

## General Election 2017: Party Manifestos

May 2017

### CONSERVATIVE PARTY

#### Forward, Together: Our Plan for a Stronger Britain and a Prosperous Future

The manifesto sets out Theresa May's determination to provide leadership on "some of the greatest challenges of our time". Whilst climate change is not mentioned within this context, references to it and the Climate Change Act do occur a number of times throughout the document.

#### Industrial Strategy

A modern industrial strategy will spread opportunity across the country and see the UK "meet the current OECD average for investment in R&D – that is, 2.4 per cent of GDP – within ten years, with a longer-term goal of three per cent". This extra money for research and development will support the turning of "brilliant discoveries into products and transform the world's industries – such as the batteries that will power a new generation of clean, efficient, electric vehicles".

#### Electric Vehicles

The £600m of support already announced to 2020 is reconfirmed and will help fulfil their ambition "for Britain to lead the world in electric vehicle technology and use" with **almost every car and van to be zero-emission by 2050**. They also pledge to invest in more low-emission buses and suggest that "smart grids will make the most efficient use of our electricity infrastructure and electric vehicles".

#### Skills

One of the major commitments in the manifesto is the promise to make Britain the "**Great Meritocracy**" through focusing in part on technical education. T-levels will replace existing qualifications in subjects including construction, digital, engineering and manufacturing. A new national programme will be created to attract experienced industry professionals to work in FE colleges and new institutes of technology will be established "backed by leading employers and linked to leading universities, in every major city in England" to provide courses at degree level and above – "specialising in technical disciplines, such as STEM, whilst also providing higher-level apprenticeships and bespoke courses for employers".

The Conservatives pledge to put employers at the centre of these reforms: "we will deal with local skills shortages and ensure that colleges deliver the skills required by local businesses through Skills Advisory Panels and Local Enterprise Partnerships working at a regional and local level". The commitment to create **3 million apprenticeships by 2020** is reconfirmed and **large firms will be allowed to pass levy funds to small firms in their supply chain**. They also pledge to work with the business community to develop a new programme to allow larger firms to place apprentices in their supply chains and explore teaching apprenticeships sponsored by major companies, especially in STEM subjects.

#### Energy

The commitment in the Industrial Strategy Green Paper to commission a **review into the cost of energy** is reconfirmed. This will "make recommendations as to how we can ensure UK energy costs are as low as possible, while ensuring a reliable supply and allowing us to meet our **2050 carbon reduction objective**".

The Conservative Party wants to see a “diverse range of sources for Britain’s energy production” and unlike in the 2015 manifesto, does not rule out future subsidy support for onshore wind stating that “while we do not believe that more large-scale onshore wind power is right for England, we will maintain our position as a **global leader in offshore wind** and **support the development of wind projects in the remote islands of Scotland**, where they will directly benefit local communities”.

Above all, it states that “energy policy should be focused on outcomes rather than the means by which we reach our objectives. So, after we have left the European Union, **we will form our energy policy based not on the way energy is generated but on the ends we desire – reliable and affordable energy, seizing the industrial opportunity that new technology presents and meeting our global commitments on climate change**”. This appears to confirm recent press speculation that sector targets under the Renewable Energy Directive will not be retained once we have left the EU.

### Energy Efficiency

The document recognises that “an energy efficient home is a more affordable and healthy home” and therefore pledges to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes particularly for the least well off “by committing to **upgrading all fuel poor homes to EPC Band C by 2030**”. They will review requirements on new homes but no timetable is set out for this.

The manifesto also recognises that “for British companies, an energy-efficient business is a more competitive business” so pledges to establish an **industrial energy efficiency scheme** “to help large companies install measures to cut their energy use and their bills”.

### Climate Change

The manifesto includes a recognition that “we are at the **forefront of action against global climate change**” and pledges to continue this leadership:

*“The United Kingdom will lead the world in environmental protection. As Conservatives, we are committed to leaving the environment in better condition than we inherited it. That is why we will continue to take a lead in global action against climate change, as the government demonstrated by ratifying the Paris Agreement. We were the first country to introduce a **Climate Change Act**, which Conservatives helped to frame, and we are halfway towards meeting our 2050 goal of reducing emissions by eighty per cent from 1990 levels.”*

### Natural Environment

The pledge to be the “first generation to leave the environment in a better state than we inherited it” is reconfirmed and a comprehensive **25 Year Environment Plan** will be produced that will “chart how we will improve our environment as we leave the European Union and take control of our environmental legislation again”.

Natural England will also be helped to expand their provision of technical expertise to farmers to deliver **environmental improvements** on a landscape scale, including enriching soil fertility and planting hedgerows. The Conservatives promise to deliver on their commitment to improve natural flood management, for instance by “improving the quality of water courses to protect against soil erosion and damage to vulnerable habitats and communities”. They will also ensure that public forests and woodland are kept in trust for the nation, and provide stronger protections for the UK’s ancient woodland.

### Brexit and Trade

The manifesto confirms that the UK will no longer be a member of the Single Market or Customs Union once it has left the EU but “we will seek a deep and special partnership including a comprehensive free trade and customs agreement”. A further aim is to replicate all existing EU free trade agreements and support the ratification of other trade agreements entered into during EU membership. A **Trade Bill** will be introduced in the next parliament.

As well as the Great Repeal Bill, there is confirmation that a number of additional bills will be brought forward to ensure that “when we have left the EU there is a clear statutory basis for United Kingdom authorities to exercise powers that are currently exercised through EU law and institutions”.

### Regulation

The Red Tape Challenge and One-In-Two-Out Rule will continue to save £9bn.

### Procurement

The manifesto pledges to ensure that 33% of central government purchasing will come from SMEs by the end of the parliament.

### Fixed-term Parliaments Act

This will be repealed.

## LABOUR PARTY

### For The Many Not The Few

#### Industrial Strategy

Labour pledges that its industrial strategy will be built on “objective, measurable missions designed to address the great challenges of our times”. The first of these missions will be to ensure that **60% of the UK’s energy comes from zero-carbon or renewable sources by 2030**.

#### Energy

Labour promises to transform our energy systems –“investing in new, state of the art low-carbon gas and renewable electricity production”. **Energy will be taken back into public ownership** by the regaining of control of energy supply networks through the alteration of license conditions; the creation of publicly owned, locally accountable energy companies / co-operatives (with at least one in every region); and legislation which allows publicly owned local companies to purchase regional grid infrastructure, ensuring that national and regional grid infrastructure is brought into public ownership over time.

The manifesto confirms Labour’s commitment to renewable energy projects, including tidal lagoons, as a means of creating jobs and helping the UK meet its climate change commitments.

#### Energy Efficiency

Labour pledges to **insulate four million homes as an infrastructure priority**. Furthermore, homeowners will be offered **interest-free loans** to improve their property and with regards to the rental market, the existing Landlord Energy Efficiency regulations will be improved and the Landlord Energy Saving Allowance will be re-established. A consultation will be undertaken on “new modern standards for building **‘zero carbon homes’**”.

### Climate Change

The manifesto includes the pledge that a Labour government will “**put us back on track to meet the targets in the Climate Change Act and the Paris Agreement**”. Britain’s leading role in tackling climate change will be reclaimed via the delivery of our international commitments to reduce emissions and mitigating the impacts of climate change on developing countries.

### Natural Environment

Labour pledges to guarantee the protection and advancement of **environmental quality standards** and work with farmers and foresters to “plant a million trees of native species to promote biodiversity and better flood management”.

### Brexit

The manifesto includes a proposal to scrap the Conservatives’ Brexit White Paper and replace it with new negotiating priorities that have a “strong emphasis on retaining the benefits of the Single Market and the Customs Union”. It also promises to prioritise maintaining access to the **Internal Energy Market** during Brexit negotiations.

They will reject ‘no deal’ as a viable option and negotiate transitional arrangements to avoid a ‘cliff-edge’ for the UK economy if required. A Labour government will continue to work constructively with the EU and other European nations on issues such as climate change.

### Trade

Labour will actively support international negotiations towards an **Environmental Goods Agreement** at the WTO and use trade negotiations to “boost market access for British environmental goods and services, alongside support for investment into new green technologies and innovative low-carbon products”.

### Procurement

The best standards will be required on government contracts.

### National Investment Bank

Labour pledges to establish a National Investment Bank to fill existing gaps in lending by private banks (particularly to small businesses) and provide patient, long-term finance to R&D-intensive investments. It will also help to deliver the industrial strategy, prioritising spending in line with its objectives.

### Air Quality

Labour will introduce a new **Clean Air Act** to deal with illegal air quality.

### Plastic

Labour will work with food manufacturers and retailers to reduce waste and set guiding targets for plastic bottle deposit schemes.

## LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

### Change Britain’s Future

Five new green laws are proposed: a **Green Transport Act**, a **Zero-Carbon Britain Act**, a **Nature Act**, a **Green Buildings Act**, and a **Zero-Waste Act** to “incorporate existing EU

environmental protections, maintain product standards such as for energy efficiency, and establish a framework for continual improvement”.

### Targets

The Liberal Democrats pledge to pass a Zero-Carbon Britain Act to set new legally binding targets to **reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2040 and to zero by 2050**.

### Energy

The manifesto includes the aim to generate **60% of electricity from renewables by 2030**, restore government support for solar PV and onshore wind in appropriate locations and build more interconnectors to underpin this higher reliance on renewables.

Other technologies that will be supported include energy storage, smart grid technology, hydrogen technologies, offshore wind, tidal power and CCS, which is “essential for delivering clean industrial growth”. Community energy schemes will be expanded and councils encouraged to develop community energy-saving projects and local electricity generation, and promote “city-scale demonstration projects” for electric vehicles and clean energy.

### Energy Efficiency

Saving energy will be a top infrastructure priority and a new Green Buildings Act will be passed to set new energy efficiency targets, including a long-term ambition for every home in England to reach at least an **energy rating of Band C by 2035**. **Four million homes will be upgraded to Band C by 2022**, with priority given to the fuel-poor. The **zero-carbon standard** for new homes will be restored and extended to non-domestic buildings by 2022.

### Climate Change

The Paris Agreement will be supported by “ensuring the UK meets its own climate commitments and plays a leadership role in international efforts to combat climate change”, and greater resources will be provided for international environmental co-operation.

### Natural Environment

The Liberal Democrats will pass a Nature Act to “put the **Natural Capital Committee** (NCC) on a statutory footing, set legally binding natural capital targets, including on biodiversity, clean air and water, and empower the NCC to recommend actions to meet these targets”. The manifesto also pledges to significantly increase the amount of accessible green space and to protect and restore England’s lakes, rivers and wetlands, including through reform of water management and higher water-efficiency standards. It aims to plant a tree for every UK citizen over the next 10 years in order to reverse the decline in the rate of woodland creation.

On agricultural subsidies, these will be rebalanced away from direct subsidy and support will be refocused towards the “public benefits that come from effective land management including countryside protection, flood prevention, food production and climate-change mitigation”.

### Resource Efficiency

The Liberal Democrats will pass a Zero-Waste Act, which includes **legally binding targets for reducing net consumption of key natural resources** and incentives for businesses to improve resource efficiency. Better product design will be promoted to improve repairability, reuse and recycling.

The manifesto also includes pledges to establish a statutory waste recycling target of 70% in England, extend separate food waste collections to at least 90% of homes by 2022, introduce a 5p charge on disposable coffee cups, establish a “coherent tax and regulatory framework for landfill, incineration and waste collection”, including reinstating the landfill tax escalator and consulting on the introduction of an incineration tax, and to work with local government to ensure these commitments are fully funded.

### Transport

The Liberal Democrats will pass a Green Transport Act, introduce an Air Quality Plan to reduce air pollution and support the manufacture of low-emission and electric vehicles. Further proposals include: a diesel scrappage scheme; a ban on the sale of diesel cars and small vans in the UK by 2025; the extension of ultra-low-emission zones to 10 more towns and cities; all private hire vehicles and diesel buses licensed to operate in urban areas to run on ultra-low-emission or zero-emission fuels within five years; the reform of vehicle taxation to encourage sales of electric and low emission vehicles; and the development of electric vehicle infrastructure including universal charging points.

### Brexit

The manifesto states that “the European Union has created the highest environmental standards in the world. We have a duty to future generations to protect our environment and tackle climate change. Liberal Democrats will ensure that everything is done to **maintain those high standards in UK law, including the closest possible co-operation on climate and energy policy**”.

### Trade

The Liberal Democrats pledge to introduce **Sustainable Development Goals audits** of new trade, investment and development deals, reviewing their impact on “people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership”.

### Infrastructure

A British Housing and Infrastructure Development Bank will be established to mobilise investment into low carbon and sustainable infrastructure.

### Skills

A national skills strategy will be developed for key sectors, including low carbon technologies, to help match skills and people.

### Finance

The manifesto includes a proposal to reform **fiduciary duty and company purpose rules** to ensure that other considerations such as environmental standards are fully included in decision-making of directors and fund managers.