector, but their research shows up to 290,000 of these jobs could be lost by 2014. If these people don't have opportunities then they will leave our country. It really is that simple! If we want to build a 'knowledge economy' we have to cut bureaucracy facing employers, makes the labour markets more flexible, and provide incentives for

businesses to employ and train the young. The young people of today are our future. This crisis was not their fault, and if we don't invest in them they will be forced to leave.

7.5 Introduce More Local Employment Schemes and Partnerships

We would work with community businesses to create local employment schemes all over the country, not just in the cities. We would also initiate more local training and employment partnerships. Local Employment Partnerships are about Jobcentre Plus and partners working with major employers, providers and sector bodies to ensure that disadvantaged customers get the preparation and training that enables them to meet employers' needs and expectations. This way the needs of customers and employers are put at the heart of service delivery.

SECTION 8 – Healthcare

Talking about healthcare is talking about lives. Politicising healthcare is gambling with lives

8.1 Tackle Stress and Mental Illness



Major depression is the number 1 psychological disorder in the western world. Alongside mounting levels of stress, it's growing in all age groups, and will be the second most disabling condition in the world by 2020, behind heart disease. The cost to our society is already in the billions, so not only is it the moral thing to help; it's also the best financial decision. This is why we favour: extra funding to tackle mental illnesses; a Government campaign to educate people about symptoms, and what they should do when they see the signs; and a long term plan to provide a support network that gives people in every workplace, and every educational institution, access to psychological support.

8.2 Increase NHS Autonomy



We need to balance NHS autonomy, with accountability to the people. Most decisions, including where money should be invested in the NHS, need to be taken mainly by the NHS themselves, with only Government aims, advice and guidance. As such an independent board needs to be set up at the top of the NHS, and elected and staffed from within the NHS. Both the government and healthcare board should be able to propose reforms, and veto changes that are deemed not to be in the interests of UK healthcare.

This way the NHS will gain the power to make more medically sound decisions, be removed from the ridiculous micromanagement of Blair's targets, and also remain accountable to the people.

8.3 Scrap the Top-Down Targets

In recent years the NHS has lost its focus on providing a service, as it's become bogged down with numerous targets, and pushed by profit seeking Business Managers with no healthcare experience. Bureaucracies have swollen, and wastage has grown. We will scrap the top down targets, and allow an independent NHS Board, with members elected from within the NHS, to implement its own. This will allow medical expertise to exert itself, and ensure that decision makers listen to Nurses and Doctors, who repeatedly call for an end to hiring business men with no experience of patient care.

8.4 Tackle Abuse in the System

Allow GP's surgeries and hospitals to charge patients who make appointments and do not turn up to them without valid reasons, or people who are caught abusing services e.g. ringing an ambulance when they are perfectly capable of walking.

8.5 Devolve Power to Local Communities

Our vision for reform would see Local Clinical priorities identified by clinicians, working with locally elected representatives, and under the guidance of the national NHS Board, as well as Government Health watchdogs. Funding from the Government, and the NHS Board, would follow these identified local priorities to address inequalities in healthcare provision, reduce the healthcare postcode lottery that presently exists, and to improve training, development and clinical standards.

8.6 Incentivise more Blood Donations

Introduce a new lottery scheme, whereby everyone who donates gets entered to win.

8.7 Review the Case for Euthanasia



We propose a full review of the cases for and against legalising Euthanasia, as well as the case for the use of living wills, whereby people can say in advance whether their doctor and family should be able to make a decision on their behalf if they're in a great deal of pain. We respect the religious arguments about the sacredness of life, and also understand the possibility that some people might recover against all odds. Yet allowing people to choose could be a very humane thing to do; prolonging someone's suffering can sometimes be quite barbaric; and spending large amounts of money on keeping terminal patients in pain against their wishes is morally suspicious. A poll conducted in 2008 found that most Britons want this, and 61% would even consider assisted suicide themselves if they were in pain. Yet it is right that when value judgements of such importance are considered, the people can decide what's right.

8.8 Introduce an Opt-Out System of Organ Donation

We would move towards an opt-out system of organ donation. Currently there are more than 8,000 people waiting for organ transplants in the UK - a figure which rises by about 8% a year. Reforming the system would save thousands of lives by reversing the situation where at present if you want to allow your organs to be used after death you have to arrange for that prior to your death, and your family can negate this wish anyway.

SECTION 9 – Environment

We have a beautiful country. Let's keep it that way!

9.1 Minimise Junk Mail



17.5 billion pieces of junk mail are produced every year in the UK, with an average of 650 pieces of junk mail posted through every letterbox! We propose that companies should be allowed to distribute a small postcard sized advert, which can be signed and returned by anyone who wishes to request catalogues, leaflets etc, but that all further junk mail should be banned. This will keep workers employed, retain business for Royal mail, and retain business for companies that chart a direct correlation between the amount of junk mail they send out and their profits. However it will hugely cut down on the environmental damage of excessive junk mail, of which most is simply thrown away without being read.

9.2 Introduce a National Smart Grid



We should all be taking part in helping the environment. That's why we want to introduce a national smart grid, whereby anyone can produce their own electricity e.g. with solar panels on the roof; and sell excess to the state. This decentralised micro-generation scheme would empower consumers, and benefit both the environment and economy. It would also bring our electricity grid into the modern age by both preventing power cuts and giving energy consumers real information about how much energy they're actually consuming.

9.3 Begin a Transition towards a More Environmentally Friendly System of Taxation

A tax on chewing gum is just a minor common sense example. Councils have to pay a huge amount to clear chewing gum off of the streets, and this money comes from our tax. The estimated cost of cleaning up just one packet of gum is £7.27! A Bristol City Council spokesperson said that in one shopping centre alone 4,400 pieces had to be cleared up in a week. A tax will ensure that the thousands needed to pay this fee do not come from everyone's taxes.

9.4 Introduce Sustainable Energy Solutions

We advocate the creation of a new business specialising in sustainable energy solutions. This business will initially be run by the Government, and therefore be accountable to the people in its aims. But the long term goal will be to privatise the company, and therefore regain the money invested to be spent once more in helping the people. This business will research the most economically and environmentally viable sources of renewable energy for the UK's long term future usage. It will then compete directly with private businesses to ensure that not only government, but also private businesses, are working for the long term energy interests of our people, as well as supplying jobs at the same time.

9.5 Continue to Push for Global Climate Deals

Irrelevant of whether the climate debate is settled we know about the changes that are occurring and have to act in whatever way we can now! There number a little more than 60 million refugees today, which is already vastly too high a number. But by 2030 there are likely to be three times as many due to rising sea levels and increasingly extreme weather patterns. By 2020 environmental change may well mean that Africa can only

produce half the food it's able to produce today. And the Inuit people (originally called Eskimos) are threatened with extinction. We need to work together with countries all over the world to press for new, and more extreme global climate deals.

9.6 Reduce the Carbon Economy



Our main priority in environmental policy is to tackle climate change, which means reducing our carbon footprint. Therefore nuclear power is a necessary stepping stone on the way to a carbon neutral infrastructure. However we would work towards the long term solution of a wholly renewable energy infrastructure.

9.7 Reduce Packaging

We will create cross sector consultative groups, which work to encourage cross industry discussion on the necessity to reduce packaging and general waste.

SECTION 10 – Welfare System

Politicians should be there to help, and to serve. That's why we, the UK Reform Party, do what we do

10.1 Protect the Sick and Disabled



Targeting disabled people to make savings is appalling. And the current process for making medical assessments has been shown as not fit for purpose by many commentators, especially for the mentally ill. If a claimant is to appeal on a decision related to benefits they face the complete loss of that benefit, and any other associated benefit, until the tribunal is heard and a decision reached. This process can run into many months, in which time vulnerable people suffer. We would therefore protect disability benefits like the Disability Living Allowance, review the benefits system to tackle such loopholes as those above, ensure medical experts are consulted more often with regards to benefits and claims,

provide support for those who need it in order to take a case through the courts, and give more recognition to 'hidden' disabilities.

10.2 Help Families



Promote Family Support Units to ensure that more advice is available to soon to be, and existing parents, as well as carers, and also support to children themselves.

With the average family spending only an average of 49 minutes together each day it's clear that more help is needed. The Relationships Foundation Think Tank estimates the cost of family breakdown at £41.7bn a year. This means that whatever help we can give families, not only will it help our

society, it will help our economy too!

10.3 Tackle Benefit Fraud



While the Coalition fails to understand the situation surrounding benefits claimants they're right to highlight the importance of benefit fraud, of which the cost is estimated at £3.5bn a year. We would implement a system, whereby if someone has been found guilty beyond any reasonable doubt, and we can see that purchases were made through the same accounts as where the benefits are paid into, those bought goods could be legitimately seized for government use.

We would also invest more heavily in the DWP and HMRC to ensure that money claimed or kept through corruption, fraud, or tax avoidance and evasion is reclaimed by the state. The DWP division who deals with this should also have the power to investigate anyone and any company, hence being able to hold groups like Parliament to account.

10.4 Reward Those Who Return to Work

We would ensure that those who return to work are better off, e.g. with continued benefits up until the first paycheque.

10.5 Protect Winter Fuel Payments

We would maintain winter fuel payments for those of low income, particularly the elderly and disabled; and review the level of payments yearly to ensure that they're in line with the cost of heating. We would also support any programs that would improve the heating efficiency of homes.

10.6 Nothing for Nothing?

*"Give a man a fish and you will feed him for the day.
Teach a man to fish and you will feed him for a lifetime"*

We would all like to see a system whereby nobody gets anything unless they work for it. It's far more efficient after all to teach a man to fish, than keep giving him fish. But unfortunately not everyone can work. Some people are far too fatigued for example, to even read. What we need to do is make that distinction, and ensure that those who can work have to, while those who cannot are given the help they need. This means

tackling benefit fraud, offering support to businesses that allows them to cater for disabled employees, making it easier for legitimate benefits claimants by cutting paperwork, increasing support and healthcare provision that can be provided at home, promoting part time jobs that can be carried out over the internet (assessing benefits claimants may be one such job), and supporting the long term unemployed through their first 6 months back to work.

10.7 Introduce a Tailored Approach to Benefits and Welfare



At £192bn our welfare budget is huge, and there are savings that can be made. Yet to suggest that those who live off benefits as a "lifestyle choice" are anything more than a tiny minority is preposterous, and shows how removed today's mainstream parties are from real life. We favour making the system more efficient and effective, through tackling benefit fraud, and making the Welfare system more specific and tailored towards each category of claimants. At present assessments are far too broad, and far too little knowledge is possessed about the many disabilities and illnesses

that exist. In addition universal benefits are a nice idea but only result in money going to those who have it already, while those who don't suffer. Assuming the administrative and financial feasibility of doing so we would means test all benefits, to reverse today's situation where rich pensioners get a winter fuel allowance, but poor disabled people do not.

SECTION 11 – Pensions

Whatever happened to being looked after from cradle to grave?

11.1 Overhaul the Pensions System



All around the world the ‘pay as you go’ pensions systems are failing, and cannot continue as they are. On present trends over 9 million people will soon face inadequate retirement income in the UK. We favour replacing the Basic State Pension with a Universal Protected Pension. The pension is not a benefit, but a right, and it should be treated as such! The Universal Protected Pension gives a guaranteed pension of 25% of national average earnings, to ensure that all pensioners are lifted out of poverty. Compulsory

contributions would fund the guarantee, yet the poorest of our society cannot afford to contribute very much, and so limited redistribution would be required in order to provide a safety net that no one can fall below. The system would be managed by an independent governance structure to de-politicize pensions. It would be funded partly by current savings as is currently the case, and partly by a funded pension plan, in which contributions are used to purchase a pool of assets to provide income for retirement. Employees would thus be assured of receiving retirement payments even if the employer is no longer in business when the employee retires, with any extra risk controlled with insurance schemes. Part funding would deal with the trust issue by giving members a personal stake in a pool of assets, rather than relying on an I.O.U. from the Government. And, as the Pensions Commission argued, funding also generates higher returns on average than the pay-as-you-go system. We appreciate our proposal is bold and radical. But we believe people would welcome this, and that new thinking along these lines is long overdue if we want to restore the electorate’s trust in pensions, and also the viability of the pensions system as a whole. Previous work on the proposal by the Government Actuary’s Department suggests the proposal is not only a good idea, but deliverable in the relatively short-term.

11.2 Listen to the Elderly



The Conservatives abolished the link between the state pension and average earnings. Labour carefully avoided re-instating this link, alongside getting rid of the Pension Book, and failing to tackle pensioner poverty. Today’s pensioners were promised that they would be looked after from cradle to grave, yet how can we care for the elderly if we don’t listen to them? We will not implement any changes to the pensions system without thorough consultation processes being held throughout the country.

11.3 Involve the Elderly



25% of pensioners live in poverty, meaning that we have one of the worst levels of pensioner poverty in Europe. This is unacceptable, and we will tackle it. Yet while we have a responsibility to help those who are retired, retirees also have a duty to support our communities. We would work with charities like Age UK to get elderly people out and about, and encourage those who are retired to counter the decline in community spirit and number of community organisations and activities.

11.4 Work with the Specialists

We will support the work done by local authorities, charities, groups and organisations to improve upon the lives of vulnerable members of our society. One example includes support and funding for home adaptations in order to make the lives of the elderly and disabled more comfortable and dignified while they're in home care.

11.5 Increase Transparency

Following how your pensions fair can be difficult at the best of times. This is why information held by the state needs to be freely and readily available in an easy to digest format.

SECTION 12 – Defence & Foreign Affairs

A million people marching through London in 2003 told us loud and clear: a new approach is needed!

12.1 Campaign for Multi-Lateral Disarmament



The question of whether we should disarm unilaterally, or combine our nuclear deterrent with that of France to make an EU deterrent, will be reviewed and carefully evaluated. But in the meanwhile we will push for multi-lateral disarmament i.e. nuclear disarmament of all countries around the world.

12.2 Implement a New Approach to Afghanistan

We will review the case for being in Afghanistan. Yet if we stay a new approach is needed. Afghanistan must be treated as one country, with one, Afghan military commander calling the shots, rather than the anarchic system that has been present since 2001. Yet it is politicians who are supposed to have the big picture. Any historian can tell you that it is necessary to win over the people in conflicts such as these, and this is where the main fight must be. Unemployment stood at 40% when we invaded, and has only fallen slightly since. Infrastructure is weak. Education is poor. Corruption, poverty and malnutrition are widespread. And the families of innocents killed don't see accountability. We need to remove the supply of soldiers to the Taliban through tackling the above problems, while removing the money available to the Taliban by tackling the illegal drugs market, which is the main source of revenue for the Taliban.

12.3 Implement a New Approach to International Relations



The Chagos Islanders, who were evicted from their homeland in the British Indian Ocean Territory, should be allowed to return and helped to settle in compensation for the immorality of our acts killing their livestock, destroying their homes, and still not allowing them to return today.

We're in favour of Liberal Internationalism if it is feasible. Our intervention in Sierra Leone was a great success. But unfortunately it rarely is feasible. The orders for intervention in Sierra Leone did not come from London, but from a renegade Brigadier David Richards, who saw the chance to intervene, and took it without permission. The invasion of Iraq was not an example of Liberal Internationalism. It was illegal under international law, which we will always support, and should never have been carried out. We therefore favour a more peaceful approach to international relations, with moral interventions pursued only under international law, and with the support of multiple other countries.

12.4 Increase International Cooperation

The only way we can truly succeed in putting happiness before wealth, and in preventing a 'race to the bottom' where countries are pressured to continually lower taxes in order to attract international businesses, is to cooperate. A Reformist Government would push for new, progressive and historic global agreements that aim to put people before profits. These agreements would build on existing international financial regulation, World trade agreements and the Millennium Development Goals.

12.5 Review Our Membership of the EU and Campaign for Reform



Whether you're for or against the EU the fact is that there are many issues to debate and discuss. As such we will launch a thorough review into EU membership, and open up discussion within the party about the future of the UK in the EU.

However, if something is broken you should try to fix it before binning it. We believe that in order to fix the EU we need to make it: more democratic, more accountable to the people both financially and politically, more decentralised, more user-friendly, more open and transparent, and less able to enact laws on our behalf, without our approval. We also plan to push reform on CAP and CFP in order to see more sustainability, efficiency, and a more balanced policy beneficial for all EU states. Should these reforms find success then we would like to see the UK pushing for further reform from the heart of the EU, cooperating wherever possible so that we can still be a global power through the EU, even as our relative position in the world declines.

Importantly, the principle of subsidiarity, which says decisions are supposed to be taken as closely to the citizen as possible, is explicitly stated in Article 5 of the Treaty of Rome. We believe that decisions are not taken as closely to the citizen as possible, and seek to ensure that in future this principle is acted upon.

12.6 Promote Peace



We need to be far more active in fighting for World Peace. Obama's speech in Egypt was fantastic, but why wasn't it followed, or even pre-empted by speeches and action from European leaders? We need to do whatever it takes, and work with whoever we must, to ensure that we are a force for good in the world. Sometimes this can mean military action. But why do we always think of war when it comes to foreign policy? There are so many more avenues to exploit, and we aim to continually use any and all avenues to push for peace around the world. To take one easy example we could crack down on UK arms dealers who sell to human rights abusers around the world.

SECTION 13 – Education

Every learner matters, and every learner is different. Let's open up education so that we can all flourish according to our strengths.

13.1 Ensure that Every Child Matters

We disagree with current government policy that 50% of young people should enter Higher Education. We refuse to accept this one-size-fits-all-policy and the false choice between pursuing academic courses and failure. Our young people are more complicated than that. Let's give them the education they deserve and that is right for them:

- A nursery place for all 3-4 year olds (one year pre-school)
- More one-to-one contact with learners from a young age, particularly in secondary schools. We would aim to reduce class sizes to 20 within 10 years.
- More spent on recruiting well-qualified teachers and building new schools with modern, inspiring learning environments.
- All schools to have full-time careers and work experience staff and all learners aged 14-18 to attend at least three careers interviews per year and be made aware of the options available to them.
- Maximise learner choice in post-14 study. Maths and English plus Science are vital to our modern economy and the demands it places on young people; the remaining subjects should be left to suit learners' abilities, interests and career aspirations.
- Greater flexibility within education. No learner should advance to a level beyond their capabilities.
- An integrated approach to National Curriculum development that meets UK economic, social and civic priorities as well as personal development.
- Allow schools to select learners based on their suitability for the education provided. Learners should be guided towards the correct education for them.
- Vocational education that is not second best. We will provide funding, appropriate careers education and work experience, alongside the best teaching, to ensure that vocational studies are seen as hallmarks of technical excellence.
- Schools given greater powers to exclude (especially for violent or dangerous behaviour), but Pupil Referral Units must be reformed to ensure that experienced, dedicated professionals provide the best education for excluded pupils.
- All young people aged 16-18 guaranteed a place in education or training.



13.2 Include and Provide for All Learners

Education should provide for all learners to flourish and reach their academic potential:

- All learners with disabilities able to attend a local school suited to their needs. Schools to ensure access, SEN strategies and other relevant provisions to include all members of its community.
- A multi-faith education based around mutual respect and tolerance. Schools will not be able to elect or employ on grounds of faith.
- We will remove the statutory requirement of a daily act of collective worship in state schools.



- A pupil premium of additional funding going to support learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. No child should be left behind.
- High quality political, citizenship and religious education for all 11-16 year olds. Learners will be prepared to actively participate and engage in a diverse, multi-cultural liberal democracy.

13.3 Ensure Every Teacher Matters

Teachers now have a salary and career opportunities comparable with most public sector professionals and significantly better than some. This situation needs to be preserved and salaries should rise at least in line with inflation to encourage the best professionals into our schools. In addition, we will:

- Means test the PGCE bursary needs to be means tested in such a way that those with the biggest financial burden are given maximum support during their training year. While many trainee teachers are one- or two-year postgraduates, many are mature adults who have moved careers and often have young families to support and mortgages to pay.
- Ensure that every graduate with a pass in a relevant degree will remain able to apply for a teacher training course. Contrary to what the Conservatives believe, the best teachers are not necessarily the best academics.
- Provide partnerships between schools and local universities to enable all teachers to undertake Masters-level study in Education. Teachers are learners too.
- Continue to encourage partnerships between schools and teacher training providers to disseminate best practice.
- Reduce paperwork to allow more time for classroom teaching and preparation, planning and assessment.
- Outlaw the current practice that teachers are expected to set work even when absent through sickness.
- We will scrap top-down targets and League tables that force teachers to 'teach to the test'.



13.4 Reform Higher Education and Training



We believe in lifelong learning and intend to make it more accessible and affordable for all. However, there should be a choice for all learners; there is worthwhile education and training for everyone, but this is not the same as most people pursuing a degree.

- We will scrap the target of 50% of people attending university.
- We would limit or remove state funding for certain degree subjects.
- The money saved should be used to develop apprenticeship and vocational qualifications in partnership with employers.
- We will work to introduce parity between academic and vocational education
- We will encourage and facilitate lifelong learning by reforming funding provisions for postgraduate and mature learners.



13.5 Reform the System of Funding for Higher Education

Rising Tuition Fees brought thousands out onto the streets to protest, and rightly so. Education must always be affordable to all, and the amounts paid must be fair.

- We will let students choose how to pay for their higher education with a flexible repayment scheme. Learners would choose between paying upfront, paying a progressive graduate tax, or repaying the state through voluntary community work. The third option would mean that everyone has a chance of getting through university debt free!
- We will introduce a levy on businesses relative to the average number of graduates they hire on a yearly basis. Students need to contribute to education because they benefit from it. But the amount they pay must be controlled so that higher education is affordable for all! Businesses benefit just as much, if not more, from higher education, and so it is fair that they contribute towards rising costs.
- We will review the Education Maintenance Allowance currently paid to 16-18 learners and consider whether this might be better spent on poorer learners in Higher Education.

SECTION 14 – Justice, Law & Order

Ideology aside, results are what matters. Your safety always comes first!

14.1 Improve Rehabilitation



Prisoners should come out of jail feeling punished, but they must also come out feeling like achievers, with enough opportunities to succeed in a legitimate line of work. This is why we favour more prison education and careers support, as well as enhanced and coordinated support in the first 6 months after leaving prison. And it is why we favour the use of more therapy, counselling and support. Prisoners go into jail with complex problems including drug addiction, unemployment, emotional imbalances, and homelessness, which may have contributed to their offending. Nearly 3/4 of all prisoners have two or more mental disorders and most have no qualifications. 85% of 16-20 year old prisoners show signs of a personality disorder and 10% of a psychotic illness. Simply locking these people up, as the fact that we have the highest imprisonment rate in Western Europe clearly shows we have done, does not work! We would also introduce compulsory rehabilitation programmes in prisons, involving paid work, with the money paid being split between the victim of the crime, the family of the offender, and the government.

14.2 Be 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' for real

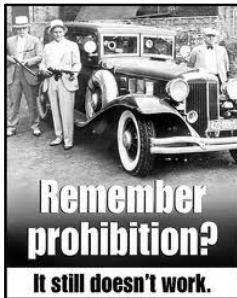
Labour's pursuit of the above slogan was disappointing. But the principle is still strong. Without the causes of crime crime would not exist. Yet punishment is an important aspect of justice, and one solution in itself. This is why we favour:

- Supporting and working with charitable organisations, especially those helping to reduce re-offending rates.
- More use of community sentences for non-violent crimes
- Putting more resources into tackling child abuse and lowering the number of children in poverty, who presently number 4 million!
- Ensuring that offenders are put to work the moment they enter prison. We would ensure that prisoners work 45 hours a week inside prison, alongside their rehabilitation programmes (allowing for exceptions where it's not feasible). That way they will pay for the costs of prison, recompensate the victim's family and their own, and at the same time learn new skills that can be put to use in legitimate trades.
- As part of the rehabilitation programme, and only where it is recommended by the courts, repeat offenders should be moved to different areas, so that they're no longer in contact with those who might encourage new offences.

14.3 Implement a No Tolerance Approach to Anti-Social Behaviour

Family support programmes, parenting classes and community organisations must all be supported in order to tackle the causes of such behaviour. Yet it is crucial that offenders do not get away scot-free, or with a mere slap on the wrist and an ASBO. Instead they must be given harsh community sentences so that they may work to repay the community, and also be given counselling to work at the root causes of their behaviour.

14.4 Fully Legalise and Regulate Prostitution



Prostitution is at present legal, but its solicitation is not. The history of Capitalism teaches us that where demand exists so too does supply, and this is why we would trial a policy of legalising such solicitation within certain times and in certain places, subject to the approval of local residents. This policy would: take criminals out of the loop; stop money from prostitution funding violence; enable prostitutes to seek support, particularly those who are forced into the trade; and allow regulation with condom only policies and regular tests to check STDs, as exists already in the Hollywood film industry.

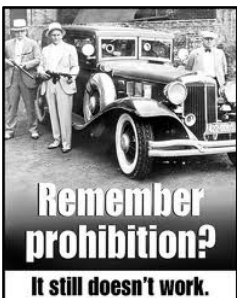
14.5 Tackle Hate Crimes



In the last 3 years over 70 disabled people have lost their lives to physical assault, torture and murder, and more than a third of all victims of anti-social behaviour are disabled. Yet the disabled community is not the only community that suffers at the hands of such crimes. We will ensure that vulnerable people who report harassment, bullying and physical attacks have more support and protection; that the Equality Act is improved to better reflect how people live today; that the police are freed from paper work enough that they can respond to all such reports in manners tailored

to the situation; that victims of anti-social behaviour are visited more often by police officers; and that counselling is freely available to all victims.

14.6 Legalise, Regulate and Tax Non-Lethal Drugs



The history of Capitalism teaches us that where demand exists so too does supply. This is why we intend to legalise, regulate and tax non-lethal drugs such as Cannabis. This policy would be trialled in certain places first, subject to the approval of local residents, and go hand in hand with more drugs education in school.

It would take criminals out of the loop, stop money from drugs funding violence, enable users to seek support, cease labelling addicts with emotional or mental needs as criminals, and allow regulation to check drug purity. In Holland, where cannabis has been legalised, use among teenagers is significantly lower (29% of 15 year olds) than in the UK where it is an offence (41%).

SECTION 15 – Immigration

Britons are not racist! The real issues are diverse, and are about encouraging unity within our multi-cultural society

15.1 Ensure Immigration Levels are Managed to Help the Economy

Falling immigration can help our economy. We oppose the Coalition's arbitrary cap on immigration, which harms business. Instead, the points based system introduced in 2007 needs to be strengthened and brought more in line with our economic needs. Even under the Tier 1 of 'highly skilled' people in the present points system around 30% of those given leave to remain are actually in low skilled roles! This has to change!

15.2 Tackle Discrimination



During economic downturns it's natural for people to seek a scapegoat, and unfortunately immigrants are increasingly being targeted as scapegoats today. We seek to tackle discrimination wherever we see it, for although it is right that the state acts to maintain a sustainable level of immigration, immigration itself is healthy, and beneficial to our society. Immigration has enriched our society, bringing new foods, art, ideas, music and culture. It has benefited our economy; with positive impacts on our GDP in almost every report. And it has also helped to alleviate the growing costs of our pensions system.

15.3 Enhance Community Integration



The topic of immigration has evoked fear in many different groups of people, but largely because the mainstream parties have permitted the growth of states within states, where people moving from one street to the next feel they're entering a new country. We will act to increase integration by ensuring that the first homes bought by immigrants are not in majority immigrant areas, and by launching Community Integration Initiatives, run by local people, and funded by state grants.

15.4 Reduce Competition for Jobs



Our programme of jobs creation, and a stricter points based immigration system would drastically reduce competition for jobs.

15.5 Help those Most in Need

We're proud that throughout the world the UK is known as a place where the rule of law applies, and the people are mannerly. We're proud that many immigrants have been able to call Britain home, and also of the help we've been able to provide to Asylum Seekers too. Yet we can do a lot more. Without the Coalition's endorsement of EU efforts to tackle slavery, and with an under-staffed Border Agency, the UK will not tackle slavery. We're appalled with the lack of focus on this, and want to see an integrated Immigration and Borders Service with wider powers in order to protect the most vulnerable and to deter criminal gangs. We would take a common sense approach to immigration e.g. not housing asylum-seeking families in areas where there's a

history of harassment, and ensuring that asylum seeking families are allocated to accommodation which they can occupy for the duration of their stay.

15.6 Increase the Supply of Social Housing



The sheer scale of immigration in recent years has put pressure on social housing provision, meaning that many who deserve access to such housing do not get it. We will increase the supply of social housing, and yet make it a condition that anyone receiving such help has to get involved within the community.

15.7 Enable Immigrants to More Easily Learn English



Far too little emphasis has been placed upon the need to encourage new citizens to learn English, and to encourage deeper integration and assimilation. Travelling around a city shopping, and finding that many people do not speak good English is frustrating. Yet it is far harder for those immigrants who try to learn, and struggle to integrate. We would ensure that all immigrants have regular access to free English lessons, and a responsibility to attend.

15.8 Help Asylum Seekers

Considering that it can take up to 16 months to get legal matters through the courts, our system is not only open to abuse, but it abuses asylum seekers, who come to our shores fleeing persecution. We therefore need to act much more swiftly. Tens of thousands of children are condemned to a childhood of poverty, fear and uncertainty while caught up in our asylum backlog, which can see people here for a decade and still on their first application. We would act to speed this process up, and give asylum seekers who have been here for more than 6 months a right to work while their application is being processed.

15.9 Tackle Illegal Immigration



Recent research has found that there could be as many as 1.1 million illegal immigrants in the UK, many of whom don't pay tax as they're not officially registered anywhere. We will take a hard line approach to illegal immigration, and ensure that wherever possible those who are not legally accepted to live here will not do so. This does not mean mass deportation, and illegal immigrants will have renewed chances to apply for citizenship before any action, in order to take account of their new ties of family and friendship within the country.

SECTION 16 – *Transport and Infrastructure*

Improving Infrastructure is vital for the wellbeing of our citizens, and a pre-requisite for investment.

16.1 Promote Environmentally Friendly Transport

There are various ways to achieve this, from providing investment and incentives for greater use of renewable fuels, to investing in eco-friendly aviation and introducing a national recharging network electric and plug in hybrid vehicles.

16.2 Make Our Roads Safer



We would launch a review into road safety, and implement measures to bring about the immediate reduction of road accidents. Such measures would include requiring that newly qualified drivers have to display a sign on their vehicle, and that motorway lessons have to be incorporated into driving lessons for all driving schools less than an hour away from a motorway.

16.3 Help the Disabled

We would provide affordable, cheaper local transport that is accessible to those with disabilities, by investing in public transport, and ensuring that all new forms of transport are disability friendly.

16.4 Introduce a Fully Integrated System of Public Transport

We plan to build a fully integrated system of public transport, such that links are provided between train stations, airports, bus routes and pedestrian routes. This would mean that more people can get to more places, without having to resort to the use of cars.

16.5 Invest in our Technological Infrastructure

92% mobile phone penetration and 70% of UK households with internet access are good figures, but not good enough. We would create a fund to ensure that those on a low income have a computer, internet access, a reliable internet connection, and training in how to use them. To ensure those who already have a computer do not abuse the fund, money should be available only upon application, only given to those who have an income less than £17,000, be received in voucher form, and be enough for basic models only, with only basic certificated training.

16.6 Expand our Airports



We would give the go ahead for the extra runway to be built at Heathrow, but at the same time invest in eco-friendly means of air travel, to ensure that we always act to protect the environment.

16.7 Introduce High Speed Rail



In high speed rail we're behind, badly! This needs remedying fast. We need to invest in the creation of a high speed rail network that spreads throughout all regions.

SECTION 17 – Animal Rights, Food and Agriculture

We believe that future generations will look back on these times as barbaric

17.1 Protect the Rights of Animals



Animals have a right not to be mistreated. As such we would ensure that no produce from mistreated animals could be legally sold. This would mean that:

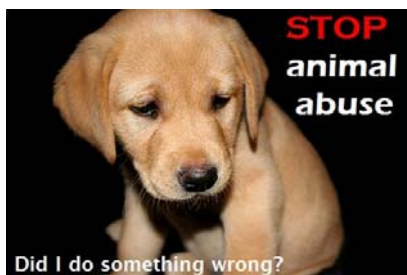
- All eggs from caged hens would be made illegal.
 - The sale of chickens kept in pens so small that some of their bones were broken before they were killed, would be made illegal.
 - The hunting ban, which is poorly enforced at present, would be strengthened.
 - Imports of real fur would be banned.
 - All animal experimentation where physical and/or mental distress is a likely side-effect would be banned.
 - Snares would be banned
- All meats would have to be labelled to say whether they pass certain checks on how the animal was raised and killed.
 - Puppy farms would be banned

17.2 Support our Farmers



We would support our farmland and our farmers, through methods such as ensuring prompt farm payments by simplifying application processes and raising the minimum threshold for payments to £100.

17.3 Tackle Animal Cruelty



We would act on the known link between animal abuse and domestic violence, and implement increased penalties for those convicted of animal cruelty.

17.4 Promote Healthy Eating



Choices about what to eat and when, should always remain a personal choice. Yet it is right that the state should take an active stance to encourage healthy eating, including less meat consumption. Much of the livestock industry relies on intensive farming methods, which are cruel to animals and harmful to the environment. Current levels of meat consumption are not sustainable. Globally the meat industry contributes to soil erosion, deforestation and climate change. It takes far more land and water to produce meat than it does to feed people on a vegetarian diet. In a world where 800 million people go hungry, reducing consumption of meat is necessary to protect human as well as animal rights. And if we succeed in making people eat more healthily then we improve health and lower costs of healthcare while at the same time making people happier.

SECTION 18 – Science and Technology

We can't compete in international markets with cheap labour – only with our brains, ingenuity and innovation

18.1 Work through the EU to Explore Space



The US has achieved in space, and now China is following. Yet in terms of Purchasing Power Parity the EU has a bigger economy than either China or the US. We would cooperate closely with other EU countries to ensure that Europe is among the next big achievers in space.

18.2 Incentivise Research and Development



Innovation by private companies will pull us out of the recession. But the state needs to help. Globally, we're 15th for proportion of GDP spent on research and development, behind nations like Israel, Korea, Iceland, Austria and Finland. We should expand the research and development tax credits, in order to attract and secure high tech businesses.

18.3 Introduce Tax Breaks for the Computer Gaming Industry



Video games already contribute £1 billion to the economy, which is a lot more than the film industry does, which already has a tax break. The Trade Association predict that a tax break for the computer gaming industry would raise £415 million more for the economy, and increase overseas investment and industry growth. We're currently 3rd in the league table of video games production, however without a tax break we will slip down the table relative to other countries that do offer a tax break. And the computer gaming

industry is not only an industry that has found record breaking growth figures in recent years; it is also one forecast to boom in the next twenty years. In an age of globalisation we must not find ourselves left behind.

18.4 Invest in Research, Science and Engineering



Government funding has only recently recovered to levels seen in 1986. If we are to compete in a globalised world we must invest in research, and the creativity of our scientists and engineer. The good news is that Britain's research is the most cost effective on the planet – it has more impact per pound spent than any other country and is second only to America in terms of overall impact. But we need to take advantage of this by increasing investment, or risk devastating British science and the economy in years to

come through ill-advised spending cuts. We also need a Chief Scientific Adviser in the Treasury to bring the thinking of that department into the 21st century.

18.5 Ensure the Future Autonomy and Freedom of Science

We will respect the covenant that the science budget is not used for other purposes, and that the funding of scientific projects is not conditional on Whitehall approval, while ensuring that the academic freedom and independence of scientific advisers is protected through amending the Ministerial Code to prevent Government from bullying or mistreating advisers and distorting evidence for statistics.